An analysis of failures in the Rome High School, Rome Georgia, for a period of five years, 1941-1976

James William Witherspoon
Atlanta University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations
Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in ETD Collection for AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. For more information, please contact cwiseman@auctr.edu.
AN ANALYSIS OF FAILURES IN THE ROME HIGH SCHOOL, ROME GEORGIA, FOR A
PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS, 1941 TO 1946

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY
JAMES WILLIAM WITHERSPOON

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
AUGUST, 1952
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter | Page
--- | ---
I. INTRODUCTION | 1
   The Rationale of the Problem | 1
   Statement of the Problem | 1
   Purpose of the Study | 2
   The Situation | 2
   The Procedure | 4
      Data Gathering Instruments | 4
      Collection of Data | 4
      Computations | 4
      Analysis and Interpretation | 4
      Summary of Related Literature | 5
II. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA | 18
   Introductory Statement | 18
   Enrollment by Grade and Sex | 18
   The 1941-1942- and 1942-1943 Freshmen Classes
      From Matriculation to Graduation | 22
   Letter Grades and Percentages by Grade and Sex | 23
   Scholastic Achievement | 25
   Failures and Withdrawals | 26
   Failures in Course Areas | 28
   Sex and Ages of the Failing and Passing Students | 31
III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS | 34
   Introductory Statement | 34
   Summary of Findings | 36
   Conclusions | 38
   Implications | 38
BIBLIOGRAPHY | 41
LIST OF TABLES

Table                  Page
1. Enrollment of Freshmen Classes from 1911-1912 Through 1915-1916, By Sex ........................................ 19
2. Enrollment of the Sophomore Classes From 1912-1913 Through 1915-1916, By Sex ........................................ 20
3. Enrollment of the Junior Classes from 1913-1914 Through 1915-1916, by Sex ........................................ 21
4. The Senior Classes of 1914-1915 and 1915-1916 Who Enrolled as Freshmen 1911-1912 and 1912-1913 .................... 21
5. The 1911-1912 and 1912-1913 Freshmen Classes From Matriculation in High School to Graduation With the Number of Failures Who Repeated and Entered College ...... 22
6. Total Enrollment of All Freshmen Classes During the Five-Year Period and the Decrease for Each Class as it Moved Through the Senior Year ........................................ 23
7. Percentage of Each Letter Grade Received by all Pupils and By Sex for the Five Years, 1911-1912 Through 1915-1916 ... 24
8. Scholastic Achievement of the 1911-1912 Freshmen Class as Reflected in Numerical Values of Teacher Marks ................ 25
9. Average Achievement of all Freshmen and By Sex for the Five-Year Period, 1911-1912 Through 1915-1916 .................. 26
10. Failures and Withdrawals as Reflected in the Decrease on Enrollment Between the Freshmen and Sophomore Classes ...... 27
11. Failure Percentages of Boys and Girls in the Several Courses for Five Years ............................................ 28
12. Per Cent of Students Failing by Areas for the Five-Year Period 1911-1912 Through 1915-1916 .............................. 29
13. Distribution of Failures According to Number of Courses Failed During the Five Year ........................................ 30
14. Distribution of Failing and Passing Students by Age and Sex ... 31
15. Statistical Data Concerning Ages of Students .................. 32
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Rationale of the Problem.— The role of the school in American democracy is to prepare the individual for cooperative living. By this means it strives to perpetuate the principles upon which the Republic was founded. The idea of universal education and the concept of democracy are mutually inclusive. But the establishment of schools for all the people is not the limit of the educational endeavor. More important is the question of adjustment and normal development which insure successful completion of definite courses of study.

The degree to which students master the fundamental processes, develop skills, and acquire acceptable behavior patterns, carries value implications for the effective educational procedure. Every pupil failure hinders the attainment of those goals which are the objectives of education. This fact has increased the educator's concern in the problem of failure, and experiments are being made and techniques devised for the elimination of the cause of this problem. In this direction, especially helpful should be an impartial survey in which the percentage of failures may be ascertained, and their relation to pupil drop-outs noted. These factors define the motivation for making this study.

Statement of the Problem.— This study is concerned with an analysis of failures on the high school level. Special attention is given to a comparison of failures as they are related to course areas, sex and chronological age, to withdrawals, and to the number of failing students who
later graduated and entered college. Specifically, it involves the question: In the problem of failure is there sustained variance (1) in subject areas, and (2) due to difference in age and sex, and does it relate itself consistently to pupil mortality as expressed in withdrawals?

**Purpose of the Study.**—The purpose of this study is to validate or invalidate the hypothesis that sex and age are definite factors in pupil performance; that in certain courses, difference in achievement is due to sex as a constant factor; and that between failure and withdrawal there is a high positive correlation. It also attempts to contribute to educational progress by presenting observations of successful practices by many persons in combatting failures through painstaking and rewarding experiments.

The following questions were under consideration:

1. What was the percent of failures during the five years, and how was it reflected in the total enrollment of the school?
2. What was the variance in failures in relation to course areas?
3. How did the failures compare according to age?
4. What was the comparison of failures according to sex?
5. What was the correlation between failures and withdrawals?
6. What percentage of the failed pupils eventually graduated, and how many of the entered college?

**The Situation.**—The study involves 1408 pupils from grades 8 to 11, inclusive, in the Rome High School, Rome, Georgia. The investigation was begun with the freshmen class of 1941-42, and follows it through 1945-46. It included not only the seniors who graduated after four years, but those who repeated and graduated, or failed the following year. Each succeeding
freshman class during the five-year period was studied from the time the pupils entered until the end of the 1945-46 term.

