

AMERICANS OF TOMORROW

December 16, 1934

Description: "Problems of Education as it Relates to Life"

Participants: Harry Von Zell, Eleanor Roosevelt

MUSIC -- FADE

MR. VON ZELL

The American Typewriter Industry has the honor of presenting Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt in the sixth of her Sunday evening talks on "Americans of Tomorrow." First, for a moment, let us turn the calendar back exactly fifty-nine years. In an issue of The Nation Magazine, dated December 16th, 1875, we see a Christmas advertisement -- there is a picture of a strange looking machine that had been recently invented, and below it we read -- "The Typewriter. It is the size of a sewing machine and is an ornament to office, study or sitting room. It is worked by keys, similar to a piano, and writes from 30 to 60 words per minute. Young persons acquire its use with wonderful ease and interest. It fascinates them, and there is no device comparable to it to teach children to spell and punctuate. There is, therefore, no more acceptable, instructive or beautiful Christmas present for a boy or girl." (PAUSE) When that advertisement appeared fifty-nine years ago today, typewriters were cumbersome, expensive and hard to operate, but the advertisement was right when it said that there was no device comparable to the typewriter for teaching children to spell and punctuate. Since the introduction of compact, easily-operated portable typewriters a few years ago, the truth of that statement in the original typewriter advertisement has been demonstrated beyond a doubt. In 1928, (?) the Typewriter Educational Research Bureau, supported by the makers of Corona, Remington, Royal and Underwood portable typewriters, asked interested educators to conduct an independent investigation. 400 teachers in elementary classrooms cooperated. Over a period of three years, every piece of written work done by 14,949 students was carefully saved and graded. Some of these children were given access to typewriters and some were not. In the first year, the children who used typewriters gained an average of 7% in general grades over their fellow students who wrote everything by hand. They gained another 7% the following year -- 14% improvement in two years. In the first grade, children who had access to typewriters wrote six times as many words as their fellow students who never used a typewriter -- and here is an important point -- half of those words were written with pencil -- showing that the portable typewriter, by stimulating interest in writing generally, encouraged writing in longhand.

This Christmas, when you are selecting a present for your boy or girl, remember these things. Give your children the advantage of an easier, more successful education. Give them a truly helpful present -- the one practical present that will completely delight them -- a portable typewriter.

MUSIC UP AND FINISH

MR. VON ZELL

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, speaking to you from Washington.

MRS. ROOSEVELT

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. In closing this series of broadcasts this evening, I want to talk about the problems of education as they relate to life.

The average boy and girl at about¹ the age of eighteen ~~either-or² enters college, or if he or she has no taste for further academic work, or the situation is such that they must earn their own living and help their families, they~~ begins on what is likely to be their life's-work.

Let us take the boy or girl who upon finishing high school might continue their education if they so desired, but have found nothing so far which they care to pursue further in their studies. This always

seems to me an unfortunate thing for while in times of stress it may be impossible to find work even if one has extra skill in some particular line, there is no question but that ordinarily children are better fitted for the competition which is life, if they can have a year of specialized education. This is particularly so for one who plans to go into manual work, and I hope that more and more young people will go into manual work of one kind or another. We have made too much of a fetish in this country of what is known as white collar work. It is not paid better in many cases, in fact, rather less well paid than some kinds of manual work and many young people would find the work of a mechanic or a farmer or a skilled workman of some kind far more interesting than the clerical work which they go into because their parents have the idea that white collar work will help their children up in the world. If they try to go into any form of manual work, however, it will pay them well, I think, to take some specialized training for at least a year if possible. Otherwise the young boy or girl will find himself or herself without any special equipment taking some routine job which leads nowhere and which has no special interest for them. In the past many a girl has gone into work simply as a stop gap until she was married, because of economic conditions this period is lengthening out and frequently even after marriage a girl wants to go on with the work she has chosen to do. And so it is well worth while for girls as well as for boys to be careful to find something that they enjoy doing, either with their hands or their heads, and prepare for it. It is wise to consult the best vocational guidance expert to be found and then if possible get a year or two of specialized training. If this is out of the question, and if because of economic necessity they must go to work at whatever kind of work they can find, it will still pay to keep in mind the thing which they want to do. My advice is: Get the best advice you can and try to get some further education and preparation along this line in the hours snatched from regular work.

