

THE DALTON LABORATORY PLAN

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The Dalton Laboratory Plan by Evelyn Dewey

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EVELYN DEWEY

**THE DALTON
LABORATORY PLAN**

The
DALTON LABORATORY PLAN

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

New Schools for Old

The Regeneration of the Porter
School

WITH PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY

Schools of To-morrow

WITH EMILY CHILD AND BEARDSLEY
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Manual of Tests Used by the Psy-
chological Survey in the Public
Schools of New York City,
Including Social and Physical
Studies of the Children Tested.

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DALTON LABORATORY PLAN

BY
EVELYN DEWEY
AUTHOR OF "NEW SCHOOLS FOR OLD," ETC.



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PREFACE

THIS book is an attempt to answer the questions of teachers and schools about the Dalton Laboratory Plan. The plan is new. It has been in operation in one school for eighteen months and in two others for a little over one year. Therefore, it is not possible to present it as a tested and proved "system," or to say that it must be arranged in such and such a fashion. It is better that it should be so; for education will never be static. It must develop and change with the increase of human knowledge and the changes in society. As long as man develops, his education must develop.

Miss Parkhurst has suggested an arrangement of the school building and program that seems to give children some of the things they need to grow up successful adults in the world of to-day. Though she has a strong personal bias on the curriculum, the plan itself does not dictate what facts or subjects children must study. It promotes a natural and thorough way of studying, a way that is in harmony with our

present knowledge of psychology, and that, therefore, tends to develop intelligent habits. The growth of character is the foundation of education. The Dalton Laboratory Plan is an experiment in an environment that permits character development. The particular school is the inheritance.

The exchange of information between teachers and schools is essential for the improvement of both the environment and the inheritance. Each teacher makes discoveries as she meets her problems. These discoveries need to be shared in order to test and establish them by use. Miss Parkhurst offers a new conception of school organization that has appealed to many schools as a better way. It needs an open-minded reception from all schools and teachers, so that children may have the benefit of whatever it can contribute and so that it may be tested, altered and refined into a more and more useful and growing tool.

The theme of the book follows as closely as possible Miss Parkhurst's conception of the plan. We have been in constant consultation as to facts and have freely exchanged opinions as to theories. We have not always agreed about

the theories. The writer is responsible for the educational generalizations and, therefore, any discrepancies and disagreements should be laid at her door.

Thanks are due to Miss Rosa Bassett, headmistress of the Streatham County Secondary School, London, England, and to her teachers and pupils for the history of the plan in their school, and to Mr. Ernest Jackman for information about the Dalton High School in Massachusetts. Portions of the last chapter first appeared in *The Nation* of May 4th, 1921, and are reprinted with its consent.

E. D.

New York City, December, 1921.