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EDUCATIONAL CHANGES IN RUSSIA

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BUREAU OF EDUCATION

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Division of Foreign Educational Systems, Bureau of Education

INTRODUCTION.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT.

In the press reports bearing upon conditions in Russia since the outbreak of the revolution in March, 1917, little mention has been made of the tremendous changes that have shaken the entire educational system in that country. One needs only read Vyestnik Vremennavo Pravitelstva (Messenger of the Provisional Government), Russia's official gazette for the publication of the acts and decrees promulgated by the various ministries and other administrative bodies since the revolution, to become impressed with the deep and far-reaching reforms that have uprooted the entire system of the old education built on principles of autocracy and the privileges of the few. A school system of such a type could not exist in a country striving for democracy. This was realized by the Provisional Government headed by Prince Lvov and later on by Alexander Kerenski.[1]

To eradicate the evils of that system, to throw the schools open to the humble and the poor, to establish "a single absolutely secular school for all citizens," was the task at which the new authorities set to work.

In this report an attempt is made to indicate the outstanding features of the new laws and regulations since the early days of the revolution. Unfortunately because of the scarcity of material it is impossible to tell at present how far the acts and decrees promulgated by the various authorities and outlined in this report have

[1] The Provisional Government with Prince Lvov at its head was organized soon after the outbreak of the revolution in March, 1917, with the understanding that it should hold power only until the Constituent Assembly should meet to decide Russia's future form of rule. Its first cabinet consisted of former members of the executive committee of the Imperial Duma. In July of the same year a more radical cabinet was formed under the leadership of Kerenski. A few months later (i. e., in November) the Provisional Government was overthrown by the Councils of Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants Deputies, and the Soviet Government, with Lenin as Premier and Trotski as Minister of Foreign Affairs, was established instead.

been actually carried out. Nor is it possible to state with any degree of accuracy the educational changes that have taken place in Russia since the overthrow of Kerenski and the establishment of the Lenin-Trotski régime. For lack of information this report closes, therefore, with the early months of the Bolshevist rule.

The old autocracy, shattered so easily, left a heavy heritage. As is well known, education in Russia is very imperfectly developed. The policy of the czars was to impart to the people knowledge that would strengthen their own imperialistic aims. Nevertheless, it differed with each monarch. The reign of Czar Alexander I (1801–1825), especially its first half, was marked by an endeavor to build up a national system of education; his successor, Nicholas I (1825–1855) saw in the spread of schools and popular education a dangerous weapon against autocracy. The system by which schools of different grades formed one continuous ascending chain was destroyed and a high barrier was set up between the elementary and secondary grades.

Education was intended for the privileged classes only, and, although the school system was divided into four grades (parish school, district school, gymnasium, and university), leading from the primary school to the highest type of educational institution, no peasant's children, according to the Ukase issued in 1813 and reaffirmed in 1827, were to be admitted beyond the district school. A few years later even this privilege was denied them, and the tiller of the soil had to be content with the parish school only, though in Russia 85 per cent of the total population is rural.

The fourth Minister of Instruction, Shishkov, with the approval of Czar Alexander and in his presence, issued the following statement:

> Knowledge is useful only, when, like salt, it is used and offered in small measures according to the people's circumstances and their needs. * * * To teach the mass of people, or even the majority of them, how to read will bring more harm than good.[1]

This attitude was held by the higher authorities for a number of decades, and neither the abolition of serfdom in the sixties nor any subsequent reforms in Russian state affairs had any considerable effect upon educational conditions in that country.

The accession of Alexander II (1855–1881) was marked by an intellectual revival and freedom of speech, but his assassination plunged the country into a state of reaction. A number of schools came under the control of the church and were governed by the Holy Synod, Russia's highest ecclesiastical authority. The church authorities also opened a series of church schools, where the child spent his years in learning how to read church music and church Slavonic characters, the rôle of which in eastern Europe may be compared to the part played in the west by Latin. The inevitable cleavage be-

[1] Musin-Pushkin, Shkola v Rossii, p. 23.

tween the secular public schools and the parochial church schools became wide and deep and the passing over of a pupil from a school of one type to that of another was attended with great difficulties.

With Nicholas II (1894–1917) came a general revival of interest in educational matters, especially during the years following the Russo-Japanese war. The second part of his reign was marked by an era of many pedagogical congresses, of various schemes for reforming the schools, of incessant attempts toward the improvement of the methods of teaching and the organization of schools of a new type. This revival, taken up by the zemstvos (rural councils) and numerous private agencies, did not succeed, however, in bringing about complete reform. The most thoroughly democratic reforms, for which the progressive elements had been striving for decades, became effective in the early months of new Russia, and only the unfortunate internal strife of later days prevented their complete realization.

SECULARIZATION OF SCHOOLS.

One of the first acts of the Provisional Government of 1917 was the secularization of church schools, in order to put the educational institutions of the various departments under the control of the Ministry of Public Instruction. This important law, passed by the Provisional Government on June 20, 1917, reads in part:[1]

> For an actual and uniform realization of general instruction all the elementary schools, included in the school system, or all those which receive state grants for their upkeep or for the salaries of the personnel, among others, the church schools under the control of the Greek-Orthodox Church, as well as the church seminaries and two-class schools, are herewith transferred to the Department of Public Instruction.[2]

This reform, as can be easily seen, was primarily directed against the orthodox parish church schools, the separatist tendencies of which proved to be a serious obstacle in the diffusion of popular education. The parish church schools differed widely in program and spirit from the neighboring secular schools in the same district. They were under strict supervision of the clergy and had no connection with the zemstvo schools, which were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Instruction.