It is obvious when I say that I believe in a year or two of special preparation that I do not of necessity think that a college education is advisable for everyone. Far from it, I think many a fortunate boy or girl whose parents think that they are giving them the³ best preparation for life by sending them to college, will is⁴ really begivieng⁵ them an opportunity to learn how easy it is to waste one's time. College education should be given to those young people who really have a desire to profit by what is offered them. I do not mean that I think the one thing that college offers in the way of education is provided by lectures and classroom work. I know quite well that much education is given by athletics and outside activities: by the opportunity to meet and know a variety of young people and above all, by the opportunity for contact with professors who know and understand and care for their pupils and whose distinction and ability command respect. Young people must be able to profit by these things however, they must have a genuine desire to educate themselves in every way otherwise four years in college is just an opportunity to learn to be lazy. ~~With a moderate amount of intelligence it is possible to "get by" in examinations as the saying goes, with very little work ordinarily and some intensive tutoring. When this is done little will be accomplished and their equipment for life has certainly been harmed rather than helped for you do not achieve success in life by doing the kind of work that "just gets by."~~

~~A very well known man has said that today is the most adventurous time for young people to start out in life. Simultaneously, I get a letter from a college graduate in one of our southern states saying that as no government program has been developed for youth today and as they can not find jobs, he would like to know what they can do. I agree with the gentleman who says this is an adventurous period but it is also a difficult period and education has fallen short, I think, in certain ways when it comes to preparing young people for actual living.~~

A group of young people that I was with not long ago, complained most bitterly that when they entered the world of business, and most of them had jobs, they found that the ethics which they had been taught were not generally accepted by the people with whom they came in contact. They were forced to believe that they had been fooled. Honesty was the best policy in copy books, but not in real life. That decidedly is a challenge to our civilization, our business, our government, our professors, but the challenge to our educational system lies in the question: "Have we equipped these young people so that they can find the adventures which are the adventures of the future?" Have we given them a wide variety of interest, have we given them the feeling that success is not entirely personal achievement, but may mean entering some community activity which will bring about group achievement instead of the old accepted idea of

personal success? Have we given them the initiative and the courage which will lead them to leave these trodden paths and the usual jobs and find something unusual and new to do? No one can tell them specifically what they are to turn to, but in some way education should give them the quality which makes them able to make a place for themselves in the world. I do not mean that education must make them able to make a success materially, but they should be able to fit themselves in a place in the community in which they live. When education achieves this goal, then and then only can we be content with our system.

MR. VON ZELL

Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt.

MUSIC -- FADE

MR. VON ZELL

Christmas Eve is only a week away -- to those of you listening who have children, let us again point out the value of making your present to them this year a portable typewriter. The help it will give in school -- the improvement it will make in report cards -- are reasons enough in themselves -- but the larger return is in the happier life -- the more successful life -- that a better education will give.

If you have missed any of Mrs. Roosevelt's broadcasts, write for the 32-page gift edition of "Helping Your Child to Success" by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. Address a penny post card to the Typewriter Program in care of the station to which you are listening. Just ask for a free copy of Mrs. Roosevelt's articles "Helping Your Child to Success." (PAUSE) William Daly and his string orchestra will continue the program with two songs from "The Cat and the Fiddle" by Jerome Kern -- "Try to Forget" and "The Night Was Made For Love."

CAT AND THE FIDDLE

ORCHESTRA

MR. VON ZELL

Tomorrow, typewriter dealers and department stores in your city will have a special display of portable typewriters for Christmas gifts. The makers of Corona, Remington, Royal and Underwood portable typewriters invite you to this special showing tomorrow morning to select the portable typewriter you prefer and to find how inexpensive are the prices and how easy the payments needed to give your boy or your girl the finest of all Christmas gifts -- a portable typewriter. (PAUSE) In closing this series, the American Typewriter Industry wishes to express its great appreciation to Mrs. Roosevelt for her fine talks on "Americans of Tomorrow" which it has been our privilege to bring to you each Sunday evening.

THEME

ORCHESTRA

Transcribed by: Nicole Mortland

Proofread by: Lee Febos, Matthew Girardi, Ikerighi David and Olivia Kinhan

Transcribed from a script held in the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

¹ This is a handwritten interlineation.

² This is a handwritten interlineation.

³ This is a handwritten interlineation.

⁴ This is a handwritten interlineation.

⁵ "g" is a handwritten interlineation.