There were 306 failures, involving 236 pupils, of which 212 were in two or more courses. No student was promoted who failed in more than one course. It was revealed that the school did not operate on the semester system. However, the monthly grades on the cumulative records indicated whether the failure occurred the early or latter part of the term. There are five course areas: Science, Mathematics, Language, Social Science, and Spelling. The school uses letter symbols in recording achievement—five-point marking system. It is a modification of the percentage system, in that, although the teacher records evaluations in figures on the cumulative records, the report cards show only the alphabet which corresponds to each valuation. The interval between each two points is designated by a letter of the alphabet, A, B, C, D, F. A signifies Excellent, or 93-100; B signifies Good, or 85-92; C signifies Fair, or 77-84; D signifies Poor, or 70-76; F signifies Failure, below 69. In the pupil's total record, results from recitations and examinations are supplemented by data reflecting personality adjustment; but grading is confined to the more tangible outcomes of instruction, such as the mastery of factual material.

A pupil failing in only one subject is promoted to the next grade, but the work of that subject must be made up before graduation. Important among the regulations issued by the Board of Education is the following statement:

A pupil failing in only one subject may be promoted to the next higher class, provided he takes the subject and passes it the following year .... Pupils are promoted by subjects and not
by grades. 1

The Procedure.-- This is primarily an analytical study. The Normative-Survey Method was used by which deductions were made and the conclusions drawn on the basis of quantitative evidence. In this study the writer followed the scientific method of problem solving. The steps were as follows:

1. Data Gathering Instruments.-- Schedules were made for the collection of documentary data. On these were provided spaces for the names and grades of pupils enrolled over a period of five years. The data included courses of study, time of matriculation, failure, promotion, age and sex, the failed pupils who later graduated, and those who entered college.

2. Collection of Data.-- In the collection of data, identified in the preceding paragraph, the scholastic status of each student was recorded from the cumulative records, with special notations on passing, failing, and withdrawing.

3. Computations.-- Computations were initiated which served as the basis for comparison in this study. These involved enumeration of data, a study of failures in each course area to determine relationship between pupil performance in the several subjects, drop-outs and their correlation with failure. The mean, median and standard deviation were the statistical measures used. The chronological age was computed from the nearest birthday.

4. Analysis and Interpretation.-- It was easy to interpret much of

the data through simple percentage presentation. However, when necessary
to clarity, measures of central tendency and variability were employed. In
order to discover existing relationships between the two sets of data it
was necessary to use the correlation ratio. Most of the data, belonging
to dichotomous distributions and of discrete categories, made it advisable
to use the phi coefficient, from which the corresponding Pearson's "r" was
estimated. In many cases it was necessary to apply the "t" test of signifi-
cance to ascertain the reliability of detected relationship.

Summary of Related Literature.—A survey of related literature reveals
that there is a general awareness of the seriousness of the failure problem.
The recent rapid influx into our secondary schools of unprecedented propor-
tions has accelerated both failures and withdrawals, and has precipitated
the need for scientific investigation. A study was made by Edmonson,
Roemer, and Bacon 1 on the high school enrollment for the forty-six years
following 1890. Their investigation disclosed a tremendous change in the
complexion of our high school population. In 1890 the 203,000 pupils
enrolled in public schools were a rather homogeneous group. Preparing for
service in the church and commonwealth, the enrollment was restricted in
range of pupil abilities, needs, and interests.

Enrollment in secondary schools today has increased to almost nineteen
times that of 1890, with an estimated six out of every seven who will never
enter college. The investigators attribute this increase, among other

1 J. B. Edmonson, Joseph Roemer, and Francis L. Bacon, The
things, to "the decrease in child labor, and the compulsory school attendance laws." The great influx of pupils has brought to our schools a heterogeneous personnel and has introduced problems affecting success and failure.

As further evidence of current thinking on this problem, Douglas expressed the opinion that psychiatrists recognize the blocking of voluntary action as one of the conditions resulting in emotional upsets. He states that failure in school blocks the learning process. "Occasional failure is disturbing. Frequent failure is tragic. Repeated failure does irreparable damage to the child's personality."

Nelson made a study in an attempt to discover the causes of failure by pupils who had the capacity but made no satisfactory academic achievement. Analysis was made on status of parents' education, economic background, intellectual stimulus, stability of family life, and guidance facilities. She made the following comment:

The fact that academic failure is no longer restricted to those of low intellectual ability is of growing concern. Frequently pupils of high intelligence fail to meet the established academic standards. In addition, it is not uncommon for pupils of good records to drop out of school altogether.

Stinebaugh, in discussing the factors for success in high school,


2 Mary-Lois Nelson, "Why Capable Pupils Fail," The Nation's Schools (February, 1944), 44-46.

regards progress as the most important. He expressed it thus:

A final factor in determining whether the pupil will remain in school is the pupil's own satisfaction of accomplishment. Just as his intention and a definite goal are very significant factors in starting a successful school career, so the recognition of progress toward the realization of that goal is a significant influence. There is no more important consideration for every high school age and for society than his completion of a successful high school career.

Among the studies on failure, many have offered validated findings on contributing factors, and of its adverse effects on boys and girls in learning situations. In addition to those previously indicated in this report, is a contribution by Meek on the diverse effects of success and failure, an experiment by Stokes on frustration and regression, and a study of individualism by Gates.

In speaking of continued failure and long-time frustration, Gates reported an investigation of basic skills involving six classes of children in the Spreyer Experimental School of New York City. As a result of persisting difficulty and failure, these children revealed various forms of unwholesome adjustment. The introduction of positive rather than negative methods in the program of the school resulted in a solution of the problem. He emphasized motivation as a factor in creating self-esteem, aspiration,

---


and success, which was observed in the results of the experiment. The study involved tests from the XIII, X and X year levels of Form L of the Revised Stanford-Binet Scale administered upon nine-year old boys. After the administration of the test, the subjects participated in a game in which half the group succeeded and the other half failed. Immediately afterward they were given tests in Form M of the Intelligence Scale corresponding to the ones previously taken from Form L. The report on that experiment is given in the following words:

The results showed that success led to increased scores and that failure served as a depressant. Furthermore, success led to an increase in average ratings given the subjects by the experimenter and observers in willingness, self-confidence, and attention, while failure resulted in a decrease in the ratings on these traits. Failure also was reflected in increasing tension and a desire to escape from the situation.