The general standard of instruction in the parish schools was reputed to be below that of the zemstvo schools. The zemstvo social workers long tried in vain to take over the parochial institutions. Measures of the Minister of Public Instruction, aiming to increase the general expenditures for secular education, were often defeated on the ground that no similar provision was made for the parochial schools. The latter, although governed by the church, enjoyed grants apportioned by the state, which in 1916 alone, according to the Russian

[1] All the dates in this report are old style, Russian calendar.
[2] Vyestnik Vrem. Pra., 1917, No. 99.

Yearbook for that year, amounted to $11,076.383. The subsidy which the parochial schools received from the state in the end facilitated their final transfer from the domain of the church to that of the state and made possible their supervision by one central authority.

The final blow inflicted upon the ecclesiastical school authorities came from the Soviet of the People's Commissaries, which in its session of January 20, 1918, officially proclaimed the separation of church and school. The immediate effect of that measure was the elimination of the teaching of religion and theology in all the public schools and the doing away of all discrimination between pupils on religious grounds.[1]

ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOLS.

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

The administrative machinery by which the state maintained its control over education has undergone radical changes. For the better understanding of these changes, a word as to school administration under the old system seems necessary.

Under the Czar's régime the entire state was divided into 15 educational districts, each headed by a curator. The curators, though nominated by the minister, had to be confirmed by the Czar. The power exercised by the curator within his own district was very large. It consisted not only in general supervision of all grades of schools, from the university downwards, but also the filling of vacancies in the ordinary staff of the schools. In addition, the curator had the right to nominate for confirmation by the minister persons fitted to discharge the functions of directors of secondary schools, and inspectors or deans of faculties in the universities.

The actual inspection of secondary schools was done by his assistants, the district inspectors, while the supervision of elementary education was exercised by the directors of elementary schools and their subordinates, the inspectors of elementary schools. Matters pertaining to reforms within the sphere of authority of the curator were decided by the curator's council, in which the district inspectors also participated.

Through this system of school administration all grades of education were brought into direct relation with the curator and through him with the Minister of Public Instruction. As a counterpart to the ministerial schools, organized and controlled by the state, stood the educational institutions, established and maintained by the municipalities and zemstvos in those provinces where local self-governments were in existence. Though originally enjoying great liberties, the zemstvo schools were gradually correlated to the min-

[1] New Russian News, 1918, No. 28.

isterial schools by a system of provincial and district school councils, which consisted of representatives of the ministry and the local self-government.

The distinct feature of these councils was the active participation of the nobility who, encouraged by the state, played an important rôle in directing the policy of the schools. The inspectors of both the ministerial and zemstvo schools were looked upon with great disfavor by the zemstvo social workers, who considered these officials as state agents interested more in the teachers' loyalty toward the ruling autocracy than in the education of the masses. The profound hatred which the ministerial inspectors had aroused manifested itself at the first teachers' conference, held in Moscow, immediately after the downfall of the Czar. The cries there first heard openly of "Down with the hateful inspectors of the public schools, down with the council! The power of the school belongs to the teacher!" [1] augured ill for the system of school inspection, as hitherto practiced in Russia.

This dictatorship "from above" broke down completely with the coming to power of the Provisional Government. The policy of the new school authorities was to refer the administration of the schools to the local self-governing bodies, the zemstvos and the municipalities. The decree of May 8, 1917, regarding elementary education reads:

> In localities where the provincial or district zemstvos are in existence, the municipal, district, and provincial school councils are to be abolished. In place of the abolished councils the administration of elementary education is temporarily laid upon provincial or district zemstvos, while in cities with a municipal school council administration elementary education is given over to the municipal duma.[2]

By placing the educational affairs in the hands of the local authorities, the post of the curator became superfluous and was abolished by the decree of September 26, 1917. With it went, as a natural consequence, the Curator's Council and its autocratic machinery, the directorates and inspectorates of schools.[3]

Although the new Ministry of Public Instruction outlined a comprehensive and far-reaching program for the reconstruction of schools, it encountered powerful opposition on the part of the radical elements of Russian society. This was due to the old deeply rooted distrust of reforms emanating from governmental bureaus, where the people had hitherto no voice. The Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies demanded the organization of a special State Committee of Public Instruction attached to the ministry and representative of the people. Organized in May, 1917, the State Commission of Public Instruction comprised representatives of the All-Russian Soviets of

[1] Russkiya Vyedomosti, 1917, No. 76.
[2] Vyestnik Vospitaniya, 1917, No. 6-7.
[3] Vyestnik Vr. Prav., 1917, No. 178.

Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, representatives from the union of towns, zemstvos, and various other organizations, mostly political. Educational workers were represented in a small minority. The function of this committee was to devise laws and see that these were laid before the Provisional Government through the channels of the ministry. The sessions of the state committee bore many fruits. Regulations were issued concerning elementary education,[1] the enforcement of compulsory education,[1] the administration of public schools, and the autonomy of the middle schools. The committee recommended also the introduction of the new spelling in public schools, higher salaries for elementary-school teachers, and various other reforms, general and particular.[2]

The decision of the state committee with regard to administration rests on the principle, so familiar to us, that public education is the affair of the local self-governments, by which body it should be administered. For the immediate administration of schools there should be formed special provincial and district boards of public instruction. As to jurisdiction, according to the state committee, the local boards should care, among other things, for the general maintenance of laws and regulations pertaining to public education, the administration of educational institutions, the coordination of all activities pertaining to public education in a given area, and the collection of statistical data on education. In addition, each provincial zemstvo may distribute state grants for education to the various districts and towns according to the decisions of the Provincial Zemstvo Assemblies.[3]

The reforms mentioned above, whether outlined or actually introduced, represent, as can be easily seen, the general trend of democratization of schools, as found in other democratic countries. The action of the Provisional Government was not revolutionary. Local self-governments existed in Russia for over 50 years, and, by granting them a voice in educational affairs, the provisional authorities simply complied with the wishes of those who have in vain sought this privilege for the past five decades.

