

Chapter II

EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

When "ON COMMON GROUND" was written, I said, "A good school is society's obligation to children for they are the reasons schools exist." I still believe this. Whatever the needs preparatory to making them good citizens should be met by the schools, and everyone knows that this rapidly changing world complicates the needs of all children.

Fifty years ago a junior high education was considered adequate for the average youth. Twenty five years ago a high school education was considered a must. Today a college education is required more and more in business and industry, whereas it used to be required in professions only.

In the seventy-five years that Miner has been the stomping grounds for thousands of children in this community, many changes have taken place in educational trends, methods, curricula, grade reports, testing and so on. Only the purpose remains the same--preparing children and youth for adulthood.

When Miner was erected in 1886, no one had to go to school. Eleven years later (1897) the Indiana Legislature enacted the Compulsory School Attendance Laws affecting all children between the ages of seven and sixteen.

The number of school days in the year has varied but little, remaining at approximately 187 days per year. The length of the school day has varied some but not greatly. For the most part the school day began at 8:30 A.M. and ended at 3:30 P.M. Half hour and fifteen minute variances have occurred at different times in the opening and closing times. Also, lunch hours have varied somewhat in length of time. One of the inherited problems of the last twenty years has been the need to provide supervision for children who bring lunches. Beginning in the war years and increasing steadily since, is the trend for mothers to take jobs away from home. This has been one of the problem areas in the school day--not only at Miner but in all schools.

Early in the life of Miner School, grades were classified by year only--i.e., first grade, second grade, third etc. Near the turn of the century B and A semesters were introduced and remained with us until recently. In the last ten years a change-over program was begun to eliminate the semester program (except in high schools) and the change was completed in the school year of 1958-59. As always, when there is a change made in any routine program, there are those favoring it and those opposing it. Naturally, the children affected here were those we referred to as mid-years. A testing program and parental consent determined whether a child went ahead a semester or back a semester. On the whole, the change-back was not too detrimental to anyone and most people feel the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.