Expressing a need for a recognition in our schools of individual differences and improvement in curriculum content, Buckley cited an experiment with the problem of failures and repeaters, begun in 1928 by the elementary teachers of Cleveland, Ohio. Observing that the leading states require pupils to remain in school until they are 16 or 18 years old, he suggests that attention now be turned to the 90 per cent who were formerly screened out. "Lowering the passing grade to 75, or even to 50, was of little value to these children as long as the content, method and time schedule remained uniform for all." He thinks that for a large number of these helpless children, failure is constant and inevitable. He relates failure to a lack of confidence, and states that "confidence cannot be

---

1 H. M. Buckley, "Combatting the Problem of Failure," The Nation's Schools, XXX (October, 1943),
developed through a series of failures frowned upon by parents and teachers alike ... Even before norms, quartiles, difference of averages and coefficient correlation were admitted to educational circles, competent teachers knew that six years by the calendar is not synonymous to six years mentally and socially. Rates of progress vary."

Rivlin,¹ charging the school with the responsibility of pupil failures, points to the lack of provision for individual differences. A summary of his statement follows:

For many secondary school students, the major provision for individual differences is retardation—and then elimination. Students fail courses and repeat them until they decide, or are told, to drop out. The year or two or three which these students spend in secondary school contribute little to enrich their adolescent years more adequately for adult life. On the other hand, the discouragement of repeated failure, the demoralizing experience of working without interest and without real effort, these are heavy prices for the school’s failure to meet the needs of the slow learner.

Discussing the school’s share in pupil failure, Finch ² challenges teachers to study the cause and origin of the difficulties observed in the pupil’s own will helpfully aroused is much more effective than either diagnostic skill or superior teaching. He posed the question: "Are the undesirable responses in so many of our young people quite often the result of our own unwise procedure, and if so, what can be done about it?" He stated that the conscientious teacher does not pass the buck when pupils

do not make the grade, but with purposeful activity, surplants the failure complex with success and confidence. Once assured they can succeed, girls and boys will become happy, trustful pupils. He further stated:

Failure of the pupils in school is really the failure of the system. Not all teachers will agree with this for there is good evidence that some instructors count the failures in their classes as just another evidence of their own high standards.

Relative to the effects of failure on withdrawals there is still some controversy. There are those who take the position that there is little difference between the correlation of failing pupils who drop out of school with those who drop out with good grades. Douglas recognized this conflict of opinion, and observed that many hold the view that failure in high school results in elimination from high school. He discussed the assumption of O'Brien whose views are exactly the opposite. According to Douglas, much thought has been given and importance attached to O'Brien's recent study on the relationship between failures and withdrawals, Douglas referred to this study in the following statement:

Studying the school records of 6,141 pupils belonging to eight different high schools in New York and New Jersey, he found the situation to be exactly opposite the one we should expect. His results showed that many students who did not fail nevertheless dropped out of school before the end of the freshmen year. On the other hand, more than fifty per cent of those students who failed persisted in school until the end of the second year. More than half of the students who did graduate failed one or more times.

Other points brought out were:

1. The percentage of graduates and non-graduates that failed were almost identical.

---

2. The time extension for completing the high school course was not in proportion to the failures.

3. The number of drop-outs did not tend to increase as the number of failure per pupil increased.

4. Failure is not a prime cause of dropping out for most of the non-graduates.

Douglas, noting the conflicting positions held by so many, finds it difficult to resolve the contradiction. He concluded:

Half the group of students who left school had passing marks in all subjects. Failure in two or more subjects rarely appeared among students who remained in school. It is difficult to resolve the contradiction. It is altogether likely that failure on the part of pupils who enter high school at the normal chronological age, and who come from the upper economic and social classes, might have little to do with elimination. Failure would in all probability be conducive to elimination for those pupils who enter high school two or more years late, who find it difficult to carry the work... The whole question should receive further investigation. Such an investigation should take in account the subjects in which failures occur, and the well-established causes of elimination.

Hoodé \(^1\) associates withdrawals both with failure and intelligence. After a study on withdrawals in which the factors of failure and intelligence were considered. He found that there is "a very definite positive correlation between low Intelligence Quotients and withdrawals ... While many factors entered into the situation a large percentage of the withdrawals had failed in one or more subjects."

Regarding failure and withdrawal, Jordan \(^2\) reported the results of a study, involving 30,000 pupils and 1,500 teachers. She reported the


\(^2\) A. M. Jordan, Educational Psychology (New York, 1912), pp. 380-82.
results of a study, involving 30,000 pupils and 1,500 teachers. She reported the following results:

There is a striking positive correlation between a high percentage of failures and a high percentage of withdrawals. Thus in one school 55.6 per cent of the pupils in agriculture either failed or withdrew, while several other schools had less than 1 per cent of failure or withdrawal.

Faced with the seriousness of the failing problem, an experiment was conducted in 1951 by Alexander in the High School at Amarilla, Texas. She speaks of it as a school which, with a few exceptions, was "a sort of repository for failures and discipline problems." She concluded from her experiences with these young people that failure undermines personality. In the following summary she gives her findings:

Nothing is more discouraging than failure, particularly to the teen age boy or girl who is at that difficult stage of growing up at which group approval is all important. For him failure of any kind seems appallingly final. He may realize that it is his own fault, and admit it, but the stigma remains and he reacts in his own individual manner.