Autonomy of middle schools.—The projected reforms of the State Committee relating to the autonomy of middle schools received cordial support of the Minister of Public Instruction, Salazkin. A bill introduced in September, 1917, for the approval of the Provisional Government places the control of all schools above the primary grades in the hands of the Council of Education. According to this bill, "the immediate control of the higher elementary schools, boys' and girls' progymnasiums and gymnasiums, real schools, normal schools, and other institutions receiving State grants in full, or sub-

[1] The details are not available. [2] Vyestnik Vospitaniya, 1917, No. 6–7, pp. 29–36.

sidized by local funds, be it for purely educational or for administrative purposes, is herewith intrusted to the Council of Education." This body is to comprise, besides the teaching personnel and the school physician, representatives of the local self-government and the parents' organizations, wherever such are in existence. The number of the parents' representatives in the Council of Education is not to exceed one-third of the members of the teaching personnel.

In institutions newly created the right to elect a director or other persons holding administrative positions is reserved to the provincial zemstvo boards or to the district or city boards, as the case may be.

The members of the Council of Education have the right to elect the teaching staff from the list of candidates submitted to it by the director or by some other person at the head of the institution. At the end of the school year, upon the written request of not less than one-third of the total number of members comprising the Council of Education, the teachers' tenure of office may be subjected to a new vote. In extreme cases of unsatisfactory conduct or lack of skill on the part of the teacher, such reballoting may take place even before the end of the school year.[1]

BOLSHEVIK RÉGIME.

With the overthrow of Kerenski in November, 1917, and the coming to power of the Bolsheviki, the educational policy was again revised. This time the control of schools passed from the hands of the zemstvos to those of the soviets, representing the masses only. The rules, as issued by the Commissariat of Education,[2] read as follows:

1. For the proper conduct of affairs pertaining to public education in and outside of school, also to normal schools (teachers' seminaries), there are being organized regional, provincial, municipal, district, and county soviets of public education attached to the soviets of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies. This refers to institutions with a general or technical bias.

2. The soviets of public education consist of (*a*) representatives of all organizations having the right to send delegates to the soviets of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies; (*b*) representatives of local educators and students (among others also from technical schools); (*c*) experts especially invited for consultation.

NOTE.—The total number of representatives from educators and students must not exceed one-third of the total membership of the soviet of public education.

3. General meetings of the soviets of public education take place, if advisable, once a month, but not less than once in three months.

4. The soviet of public education elects an executive committee from its own members.

5. All appropriations from the State treasury are to be solicited by the regional and provincial soviets of public education.

[1] Vyestnik Vrem. Prav., 1917, No. 161.

[2] Under the Bolshevik régime the ministries were changed to commissariats, the post of the minister being superseded by a "people's commissary," appointed by the Central Executive Committee of All-Russian Assembly of Soviets.

6. The soviets of public education work under the direction of the soviets of deputies and in accord with the views of the latter institution. In respect to pedagogical and financial questions the soviets enjoy autonomy and are accountable to higher authorities in the following order: County soviet of public education, district soviet of public education, provincial soviet of public education, regional soviet of public education, and, finally, the State commission of education.

7. The opening of new schools and the sequestration of private educational institutions, in case the expenditures are covered by the State, are to be undertaken with the exclusive approval of the State commission through the channels of the soviets of public education.

8. The soviets of public education shall extend their activities to the people's universities, public courses, exhibitions, theaters, motion pictures, excursions, libraries, etc.

9. In localities where the zemstvos and municipalities have not yet ceased their activities the soviets will take charge of the work pertaining to public instruction. All school apparatus, municipal and rural, as well as all sources of income, will be transferred to the soviets.

10. The soviets of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies have the right to make only such changes as are compatible with local conditions.[1]

PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS.

The rôle of parents' organization in the school council mentioned in the previous section is a recent development and sprang, like so many reforms in Russia, out of sheer necessity.

By the constant recasting of schedules in secondary schools the school authorities under the old régime curtailed the subjects most in touch with modern life. Natural sciences and history were reduced to a minimum and Greek and Latin studies reinforced. The teaching in the boys' and girls' gymnasiums became formal and unattractive.

Protests emanating from the intelligent circles of society became more and more emphatic, until dissatisfaction culminated in 1905 in a general strike not only in university institutions, a common phenomenon in Russia, but also among high-school pupils. The strike, spreading throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, made the authorities realize that to cope with the high-school problem a radical change in the system was imperative. It became clear to them that to win the pupils' confidence was beyond their power, and that to save the situation the parents' cooperation must be first invited.

The importance of the influence of parents in school life had been realized by the school authorities much earlier, notably in 1899, when the Minister of Public Instruction, Bogolyepov, bent upon carrying out reforms in the secondary schools of Russia, issued a circular addressed to the curators of the educational districts, admitting the justice of many complaints of the defects in the secondary schools.

[1] Izv. Sov. Rab. i Sold. Deput., 1918, No. 37.

As a result of this admission a conference was summoned by P. A. Nekrasov, curator of the Moscow district, in which about 200 educators, mainly teachers and directors of secondary schools, took part and formulated recommendations which, timely as they were, did not procure the participation of parents in the affairs of the school. A closer rapprochement followed only a few years later, when the school youth, inspired by the liberalizing movements of 1905, began to revolt from the restriction of the school régime, causing great perturbation among the school authorities. It was then that the latter turned to the parents for help. Officially invited for the first time by the school authorities to lend a helping hand the parents literally "burst" into the schoolroom, and in the hour of distress rescued the situation.

With the slogan that the school should be a temple of knowledge, and not of politics, the parents' commitees set to work. Their influence was at once most beneficial. The pedagogical circles had extended to them their sympathies and won their cooperation. Owing to the influence of the parents' committee interest in the school studies was revived, the students appeased, and politics, at least outwardly, banished from the schoolroom. The parents' committees established cordial relations between teachers and pupils. Leaving no stone unturned, they responded to all the needs of the pupils' school life. In this they saw their right and duty.

