

EDUCATION

It's Patriotic To Teach

➤ MANY PATRIOTIC school teachers are becoming restless and dissatisfied with their jobs, and looking for more "constructive" war work. But in the judgment of many national leaders, those who are doing a good job of teaching youth are as important to the nation as are the soldiers fighting in the front lines.

In Great Britain this lesson was learned the hard way. Only after an alarming increase in juvenile delinquency, together with a general decline in adolescent morale, did leaders realize the harm done by weakening their educational and recreational institutions.

The morale of a school-age child depends almost entirely on the example set for him every day by those adults closest to him—his parents and his teachers. War has a particularly destructive effect on the teen-age child, but there are many ways in which a sane, well-balanced teacher can counteract this.

The idealistic adolescent is patriotic by nature. He doesn't need to have patriotism forced on him. In particular, he is keenly sensitive to the hypocrisy

of such statements as, "It is your patriotic duty to study hard," or "Mow the lawn" or whatever else we happen to want done.

He wants a real explanation of war—what caused it, what part he can take in it, what hope there is in working toward the abolishment of future wars. Otherwise he will naturally conclude that mass killing and cynical disregard of human suffering is the natural way of life.

A confused, defeatist teacher can do irreparable damage to the groping, hopeful adolescent. An attitude of "We'll always have war, so long as we have human nature" can destroy a child's faith in life.

He wants to hear what is being done to rebuild a better society, in which war will be unnecessary because everybody has his human share of the world's goods. He wants to hear about the magnificent dream of the future which has enabled the ordinary people of China and Russia, for instance, to fight almost single-handed against overwhelming odds.

Science News Letter, September 5, 1942

NUTRITION

No Bananas for Babies

➤ BANANAS have become such a staple article of the modern infant's diet that many a young mother may now be running from market to market looking for bananas for baby's supper. The supply of this tropical fruit has grown extremely short since war-caused shipping difficulties are cutting down the imports from Central America.

If bananas were really essential in a baby's diet, however, the mothers themselves would probably not be here worrying over the problem. It is less than a generation since bananas became generally used for babies and many a grandmother has been horrified to see her precious grandchild fed bananas night after night.

Bananas are a nourishing food. They supply minerals and vitamins, carbohydrates and proteins, and a fully ripe banana, well mashed or sieved, can be digested easily by quite young babies.

The nourishment of bananas can be supplied from other foods. If mother is uncertain just how to change baby's

diet, she should consult her doctor or the baby's. He will probably tell her to give the baby strained apple, strained apricot, strained pear and perhaps other strained fruits, to supply the vitamins and minerals, and to increase the amount of cereal to make up for the carbohydrate, protein and calories of the banana. How much of the other foods to add in place of bananas depends on the baby's age and condition, and on this also the doctor should be consulted.

Of course, baby himself may object to another food in place of the banana which he has grown to like. The trick is not to force him to take the new food. Try him first on just a little. If he shuts his mouth tight after one taste and shakes or turns his head, wait until the next meal before trying the new food again. With a little patience he can be taught to like the new foods. Mother must not get excited over his refusal, or her tense, uneasy attitude will add to baby's alarm at meeting a new taste.

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Bananas, one of the world's oldest cultivated crops, were mentioned in Chinese writings of more than 3,000 years ago.

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