Observing that students with Intelligent Quotient ratings of superior had failed as many as three out of four subjects during the term, remedial techniques were immediately instituted. Realizing the effect of failure on the whole school, many new approaches were introduced, one of which was the removal of antagonism toward doing the required thing—one phase of the psychology of failure.

On the matter of sex differences, as it relates to intelligence and general educational achievement, there have been expressed many widely

divergent views. While there are those who have been inclined to give to one sex or the other superior status, others who report reliable investigations, find no constant, significant differences. Gates \(^1\) expresses the view that "the apparent differences between the intelligence and the educational performance of girls and boys may be due to the difference in the age of maturity of the two sexes." He refers to the report of an investigator who states that "girls are more advanced than boys in skeletal development at birth. They are about one year ahead of boys at the age of entering elementary school and about two years ahead at the age of entering high school."

Feusch \(^2\) notes the grades of girls in high school as compared with boys and states that in spite of the efforts of the schools to develop each individual for self-realization and social usefulness, "there still remain two groups—the boys and the girls—who apparently do not quite fit the same mold." Pointing out the difference in marks received by boys and girls, he was impressed with what he thinks is a subjective attitude in grading in favor of girls. He finds no difference in their ability.

Davis \(^3\) takes the position that there is no significant difference

---

between the intelligence and educational achievement of the two sexes.

In a discussion of sex differences, Jordan refers to Terman's report which states that, up to the age of 11, girls surpassed boys by three Intelligence Quotient points, but after that age there was no measurable difference between them. Jordan takes the position that whatever differences may be found between boys and girls in matters of intelligence and achievement, may well be attributed to factors other than sex. His point of view on this point is expressed in these words:

Since the advent of intelligence tests thousands of boys and girls have been measured by these instruments. In general, the records have shown almost no difference between them. So small have the differences appeared between the two sexes that no standard test uses two sets of norms at any age, or for any grade.

Conklin, taking a somewhat similar position, states:

Where comparisons are made in terms of one item or another in the test batteries used, it has not been infrequently revealed that in certain functions the boys tested surpassed the girls to a significant degree, and that in other functions the girls showed averages sufficiently higher to be statistically reliable. But the differences are not yet established in a manner such that they are of any great practical significance. For research purposes they must be used, but for practical purposes in working with adolescents one must know in each special case what the individual's relative ability may be and not trust to inference from the sex of individual.

Freeman tells of an investigation involving 3,400 boys and girls in

---


which the Dearborn Group Tests were used. He found the average scores of the girls to be somewhat superior to the boys between the ages of eight and sixteen, although the difference at sixteen was only one point. However, from the final analysis of the results, he concluded that there are no consistent difference found between the sexes. He says:

The medians for the two sexes are so nearly alike that at any age either median could be used to represent either sex, and little injustice would be done, except possibly in the fifteenth year ... There are no significant differences between the sexes in mentality. This is true of the individual scales and of the group scales, some of which are of the non-verbal performance type. Whatever minor differences might have been shown are of little importance when compared with differences between persons of the same sex ... Concerning intellectual traits themselves, the individual differences within each sex are so enormously greater than those between the sexes that so far as intellectual abilities go, no distinction on the basis of sex alone is possible.

The observations of Anastasi¹ are among those who accord girls superior ability for certain subjects, in particular, and better educational performance in general. With reference to scholastic achievement, she has this to say:

On the whole girls excel in general scholastic achievement, both as revealed by achievement test records and by school grades. Performance on the separate parts of standardized achievement tests, however, shows a hierarchy of abilities in different school subjects, which corresponds closely to that found with tests of intelligence and special aptitudes. In an investigation on 300 school children with the Stanford Achievement tests, no sex difference was found in total achievement quotient. But an analysis of the scores indicated a definite superiority of girls in reading, language usage, and dictation, and of the boys in arithmetic, nature study, and history. In general, according to extensive school surveys, girls obtain higher achievement in subjects requiring verbal ability or memory. Boys excel in those subjects which call into play numerical or spatial

spatial aptitudes, as well as certain "information" subjects as history, geography, and general science.

She summarizes as follows:

Various explanations have been offered for the greater scholastic success of girls. Among the major factors may be mentioned girls' demonstrated ability as it relates to linguistic aptitude which probably plays an important part in nearly every school subject.

Gates 1 expresses a divergent point of view. He concedes that it is necessary to consider the difference in male and female personalities as a whole, and its possible influence on mental and temperamental development; but he states that in general intelligence sex differences are less conspicuous at all stages of growth. He further explains:

In more specific mental abilities—perception, memory, reason, and the like, the differences between the sexes, where they exist at all, are so slight and unobtrusive as to appear dwarfed and in comparison with the immensity of the variation within either sex. In special aptitudes for various types of school work, sex differences appear to be slight. According to a test administered to 5,000 children in 19 different schools, with approximately 750 representatives of each sex, on the whole, differences are essentially negligible.

Gates makes the observation that, according to reliable investigators, there is no significant differences between the sexes which carry educational significance.

The many views expressed with reference to the differences between the sexes all seem to agree to some extent that age does have something to do with the high school pupil's success. The student who enters high school during early adolescence has a decided advantage over the one who waits two or three years longer.

---

Of the numerous roles which the classroom teacher plays, according to Feusch, that of dispenser of success or failure is undoubtedly the most impressive and worrisome to the pupil, and one of the most crucial for personal and social adjustment. Much progress will have been made, "when the true failure ratio reaches unity ...."

---

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introductory Statement.—This chapter is devoted to a presentation and analysis of the data involved in this study. It begins with the freshman class of 1911-12, which provides a basis for the interpretation of all factors to be considered, with special reference to failures, withdrawals, and repeaters. From the pupils of this class, scheduled to graduate four years later, are presented the records of those who failed, withdrew, reentered, repeated courses, and those whose graduation was retarded one year. The record of the 1912-13 freshman class is a similar presentation with the exception of the repeaters.