By instituting special summer courses the parents' organizations assisted the backward students in subjects in which they had previously failed. They suggested to the school authorities that the home lessons be modified by furnishing exact tables relative to the home studies. They reported the progress their children made with the various textbooks; they obtained numerous editions of the same book, so as to enable the children to read and discuss in the classroom books familiar to all. They supplied school libraries with additional books, issued catalogues of the best books available, and distributed them for the guidance of parents in their own as well as in other localities. Their activities extended to the improvement of the pupils' entertainments and amusements. Last, but not least, they took an active interest in school luncheons and sanitation.

These activities, at first welcomed, received, with the setting in of the reactionary spirit in 1907, a decided check on the part of the school authorities, who viewed with suspicion the ever-growing influence of the parents' organizations.

With the outbreak of the revolution the parents' committees came again to their own. That the parents' cooperation in school affairs is valued highly is proved by the bill of September, 1917, which

allotted to the parents of school children a conspicuous place in the council of educators.

ABOLITION OF RESTRICTIONS.

NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS.

Among the new measures introduced in Russia since the revolution the most vital one is the decree abolishing all restrictions hitherto imposed upon various nationalities, denominations, and creeds. For instance, Jews were formerly admitted to secondary schools and universities only by percentage. Their admission to schools within the so-called Jewish pale—that is, roughly speaking, Poland and southwestern Russia—was limited to 10 per cent, in other provincial universities to 5 per cent, and in Petrograd and Moscow to 2 per cent of the total enrollment of students. Furthermore, the non-Russian population in Provinces like Poland, Ukrainia, Lithuania, etc., once independent States, had to submit to the Russifying policy of the former Government and for lack of facilities to send their children to schools in which the use of their own native language was forbidden.

These conditions appear to have vanished with the "Declaration of the rights of the peoples," issued by the All-Russian Soviet, first in June and then in November, 1917. The tenets of this declaration are as follows:

1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples to free self-determination even to the point of separation and establishment of independent states.
3. Abolition of all racial and religious privileges and restrictions.
4. Free development of the nations and ethnographic groups which were merged into the Russian Empire.

From a pedagogical point of view the restrictions which prevented the various nations and ethnographic groups, constituting 57 per cent of the total population of Russia, from establishing and conducting their own private schools were forthwith removed. They were permitted to institute their own schools and use their national language as a medium of instruction.

It is also significant that the State itself made provisions for the introduction of the local language into normal schools of those provinces where the non-Russian population constituted the majority.[1]

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION.

Private instruction imparted at home was formerly considered an offense under some conditions and punished accordingly. The new bill introduced by the Minister of Public Instruction and ratified

[1] Vyestnik Vremennavo Pravitelstva, 1917, No. 104.

by the Provisional Government abolished all restrictions relative to private instruction and thus paved the way for private individuals eager to assist the Government in wiping out illiteracy.

Commenting upon this bill, the Vyestnik Vremennavo Pravitelstva, 1917, No. 79, states:

> According to the laws now in force it is the duty of the educational and administrative authorities to find out by observation what individuals practice the art of teaching children in private homes, if such persons possess the necessary certificate, otherwise to prosecute them according to the law. The articles of law pertaining to private instruction have at present, with the entire change of structure of society, lost their significance, while they still retain the force of law in the civil code. For this reason the Minister of Public Instruction has introduced for the approval of the Provisional Government a bill aiming to abolish all restrictions regarding teaching in private homes.

EDUCATIONAL LADDER.

The reorganization of the entire school system, long a dream of the most progressive elements of the Russian society, was effected by a decree issued by the Provisional Government in June, 1917.

According to the Russkiya Vyedomosti, 1917, No. 144, all State schools are to run in two parallel lines, cultural and vocational. Each grade leads directly to the next higher of the same line or to a corresponding grade of the parallel line. The pupils begin with the elementary school and pass then either to a lower vocational school or continue the general course by entering a higher elementary one, corresponding to the first four classes of the present gymnasium. The gymnasium is to undergo a gradual change and be reduced to a four-class school, whereby the first four classes of the present gymnasium are to be turned into a higher elementary school. With the higher elementary school the cycle of elementary education comes to an end.

From the higher elementary school the pupil passes to the secondary trade school or to the four-class gymnasium which is to correspond to the last four classes of the present gymnasium (5th–8th classes, inclusive). This cycle completes the pupil's secondary education.

Finally, the four-class gymnasium is to pave the way to the university or to a higher technical or professional school.

This act abolishes all barriers and offers free and uniform access to all grades of education. Moreover the school schedule is to be so arranged as to enable the pupils to change the academic for a vocational course and vice versa.

A similar reform with regard to the city schools received considerable attention on the part of the late Czar's liberal Minister of Instruction, Ignatyev, whose proposals for better schools were widely commended by the exponents of educational reform.

To make this change real the Provisional Government assigned the following sum for education in 1917 to supplement the budget fixed by the old authorities:

The sum of $2,707,857 "for the opening of four-class gymnasiums and real-schools,[1] new higher elementary schools, also for the opening and upkeep of teachers' institutes and normal schools.

Out of this sum it was proposed to spend:

(*a*) $546,750 for the opening of 100 four-class gymnasiums and real-schools.

(*b*) $1,291,725 for the opening of new higher elementary schools and for various needs of these schools, as provided by law.

(*c*) $110,000 for the opening and upkeep of 5 teachers' institutes.

