

Education criticism has long history

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read they are only learning a set of sounds, and the oftener those sounds are repeated the more familiar they become. And when the children are permitted to read aloud they see the words written and hear themselves pronounce them . . ."

Textbooks presented a problem in that there were not enough to go around. Woodburn wrote that "each pupil brought what he happened to have." In one of his schools there were six different

arithmetics at one time. Commented the teacher, "One boy had old *Gough*, an old Irish book distinguished for its long and difficult questions. This was the first arithmetic I ever studied myself when I was schoolboy." Woodburn felt the extra time it took to help that one scholar with the book deprived others.

Unlike some adults in the community who were prejudiced against females attending the school he taught, Woodburn encouraged the girls. He referred to them as ladies and said, "You have

had some opposition to contend with."

As for Woodburn's teaching day, it began at 8 o'clock and ended at 5, the hours broken up with 15-minute recesses at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. and an hour and half for lunch. Too, there was sometimes a problem with the township trustees, who had the authority to hire and fire teachers. Commented Woodburn, "These were always wishing to give special direction to the teacher . . . telling the teacher how this and that should be done. Those knowing the least about the management of schools are always the most offi-

clous."

In time Woodburn held the position of school examiner, the equivalent of superintendent, a responsibility that sometimes caused him to feel discouraged. During that time he wrote: "We have many miserably deficient teachers. During the past two years I have examined and given certificates to about 75 teachers in this county, and I have had the opportunity of knowing something about the state of education in our county, and it is distressingly alarming the amount of ignorance that exists in some portions of our own county."