Enrollment by Grade and Sex.—An examination of the records reveals that the largest freshmen enrollments were the first and last years of this study. A record of the freshmen classes from 1911 through the school term 1914-15 indicates a constant decrease in the number of persons matriculating. This decrease in freshmen enrollment discloses that fluctuation in the registration of girls was greater than that of boys. It may be observed that for the two years following 1911 was a decrease of 29 per cent in the enrollment of boys, there was no appreciable drop in the registration of freshmen girls during that period. However, by the school term 1914-15, the boys had almost regained their loss, while the girls had dropped 56 per cent from the enrollment of 1911-12. A detailed presentation of this data are shown in Table 1.

In the sophomore classes, which suffered a loss of 50 per cent in the
TABLE 1

ENROLLMENT OF FRESHMEN CLASSES FROM 1913-1915 THROUGH 1915-1916, BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-18</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 229 179 408*

*Total number of persons enrolling for five years.

The enrollment of girls in four years, the enrollment of boys increased. With regard to the decrease in the sophomore enrollment of girls, it should be noted that the school term 1914-15, when there was the largest number of sophomore girls enrolled during the entire period included in this study, was an exception to the general pattern. The relative decreases in the sophomore enrollment of boys and girls are reflected in the data presented in Table 2. The comparative stability of the enrollment of boys during the sophomore and junior years is apparently due to the fact that during their freshmen year they had lost a larger percentage of their enrollment than the girls—71 per cent as compared to 50 per cent for the girls.

The freshmen class which began with 89 pupils in 1913 had only 45 enrolled as sophomores the following year, and the freshmen class of 1914-15 had a corresponding decrease—the loss of 35 pupils, or 45 per cent. In
TABLE 2

ENROLLMENT OF THE SOPHOMORE CLASSES FROM 1912-1913 THROUGH 1915-1916, BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1912-13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>114</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
<td><strong>181</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

these classes is represented the largest decrease from the freshman to the sophomore years of all classes during the five-year period.

Table 3 shows the enrollment of the junior classes for three years— from 1913 to 1916, inclusive. In comparing these enrollments with those of the sophomore classes, we observe that the percentage of drop-outs decreased as the pupils advanced in high school. The decreases from the freshmen to the sophomore years for the class of 1911 were 41 per cent for the girls and 61 per cent for the boys, a decrease of 50 per cent in the total enrollment.

From the sophomore to the junior years, the decreases were 40 per cent for the boys and 17 per cent for the girls—a total decrease of 25 per cent. In the sophomore class of 1914-15 the enrollment for girls was 37, for boys 16. This class in the junior year had an enrollment of 54, 43 girls and 11 boys. This was an increase in enrollment of 1 over the previous year. The increase in the enrollment of 6 for girls was the result of transfer students and repeaters.
TABLE 3
ENROLLMENT OF THE JUNIOR CLASSES FROM 1943-1944 THROUGH 1945-1946, BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the period of this study there was a decrease from 181 to 115 from the sophomore to the junior classes, representing a loss between these two classes of 36 per cent. Fifty-seven per cent of these were boys and 24 per cent were girls. The enrollment of the sophomore class of 1944-45 had an increase of 2 per cent when they became juniors the following year.

The only loss between the junior and senior years was one girl from the 1944-45 class, and a loss of seven from the class of 1943-44. The data in Table 4 may be compared with Table 1 to get an idea of the decrease

TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in the enrollments of the 1941-42 and 1942-43 freshmen classes.

The 1941-1942 and 1942-1943 Freshmen Classes From Matriculation to Graduation.— Table 5 is a presentation of the records of enrollment for the 1941-42 and 1942-43 freshmen classes, with special reference to losses incurred from the period of matriculation in high school until the year of graduation. Indicated here is how these losses compared in the two classes, and what periods they occurred.

**TABLE 5**

The 1941-1942 and 1942-1943 freshmen classes from matriculation in high school to graduation with the number of failures who repeated and entered college

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Fresh Year</th>
<th>Soph Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Failures Who Rep.</th>
<th>Failures Who Grad</th>
<th>Failures Who Ent. Coll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 5, the combined enrollment of the two freshmen classes were 166. Of that number 89 were enrolled in the 1941-42 freshmen class and 77 in the freshmen class of the following year. From the data presented it is easy to observe what each class lost from the freshmen period to the year of graduation. During the five-year period, from the 166 students enrolled as freshmen, there was a total loss of 111 pupils, or 66 per cent. Between matriculation and graduation the enrollment of
girls had decreased 62, or 70 per cent, and the boys 59, or 64 per cent.

Table 6 presents a composite picture of all classes for the five-year period, 1911-12 through 1915-16.

### TABLE 6

**TOTAL ENROLLMENT OF ALL FRESHMEN CLASSES DURING THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD AND THE DECREASE FOR EACH CLASS AS IT MOVED THROUGH THE SENIOR YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASSES</th>
<th>FRESHMEN</th>
<th>SOPHOMORE</th>
<th>JUNIOR</th>
<th>SENIOR</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>G B T</td>
<td>G B T</td>
<td>G B T</td>
<td>G B T</td>
<td>G B T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-12</td>
<td>51 38 89</td>
<td>30 15 45</td>
<td>25  9 34</td>
<td>18  9 27</td>
<td>6  1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912-13</td>
<td>50 27 77</td>
<td>28 14 42</td>
<td>19  8 27</td>
<td>20  8 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>39 26 65</td>
<td>37 16 53</td>
<td>13  11 54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-15</td>
<td>22 35 58</td>
<td>19 22 41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>67 52 119</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>229 179 408</td>
<td>111 67 181</td>
<td>87 28 115</td>
<td>38 17 55</td>
<td>6 1 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest matriculation during the five years was with the freshmen class of 1915-16, when 119 registered—67 girls and 52 boys. Considering the total of the freshmen for four years, excluding the fifth year on which there are no data for the sophomore class the next year, the following losses are evident. Out of 289 freshmen who registered during that period only 181 reached the sophomore class—a loss of 37 per cent in one year. Reading horizontally, the enrollment record of each class may be observed from the period of matriculation until the school term of 1915-16.