(*d*) $759,382 for the opening of 25 normal schools.[2]

In this connection it may be of interest to compare the statistical items as far as available. They represent the state expenditures for middle schools in 1915 and 1916.[3]

	1915	1916
Boys' state middle schools	$9,514,430	$9,536,333
Boys' state-aided middle schools	587,210	668,410
Various other expenditures (regular salary increase, teachers' lodgings, parallel classes, etc.) in boys' gymnasiums, progymnasiums, and real-schools	3,360,768	3,682,500
Girls' state middle schools	289,445	293,633
Girls' state-aided middle schools	899,764	1,024,764
Total	14,651,617	15,205,640

The increase for middle education in 1916 was $554,023; in 1917, $3,039,662.

TEACHERS' TRAINING INSTITUTIONS.[4]

The reorganization of the elementary and higher schools, by which the present gymnasium is to be divided into a higher elementary and a high school institution, led the Minister of Public Instruction, Manuilov, to issue a new program affecting the status of Teachers' Training Institutions, which comprise the normal schools (uchitelskiya seminarii) and the teachers' institutes (uchitelskiye instituty).

(*a*) *Normal schools.*—The decree of June 14, 1917, defines the status of the normal schools, the main source for supplying teachers in the primary grades, as follows:

1. The normal schools are secondary institutions and consist of four classes. They admit men, women, or both.

2. The normal schools may have one or two preparatory or parallel classes.

3. Admission to the preparatory class is afforded to graduates of a two-class elementary school, while admission to the first class of a

[1] The gymnasiums offer classical instruction, while the real-schools are nonclassical, with a technical bias.
[2] Vyestnik Vr. Pravitelstva, 1917, No. 101.
[3] Pravitelstvenny Vyestnik, 1917, No. 38.
[4] Vyestnik Vr. Pr., 1917, No. 104.

normal school requires graduation from a higher elementary school or its equivalent.

4. Candidates who pass a special entrance examination may also be accepted.

5. For practical work of the prospective teachers there is to be attached to the normal school a two-class elementary school, with a six-year course.

Further, the regulation requires all existing teachers' schools with an elementary program to be raised to the standard of normal schools. This change is to take place within two years from the date of publication of this regulation.

The teachers' schools were previously of low standard and their course differed little from the program of a two-class primary school.

(*b*) *Teachers' institutes.*—While the normal schools are intended to qualify candidates for the teaching profession in the lower elementary schools, the teachers' institutes prepare candidates to occupy positions in the higher elementary schools. The latter, as already explained, correspond in scope to the first four classes of the present gymnasium.

The following statements, issued by the Minister of Public Instruction, under date of June 14, 1917, show the new regulations, as affecting the teachers' institutes:

1. The teachers' institutes may admit men, women, or both.

2. Admission to the first class at the teachers' institute is granted to graduates of normal schools, boys' or girls' gymnasiums, real-schools with an additional class, higher commercial schools, and similar institutions. Admission is restricted to candidates who have been in the school service for not less than two years.

3. For the purpose of giving students practice in teaching there is to be attached to each institute a higher elementary school, teaching in which is required of all students.

4. The course of study in teachers' institutes covers three years and is divided into a general course—compulsory for all the students—and a special, corresponding to the group of subjects in which the candidate prefers to specialize. The special course consists of the following groups: Literary-historical, physico-mathematical, and scientific.

Students who have successfully completed a certain course in the teachers' institute receive the title of "Teacher in a Higher Elementary School" in a particular group of subjects. Admission to the examination for a license as such is afforded only to candidates who have taught school for at least two years.[1]

[1] Vyestnik Vr. Pr., 1917, No. 128.

REFORM IN SPELLING.

Closely connected with the reforms already mentioned is that in spelling. Some time ago such scientists and recognized experts on the subject as the members of the Academy Fortunatov and Shakhmatov pointed out the necessity of such a reform. Their views were based on the fact that the former orthography had no scientific foundation; that it was arbitrary, and the result of an inadequate knowledge of the Russian language on the part of the old philologists. The new spelling was adopted on May 11, 1917, by a special committee charged with the work. The Minister of Public Instruction, A. Manuilov, referring to the reform which he was instrumental in introducing into the school system, remarks:

> The reform worked out by a special committee attached to the Academy of Science and supported by the state committee of the Ministry of Public Instruction presents a system based on scientific principles which, while retaining all the elements of the former orthography, aspires to bring uniformity between the written word on the one side and its phonetic composition and etymological construction on the other.[1]

From a practical point of view the reform in spelling will undoubtedly facilitate the studies of elementary school pupils by saving for more serious studies time that was formerly consumed in learning all the minutiæ of a spelling that had no justification.

The spelling, as adopted by the school authorities, consists in the elimination from the Russian alphabet of four letters: ѣ (yat); і (i); ѳ (phita); and ъ, the so-called "hard sound." The pronunciation of the first three letters is identical, respectively, with e (ye); и(i), and ф (f). The hard sound, though frequently used at the end of words ending with a consonant, is not pronounced.

The new spelling was introduced into Russian schools in the lowest grades first. Students who started school with the old spelling were allowed to adhere to it, or adopt the new one. No mixed spelling was, however, to be tolerated.

NEW TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

Under the old system textbooks intended for use in Russian schools had to be approved by the Scientific Committee, the chairman of which was appointed directly by the Emperor. But the new order of things demanded new standards. A committee appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction of the Provisional Government was charged to further the publications of school books compatible with the principles of a growing democracy. The Bolshevik authorities went much further. In this connection it is interesting to note a bill of December, 1917, approved by the Commissary of Public Instruction, A. Lunacharski, and apparently adopted by the general soviet.

[1] Vyestnik Vrem. Pr., 1917, No. 68.

By this bill the state may take over and enjoy the proceeds from any literary production for the period of five years, provided that at least 15 years shall have elapsed after its author's death. The work thus made the property of the state must show sufficient artistic and literary value. It is to be published in two editions, an academic edition with a full text, and a popular edition with abridged text. By this means the state authorities hope to counteract the influence of poor and vicious books and replace them with literature of a more healthy type.[1]

HIGHER EDUCATION.

