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[Review of the children's reading primer Buck up, by Peter Thomas Pienaar]

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the student whose education has been unsuccessful . . . The students who drop out with passing grades . . . offer the most direct challenge to our educational system, since they are young men and women who have demonstrated the capacity to continue at university and choose voluntarily not to do so. Their percentage in the total number of dropouts increases with each year of college.'

The section of the Muscatine Report on the improvement of university and college teaching has a message for institutions of higher learning in South Africa. In commenting on the lecture method, Dr. Harold Taylor stated the case for the student as his own teacher in the following letter:

'There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the lecture as a mode of communication, provided it is given to those who want to hear it by people who have something fresh and original to say on a subject of interest to the listener. But it has to be used sparingly and for particular reasons. It should be a means of starting up some self-generating thought in the student, to start him thinking, imagining and questioning. . . . Discussion and independent inquiry are the natural and most effective ways to learn . . . The real problem is to teach students how to teach each other, from books, from experience, from their teachers, from anything . . .'

The universities, it is claimed, ignore the potential for undergraduate instruction which lies not only in the graduate student-body, but among the undergraduates themselves. The *teaching* programme should be turned around and considered a *learning* programme by the students with such help as lecturing staff and other students are able to give. The use of students as teaching assistants is also justified for other reasons: it may provide the necessary financial support which some students need, it is one of the best ways of training college teachers, and above all it is an excellent means for educating the student-teacher himself.

'To teach your speciality to younger students provides excellent occasion for clarifying your own ideas, plugging gaps in your knowledge, re-examining the basuc assumptions and the relevance of your discipline.'

Smaller classes have to be encouraged, and in these seminars or tutorials, the kind of teaching to be encouraged should be problem-orientated. The need for formal lecturing could be reduced in many of our college courses if the student's "course load" were reduced (but not the amount of work he has to do), that is, if the number of subjects was restricted so that more 'in-depth' study could be undertaken. Research projects, especially field work, needs to be encouraged at student level.

The Committee, in discussing the functions of the professional staff at universities and colleges, emphasizes the need to encourage more research. Teaching and research are not mutually exclusive.

"Teaching and research can be made to nourish each other better. Our ideal here is a kind of teaching suffused with the excitement and authority of research, and a kind of research responsive to the humane requirements of teaching. Our ideal professor is like Chaucer's clerk: 'gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.' " p.6.

The dichotomy between teaching and research is unnecessary. The classroom is but one medium for teaching and its efficacy is debatable. Research, whether in a laboratory or in the field, is another medium for teaching.

A.N.B.

'Tales From The Game Reserve — Reading For Fun' written by, and obtainable from:—

Mrs. K. F Argyle,
'Blue Acres',
Chester Road,
Bryanston, Transvaal.
Telephone enquiries:— 706-2320.
Price R1.50 net.

Whilst this book is designed to cater for 'young children who are good readers and older children who are not able to read at their age level and are having remedial tuition', I consider that it would be especially useful for remedial teachers coping with the latter type of child. I would particularly recommend it as a supplementary reader.

A developmental reading primer, with the unusual title of 'Buck up' written by,, and obtainable from:

Mr. P. T. Pienaar,
P.O. Box 18,
Grahamstown,

at the modest cost of 85 cents.

The reader is, in fact, a collection of short passages, and the author states that 'the passages have a readability level of 9.0 to 10.0, probably the lowest level at which it is possible to write stories which will support the sort of searching comprehension and vocabulary extension questions, which are a feature of any sound developmental reading programme.' The stories have an interest level of 9.0 to 13.0, and appeal to both boys and girls in that age range. However (the author goes on to state), from our experience in pilot classes in which the programme has been tried, the stories seem to have most appeal for children whose first language is English in Standards 3 and 4.'

This book is designed for teachers who wish to improve and extend both vocabulary and comprehension. I would recommend every teacher of English at the Senior Primary level to use this book for reference and class use.