**Letter Grades and Percentages By Grade and Sex.**—In Table 7, are presented the percentages of the letter grades received by all pupils of
TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE OF EACH LETTER GRADE RECEIVED BY ALL PUPILS AND BY SEX
FOR THE FIVE YEARS, 1941-1942 THROUGH 1945-1946.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADES</th>
<th>FRESHMEN</th>
<th></th>
<th>SOPHOMORE</th>
<th></th>
<th>JUNIOR</th>
<th></th>
<th>SENIOR</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>BOYS</td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>BOYS</td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>BOYS</td>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>BOYS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-Failing</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-Passing</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the Rome High School who were involved in this study. Along with the other symbols of evaluation, the percentages of the withdrawals are given, with the percent of those who withdrew failing and those who withdrew passing.

This data present the relative achievement of the pupils as expressed in letter grade percentages. The small number of A's received by the students in comparison with D's and F's raises a question. The matter of educational ability and other possible factors in the situation are all beyond the realm of this study. However, according to the data presented, it is to be observed that most of the grades tend toward the lower levels of achievement. The letter grades received by the girls are for the most part higher than those received by the boys.

The percentage of B's received by the girls exceeded those received by the boys except in the junior and senior years where there was a slight
TABLE 8

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE 1941-1942 FRESHMEN CLASS AS REFLECTED IN NUMERICAL VALUES OF TEACHER MARKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>ENROLLMENT</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>MEDIAN</th>
<th>STANDARD DEVIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>79.35</td>
<td>73.26</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>71.83</td>
<td>9.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>73.16</td>
<td>7.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

advantage in favor of the boys. The percentage of C’s with which the girls are credited represents an advantage for them. In the D column the greater percentage is in favor of boys. Failures and withdrawals will be discussed in a succeeding section.

Scholastic Achievement.— Data regarding the achievement record of the 1941-1942 freshmen class are shown in Table 8. The average achievement was C. According to the numerical value of this letter, from 77 to 81, this average is considered "fair". However, the achievement record for the boys that year was D. This achievement level is from 70 to 76, and is considered "poor."

It is evident that the total freshmen grades for that year were affected by the large percentage of D's and F's. A similar situation existed in all freshmen classes for the period, in each of which the level of achievement was D.

Table 9 is a presentation of the average achievement of all freshmen for the five-year period, 1941-42, 1945-1946. The freshmen classes are used since they represent all the students under consideration in this
research. It is revealed by the data that the freshmen never exceeded the achievement level of D. These data also reveal that the achievement record favors the girls.

It is to be noted that in every case the achievement average of the girls is higher than that of the boys. The level of achievement, however, as ascribed both to boys and girls indicates that there is a fine opportunity for educational improvement. This is indicated by the fact that the pupils seldom rise above the category which the system classifies as "poor".

Failures and Withdrawals.— In Table 10 is indicated the decrease in enrollment for the five freshmen classes, and how that decrease was effected by withdrawals. Reference is made to those who withdrew failing, those who withdrew passing, and the percentage of withdrawals who re-entered. The freshmen class of 1945-46 is not included since it was impossible to ascertain the enrollment of the sophomore class one year beyond the period for this study.

From data collected and studied it would appear that there is an
TABLE 10
FAILURES AND WITHDRALS AS REFLECTED IN THE DECREASE ON ENROLLMENT
BETWEEN THE FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORE CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Decrease in Enrollment</th>
<th>Per Cent of Decrease</th>
<th>Per Cent Withdrawn Failing</th>
<th>Per Cent Withdrawn Passing</th>
<th>Per Cent Re-Entered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914-15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>85.05</td>
<td>14.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>81.55</td>
<td>15.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

enormous loss by drop-outs during the early period of the high school career, particularly in the freshmen year. As compared with the freshmen and sophomore years withdrawals are small in the junior and senior years. In each of the freshmen classes, the percentages of drop-outs are excessive. It is also evident that a large per cent of withdrawals is with the failing pupils. In the year 1914-15, 56.8 per cent of the loss between the freshmen and sophomore classes was among those who had failed, while 43.2 per cent was with those who had passed.

In the year 1915-16 only 14.95 of the withdrawing students were passing, but 85.05 withdrew failing. The comparison for 1916-17 was 60.7 per cent of the withdrawals had failed, and 39.3 per cent had passed. The year 1917-18, like 1915-16 experienced a great percentage of failing withdrawals in comparison with those who withdrew passing.

In the last column is recorded the percentage of those withdrawing
pupils who reentered. It appears that in most of these cases the withdrawals were near the close of the school term. A pupil failing in two subjects must repeat those courses for an entire school term, even though his report card shows that he had passed every month until the last. There was a tendency for pupils who withdrew during the early part of their high school career to drop out of school altogether. On the other hand, those who withdrew failing during the junior had a tendency to reenter. Of the twelve persons in the senior classes of 1944-45 and 1945-46 who made failing grades, six of them eventually graduated, and one went to college.