The question of the reorganization of the universities, which the events in Russia have rendered urgent, received considerable attention on the part of the Provisional Government. Subsidized by the State, the Russian universities formed an integral part of the Russian Empire, or the Russian autocracy, which was free from the first so to impress its own stamp upon them as to mold them to its own aims.

The effect of this practice upon professors and students prompted the Provisional Government in June, 1917, to issue a decree which did away with all State interference and put the highest institutions of learning on a plane of autonomy never paralleled in the history of Russian schools. The university council, stripped of its power by the statute of 1884, became again an important factor in the life of the university; and the system of election of university officers, until now limited to the rector, the dean, and the secretaries of the various faculties, was extended to include also the university professors.

Election of professors.—These according to the bill of June 17, 1917, are to be elected by a unique combination of competition and recommendation. Persons desirous of securing professorships lodge application with the dean of the faculty. The members of the faculty and the university council, as well as the members of other higher educational institutions, may present their own candidates and upon invitation of the university discuss the merits of the prospective professors. The candidates are then subjected to a vote by the faculty and the election returns presented to the university council. In order to be elected the candidate polling the highest vote in the faculty must also receive the majority vote in the university council. He is then elected, subject to confirmation by the minister. In case of disapproval the latter must present his reasons to the university council within the period of two months. Failure to confirm a candidate leads to elections of a new candidate.[1]

[1] Gazeta Vr. Rab. i Kr. Pr., 1917, No. 26. [2] Vyestnik Vr. Pr., 1917, No. 8.

Requirements for candidates for university chairs.—A project which was worked out by the commission on the reorganization of higher education summoned by the assistant minister, Vernadski, in charge of higher education, states the following requirements for candidates for university chairs: (1) To become a regular ordinary or salaried professor the candidate must have had at least five years of experience as lecturer in one of the higher institutions of learning; to become an extraordinary or unsalaried professor only three years of experience. (2) Russian scientists, distinguished for their educational activities and possessing the degree of doctor of philosophy conferred by foreign universities, are also eligible to professorships.[1]

Docents.—The post of docent, instituted in 1863 and abolished in 1884, was reestablished by a ministerial circular of June 24, 1917. This reads:

In all Russian State universities the post of docent shall be reestablished as follows:

1. Docents shall receive a salary of $1,200 per annum, with two increments of $175 each after the fifth and tenth years of service.

2. The assignment of docents to the various chairs is left to the faculty subject to confirmation by the university council.

3. Persons holding doctor's or master's degrees, or those not possessing such degrees but otherwise meeting the requirements of private docents and actually having had a three years' experience in teaching, are eligible to fill vacancies.

4. The election of docents, subject to confirmation by the council, is made by the faculty from the number of candidates proposed by its members.

5. Docents have a right to participate in faculty meetings with a voice on all subjects except that pertaining to the election of professors.

Admission of students.—The admission of students to higher educational institutions, until now restricted by various laws and regulations bearing upon the students' nationality, creed, and domicile, has undergone a sweeping change since the publication of the ministerial circular of June 13, 1917. How this measure affects nonorthodox and non-Russian students has been discussed in another connection. Here it may be of interest to mention the reform with regard to the students' domicile. As already stated, Russia was divided into 15 educational districts with a university in each of 10 of these. According to measures adopted by the ministry in 1899, students living in a district possessing a university could not freely select a higher institution outside their own educational border line. The new regulation does away with this law of bondage and leaves to the student a free choice between universities existing throughout Russia at large. Of particular interest are the following clauses of the circular:

1. The university admits on equal basis persons of both sexes with no distinction as to nationality and creed, providing such persons possess diplomas or certificates of maturity or the equivalent.

[1] Vyestnik Vr. Pr., 1917, No. 141.

2. Students wishing to change the course of study and also those coming from other universities in or outside of Russia are admitted on the same basis as new students, credit for work done elsewhere being decided by the respective departments.

3. Special students, men and women, who possess a high-school education, may become regular students if they pass an examination for a certificate of maturity. In such cases credit may be granted for academic work done previously.

NEW UNIVERSITIES AND FACULTIES.

Plans to increase the number of universities and faculties, the lack of which has been keenly felt by the intelligent circles of society, came to fruition in the first year after the fall of the Empire.

The eagerness of certain cities to assist the Government in its work by offering large sums of money for the building of the proposed new universities, and the rapidity with which some of the reforms have been put into operation, prove that the time was fully ripe in Russia for measures so long delayed. But the credit for these reforms belongs not solely to the Provisional Government. Changes in university education were also planned by the prerevolutionary authorities. The March days of 1917 simply accelerated the course of events, and what under ordinary circumstances would have taken years, perhaps decades, to accomplish, was then done overnight.

The following are the most important measures: The Demidov Lyceum in Yaroslav, intended exclusively for the study of laws and organized on the same principle as the faculty of laws in a university, was transformed in July, 1917, into Yaroslav university and organically connected with the faculty of law. The medical, physico-mathematical, and historico-philological faculties were to be instituted at a later date.

Other changes created by the new authorities include the transforming of the Perm branch of the Petrograd university into an independent university institution, which opened last year with all the four faculties mentioned. In addition, the Warsaw university, which, in the early days of the German occupation of the western front in Russia, was transferred to Rostov-on-the-Don, underwent a radical change. The Warsaw university proper was abolished and in its stead was created the Don university, named after Rostov-on-the-Don, in which city it is situated. The Don university opened in July, 1917, with all the four faculties. The action of the authorities with regard to the Warsaw institution will become intelligible, if we bear in mind that the Warsaw university was intended to serve the needs of the Polish population. With the creation of the new Polish state, however, the Warsaw university in a Russian city had obviously no raison d'être and was supplanted by an institution definitely suited to its environment.

The two young Russian universities—one in Saratov and one in Tomsk—created shortly before the revolution by the then liberal

minister Ignatyev, received considerable attention on the part of the new authorities. By an early act of the Provisional Government the Saratov university was expanded to include the physico-mathematical, historico-philological, and the law faculties, while to the Tomsk university were added the physico-mathematical and historico-philological faculties.

Plans were also underway for the opening of two more universities—one in Irkutsk and one in Tashkent—both intended to supply the needs of Asiatic Russia, which at present boasts of only one higher educational institution—the Tomsk university.

Finally, the stand taken by the new authorities with regard to the question of higher education for women deserves explanation. Women students, debarred from the pursuit of studies in universities, had formerly to content themselves with so-called "Higher courses for women" instituted in many university centers. These courses, general and professional, compared favorably with the kind of education offered at universities, yet graduation from these institutions did not carry the same prestige as graduation from a Russian university. This fact led the ministry to draft a law which aims to transform the higher courses for women in Petrograd and Moscow into regular universities for women. In addition to that, women may enter any higher educational institution on the same basis as men.

Reports from Russia bring advices that are anything but favorable for the development of higher institutions. Owing to the revolutionary upheaval many university professors, known for their adherence to the old régime, were summarily dismissed from their posts; others handed in their own resignations; classrooms were deserted by students serving in the militia and various political organizations; and university buildings were utilized for the propagation of the new ideas. Add to this the need of professors felt in Russian universities long before the war; the lack of material required for the proper equipment of laboratories and clinics; the high cost of textbooks and various apparatus; and last, but not least, the general chaotic conditions of the whole country. Says the Novoye Vremya, under date of September 29, 1917:

> A series of new universities is being opened in great haste. It is difficult at present to furnish new universities with indispensable textbooks and libraries, and there is no way of securing professors. Long before the war the university chairs were only half filled.

The Provisional Government is responsible for the changes in higher education which have been mentioned. Enlightened as these measures were, they did not, however, satisfy the Bolshevik leaders, who, as can be seen from the new university statute, seem to be anxious to throw the university doors open to all, regardless of attainments. The statute was prepared by a special commission,

consisting of Profs. Steinberg, Pokrovski, Artemyev, Fedorovski, Reussner, and Magirovski.

THE NEW UNIVERSITY STATUTE.[1]

1. The universities are divided into three free associations: (*a*) The fundamental, (*b*) the educational, and (*c*) the cultural.

(*a*) The fundamental association aims to promote the theoretical work of its members in the field of learning. (*b*) The educational association is a higher school, which by means of instruction imparts an all-round education in an entire field of knowledge or one of its special branches. It consists of permanent students, instructors, and professors. To the class of permanent students belong persons who have passed the midterm examinations. The instructors are chosen by the faculty for the duration of three years on the basis of a competitive procedure. They must have an established reputation in the world of science or be known for their pedagogical activities. (*c*) The cultural association (university extension) will comprise a unit with the aim of informing the working people how to acquire knowledge in a concise and intelligible form; it will also prepare workers for the people's universities, and furnish direct assistance to all cultural and educational agencies. The higher people's schoo admit all persons above 16 years of age, with no distinction as to sex and nationality.

2. The university must not be a class institution; hence, it must be free and admit all who seek higher education.

3. The new statute excludes any possibility of turning the members of the university into a privileged class. For this reason there have been instituted temporary positions only, constant competitions for professors and instructors, compulsory lectures by professors in public auditoriums, the assignment of professors to provincial universities.

4. The number of chairs and faculties in each university is reserved to the decision of the university association.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Technical education received considerable thought on the part of the prerevolutionary minister, Ignatyev, who saw in it a means "to make the world more comfortable." His attention was mainly centered on the higher technical institutions which were to provide the State with trained experts for the promotion of the industrial development of the country.

The Provisional Government, while realizing the importance of higher technical schools, was of the opinion that to attain the best

[1] Izv. Vser. Tsent. Kom. Sovietov, 1918, No. 94.

results a fundamental and radical change was imperative, and with that in view made sweeping changes in the field of elementary and secondary technical education.

To begin with, it changed the section dealing with industrial schools under the Ministry of Instruction,[1] into a department of professional education.

It further issued a decree by which all professional institutions were to be divided, according to grades, into three groups: (1) Technical institutes (tekhnicheskiya uchilishcha); (2) trade institutes (remeslennyya uchilishcha); and (3) trade schools (remeslennyya shkoly).

The technical institutes, as stated in the new regulations, should aim at providing the students with a thorough knowledge, theoretical and practical, in some special field of industry; the trade institutes were to offer to students courses in applied sciences coupled with practical work, while the trade schools had as their aim the preparation of students to perform work in some special branch of industry in an intelligent and competent manner.

The course of study in technical institutes was to cover four years, in trade institutes not less than three years, while in trade schools it was to vary according to the needs of the particular branch of industry.

Admission to technical institutes, according to the decree, depends on the completion of the course of higher elementary schools, to trade institutes of a two-class elementary school, while admission to a trade school requires only graduation from a one-class elementary school. The technical schools admit boys and girls.

Degrees.—The completion of the course of a technical institute qualifies the student for the title of technician, which carries the right to execute work designed by an engineer, while graduation from a trade institute or a trade school leads to the title of master, or assistant master, respectively. Successful practice in his specialty for the period of not less than three years entitles the technician to a degree of engineer with the right to produce original work in his field. At the same time, under similar conditions, masters may become raised to the rank of master technicians, while assistant masters may become masters. These titles may be bestowed on the aspirants by the council of education of the respective schools, from which the students were graduated.