**Failures in Course Areas.**— Relating to failures in the several courses, as may be seen in Table 11, the number of boys exceeded that of the girls throughout the five years. In the junior year the boys had fewer failures in science, mathematics, language, and social science, and in the senior year in all subjects but mathematics. The only other time when the percentage of failures for boys was smaller than that of the girls was in
TABLE 12
PER CENT OF STUDENTS FAILING BY AREAS FOR THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD
1941-1942 THROUGH 1945-1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Lang.</th>
<th>Soc. Sc.</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-44</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>30.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social science during the freshmen year. It may be pointed out, however, that in the junior and senior years there was a comparatively small enrollment of boys.

Even though there was a high rate of failures in all courses, the highest was in the area of language. In the freshmen classes the per cent of failures among girls was 33.9 per cent and among boys 47.6 per cent. In the sophomore classes, girls had a failure percentage of 11.5 while the rate of failure with the boys was 22.2 per cent. In the junior year the failure percentage of the girls exceeded that of the boys by a ratio of 24.1 to 10.7. In the senior year, although the girls had 5.0 per cent failures with none for the boys, the enrollments of the two sexes are not comparable--38 girls and 17 boys. In all course areas except social science the failure percentage of boys exceeds that of the girls. The relative achievement in courses between boys and girls, and the lack of
TABLE 13

DISTRIBUTION OF FAILURES ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF COURSES FAILED
DURING THE FIVE YEARS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASSES</th>
<th>FRESHMEN</th>
<th>SOPHOMORE</th>
<th>JUNIOR</th>
<th>SENIOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Courses Failed</td>
<td>Number Failing</td>
<td>Number Failing</td>
<td>Number Failing</td>
<td>Number Failing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed One Course</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In All Courses</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

performance as reflected by failures, indicate that both sexes are educationally in need of guidance.

In Table 12, page 29, the failures of all freshmen are presented as it relates to course areas for five years. Here, to, it is shown that the greatest percentage of failures was in language.

In the failures recorded some students failed in one or two courses, while others failed in all of them. Table 13 presents the distribution of course failures for the Rome High School for five years. There were 95 pupils failing in one course, 209 in two or more courses and 306 who failed all courses. The 209 refers to those who failed in two or more courses but did not fail in all. All students who failed in more than one course would be required to repeat the grade. A total of 142 pupils failed the latter part of the term. Many of these were in April and May, which meant that the whole year was lost. If they failed the following year they would be
two years behind other students with whom they matriculated.

Sex and Ages of the Failing and Passing Students.—It is evident from the data studied that chronological age has been a very definite factor in the academic success or failure of the pupils in the Rome High School. Sex and age distribution may be observed in Table 14. From these data it is clear that failing students occupied higher age brackets than the students who passed.

The majority of the failing students were older than those who passed. In the enrollment of girls there were 139 failing students who were over 13 years old, and only 27 passing older than 13. Among the boys there were 83 failing students who were more than 13 years old, and 13 passing students older than 13. Among the failing girls there were 46 who were 14, 41 who were 15, 29 who were 16, 20 who were 17, and 3 who were 18. Only 10 failing girls were 13 years old or less. In the failures among the boys there were 4 who were 14, 52 who were 15, 12 who were 16, 13 who were 17,
TABLE 15

STATISTICAL DATA CONCERNING AGES OF STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>t Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911-1912</td>
<td>.78*</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912-1913</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-1914</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1915</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-1916</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These differences are in favor of students who failed, thus indicating that they were older than those who passed.

and 2 who were 18. Only 5 failures were less than 13 years old.

In every case the mean of the failing student was higher than that of those who had passed. However, in order to determine whether this difference was significant certain computations were necessary. Data concerning the mean age of the failing and passing students are expressed in Table 15.

In the year 1911-1912, the 61 degrees of freedom available require t values of 2.678 and 2.008 at the 1 and 5 per cent levels of confidence respectively. Thus in 1911-1912 a significant difference was found in the ages of pupils who failed and those who passed. In the years 1912-1913 and 1914-1915 the t values required 36 and 23 degrees of freedom are 2.030 and 2.069 respectively, at the 5 per cent level of confidence. In neither case was the t value significant at the 5 per cent level of confidence.

In 1913-1914 there are 35 degrees of freedom available which require 2.721 and 2.030 at the 1 and 5 per cent level of confidence. Hence t
values of significant differences existed in the ages of the failing and passing students in 1943-44 and 1945-46. In three out of the five years there were statistically significant differences in the ages of failing and passing students. In every case the failing students were older.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introductory Statement.— Among the functions of all social agencies, the role of the school is the most challenging and inclusive. In the operation of the administrative and instructional programs of education lies the success or failure of those who in the future shall be called upon to serve in all the economic and social areas. The preservation of democracy, in all of its aspects and ideals, depends upon whether its citizens of the next generation begin their school life under a paralysing failure complex, or under the inspiration of a sense of mastery.

In recent years we have moved from an agrarian to an industrialized society, governed by a machine technology, creating a culture that is tangled and confused. In education, as elsewhere, youth stands at the crossroads, faced with the question of courses to select, and the experiences in which to participate, that he might pursue, without tragic failure, the requirements of a high school career. To meet this challenge, the teacher and administrator must be concerned with curricula, with methods by which subjects are taught, and most especially the methods by which children are taught. Unless educators are concerned with the life of the pupils— their success and happiness; unless they have interest in the total program as an effective instrument in personality development; unless an atmosphere and opportunities for experiences are created which make it unlikely for the child to fail, then education misses the goal, and teaching will be without purpose.
In this study the writer was concerned with failure on the high school level, especially as it is observed in the situation in the Rome High School, Rome, Georgia. Special attention was given to a comparison of failures in the several areas of study, and what effect has age or sex on failure as reflected in withdrawals. The following specific questions were considered:

1. What was the number of failures for five years, and how was it reflected in the school's enrollment?
2. According to course areas how did the percentage of failure differ?
3. What evidence was there of the relationship between age and failure.
4. How did failure among the students compare as it relates to sex?
5. What was the correlation between failure and withdrawal?
6. As compared to the pupils who passed, what percentage of failed pupils graduated, and how many of them entered college?