In addition to the above-named graded schools, the Provisional Government made provision for the opening of various courses in special branches of industrial education.

[1] A number of technical schools lie outside the jurisdiction of the Minister of Instruction, but as changes in both kinds of schools do not differ materially they are treated here collectively.

Courses, permanent or temporary, for teachers who could be used in the various technical schools were also planned by the educational authorities.

By the same decree provision was also made to assign once in three years instructors of special branches to various factories and industrial plants with the view of putting them in touch with the latest developments in the industrial world.

The cost of the technical schools and courses was to be defrayed by revenues from the treasury, the zemstvos, municipal, and other bodies. A considerable amount of money for scholarships was also assigned for students desirous of pursuing technical or industrial careers. To cover the expenses entailed by the reform act in 1917, the Government assigned for technical education an extra sum of one and a half million dollars in addition to the amount named for the same purpose by the pre-revolutionary authorities.[1]

As an actual effect of the decree regarding technical schools in Russia it is interesting to note the opening in Moscow of the first technical institution of a new type with a four-year course. Commenting upon this fact, the Vyestnik Vremennavo Pravitelstva, 1917, No. 92, adds:

> With the permission of the Minister of Public Instruction, and in accordance with the new law regarding technical institutions, there has recently been opened in Moscow the first technical institution which aims to give the student a theoretical and practical education indispensable for directing the work in architectural, engineering, hydrotechnical, mechanical, or electrotechnical lines. Graduates of the technical institutions will have the same rights as engineers in any of the above-mentioned specialties who have completed a course in technical institutions in Western Europe.

In line with the reforms pertaining to technical education of the lower and intermediary grades is the progress made in 1917 in the field of higher technical education. Among the new institutions should be mentioned the establishment of two polytechnic institutes, one in Tiflis, Caucasus, and one in Nizhni-Novgorod, the former with agricultural, chemical, hydromechanical, and economic faculties, and the latter with chemical, mechanical, structural, and mining faculties.

The establishment of the polytechnic institute in Nizhni-Novgorod is the result of the transfer of the Warsaw polytechnic institute, which at the beginning of the German occupation of Poland was moved farther east to the first-named city. The same political reasons that prompted the transfer of the Warsaw university also led to the transfer of the Warsaw polytechnic institute.[2] In addition, plans were also made for the establishment of a new higher technical institution in Tzaritzyn, an important city in the lower Volga region.

[1] Vyestnik Vr. Pr., 1917, No. 77.

[2] Both the university and the polytechnic were reopened afterwards in Warsaw.

Another proposal recommended by the new school authorities is the establishment of technical departments in connection with universities. The advocates of this measure are of opinion that this arrangement will eliminate waste in the equipment of laboratories which may be used in common by students pursuing technical and purely scientific studies, and in avoiding duplication of professors. The newly projected universities, Irkutsk and Tashkent, which the Provisional Government was planning to open, were to have technical divisions. Had this proposition been adopted Russia would have entered upon a scheme materially different from the one now in existence, by which university courses are divided into four groups—law, medicine, physico-mathematical sciences, history and philology.

ADULT EDUCATION.

Press reports from Russia show that the need of education has at no time been so poignantly felt by the masses as at present, when the old order of things has crumbled, when the whole nation has been drawn into the vortex of politics, and when the call for a new organization of life has been sounded from every street corner and public platform. The people, anxious for the printed and spoken word, crowd the auditoriums and lecture halls and demand pamphlets and books from libraries, unfortunately poorly equipped with the very kind of literature that could throw light on the burning questions of the day. The dearth of popular literature, coupled with the lack of properly organized lectures, makes the ignorant masses an easy prey of agitators, who in their zeal to convert the people to their own political views sow doctrines that bring only chaos to the already muddled head of the Russian muzhik. Soon after the revolution in March, 1917, the school authorities, fully aware of the need of training facilities for the adult population, took immediate steps toward its realization.

One of the fruits of this decision was the calling of a conference in September, 1917, with the view of devising a program for the most advantageous expenditures of the State subsidies. This conference, presided over by the assistant minister, Countess Panin, long known for her activities among the working classes in Russia, recommended, among other things, the following course of action:

The opening of primary schools (shkoly gramoty), where adults could learn to read and write, the opening of elementary schools with a general program, and the establishment of schools suited particularly to the needs of the rural population.

In addition, the conference advised the organization of courses for social workers in the various fields of adult education, as well as for the zemstvo leaders. It also emphasized the need of numerous special courses, such as agronomy, industrial and economic cooperation,

bookkeeping, etc. Finally, the conference made a strong plea for the extension of the system of the public libraries, which it recommended should be supplied with proper literature suitable for the understanding of the masses.[1]

How far these proposed measures were accepted and to what extent they were put into practice by the proper school authorities is impossible to state because of the scarcity of news that could throw light on the situation. One thing is certain, however. The provisional authorities, as well as the succeeding Lenin-Trotzky régime, emphasized the vital need of schools for adults in the general scheme of education.

A. V. Lunacharski, the People's Commissary of Public Instruction, thus pictures the situation in an address directed to the Russian people:

> Everywhere in Russia, not only among the city workingmen, but also among the peasants, there has arisen a strong desire for education. Innumerable are the workmen's and soldiers' organizations of that nature. To meet the demands of the mass of the people, to uplift them, and to clear the way for them are the first duties of a revolutionary and people's government.[2]

Apart from the Provisional Government's intention to establish facilities for the education of the adults, it is interesting to note that the more intelligent circles of society tendered their help and took up the matter of providing special schools for that very purpose. So, for instance, in March, 1917, the municipality of Nizhni-Novgorod, one of the important cities of the Volga region with a large working population, assigned for a people's university the sum of $50,000, while private contributions for the same purpose amounted to $400,000. Many other cities show a similar record in adult education.

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