The purpose of the study was to validate or invalidate the hypotheses that:

1. Age is a definite factor in pupil performance.
2. That there are courses in which one sex does better than the other.
3. That there is a high positive correlation between failure and withdrawal.

This study involves 1,088 students from grades 8 to 11 in the Rome High School, Rome, Georgia, for five years—1941 to 1946. The study was made during the latter half of the 1945-46 school term. It was begun with the freshmen class of 1941-42, following it through with succeeding freshmen classes until 1946.
There were 306 failures, involving 236 pupils, of which 212 were in two or more courses. Even though the teacher recorded on the student's record character indicators, such as diligence, interest, dependability, and cooperation, the final grading was confined to: the mastery of factual material. Most of the failures occurred in the latter part of the term; and in every case where the pupil failed as many as two courses he was not promoted to the next higher class.

The Normative-Survey method of research was used, deductions were made and conclusions drawn on the basis of quantitative evidence. On data collecting instruments constructed for that purpose the information was recorded from the official cumulative records. These data included date of the pupil's matriculation, sex, the time he failed or withdrew, when he reentered, if and when he graduated, and whether he entered college. Chronological age was computed from the nearest birthday.

Computation involved enumeration of data on the many aspects indicated previously in this report. It was comparatively easy to analyze much of the data through simple percentage presentation. In other cases, where necessary to make it meaningful, measures of central tendency and variability were employed. In order to discover existing relationship between two sets of data the correlation procedure was used. Since much of the data were of discrete categories, belonging to dichotomous distributions, the phi coefficient was used, from which the corresponding Pearson's $r$ was estimated. In many of the cases the $t$ test of significance was applied in order to ascertain the reliability of detected relationship.

**Summary of Findings.**—It was revealed by this study that there was an exceedingly high percentage of failures among the students of the Rome High
School. The most important findings are delineated as follows:

1. There was a tremendous loss of pupils between matriculation and graduation, most of which occurs during the freshmen year. In the freshman year 1921-22, there was a loss of 70 per cent for the boys and 50 per cent for the girls. Studying the two freshmen classes of 1921-22 and 1922-23, when there was a combined enrollment of 166, only 55 reached graduation. Most of the loss was by pupils who had failed their courses. Out of the two classes indicated there was a loss of 111 pupils or 67 per cent between the freshmen and senior years, and 37 per cent of the withdrawals occurred during the first year of the high school.

2. There is a positive correlation of .79 between failures and withdrawals on the basis of computations made in this study.

3. The highest per cent of the failures was in language. There was a failure percentage of 34 in this course as compared to 19.5, 18.1, 23.4, and 16.2, for science, mathematics, social science, and spelling respectively.

4. The failure of boys in language exceeded that of the girls. The total rate of failures for the boys was 35.9 as compared with 24.5 for the girls. During the freshman years the boys had a failure percentage of 47.6 and the girls 33.9.

5. There were a greater number of failures among students who entered high school after their fourteenth birthday than those who entered at an earlier age. There were 83 failing boys above 13, and only 13 passing above that age. Among the girls, 139 failing students were over 13, and only 27 passing beyond that age.
6. Pupils who withdrew in later adolescence seldom re-entered or graduated.

Conclusions.—As is well known, many sets of data are required before definite conclusions can be drawn. The nature of this study made it inappropriate for the writer to seek information on parents' educational status, economic background, social and cultural surroundings, stability of family life, and other factors which might serve as modifying pressures on the student's personality and achievement. The findings of this study seem to warrant the following conclusions:

1. Failure is a definite contributing factor in withdrawals.
2. Failure is less frequent among pupils of early adolescence than among those who enter high school at a later age.
3. Pupils who fail and withdraw in later adolescence seldom repeat the grade or graduate.
4. Withdrawals in which failure is an apparent factor is at a higher rate among boys than among girls.
5. There is a significant difference in the failure rate of boys and girls in language and social science. The failure ratio in language is higher for the boys than girls and in social science the percentage of failures is higher for the girls. There is no significant difference noted in other courses.

Implications.—The implications of this study to educational theory and practice are confirmed by the fact that the findings are in agreement with a majority of references cited in the literature. Failure is a serious problem in the instructional program of the school. The adverse affects of it are not limited to the pupil withdrawal from school, but is
a definite contributing factor to social maladjustment. Since one of the functions of education is to provide experiences that will enable pupils to reach goals set for members of a democratic society, and factors which serve as an obstruction to the objective, such as failure among pupils, deserve serious concern. From the findings and conclusions, the implications are:

1. Improved methods and techniques for the reduction of failures should reduce the percentage of withdrawals. Since motivation is a primary factor in success, the sociological drives for mastery and status should be stimulated by teachers. Emphasis upon positive rather than negative measures should be encouraged.

2. The school would profit from a well-regulated program of vocational and educational guidance. It is evident that there is no means of screening those whose interests are mainly vocational from those who have ability for and interest in an academic program such as the Rome High School offers. The curriculum offerings should consider the varied interests, abilities, and aptitudes of all students.

3. Special attention should be given to language deficiency and reading comprehension. Most school subjects and experiences today are largely verbal. It is probable that a lack of language efficiency contributes to retardation in other courses, and indirectly to failure and elimination from school.

4. The program should be accelerated. It is evident that a majority of the students reach the high school level at a late age. Regular promotions in the elementary schools of the system from which Rome
High School draws most of its students, would increase the likelihood of the pupils' success on the high school level.

5. From the data gathered it is evident that the majority of failures occur during the second part of the term. If grades were calculated on the semester system, and pupils required to make up courses failed only during that semester, there would be less failures and withdrawals.

These practices would yield a favorable effect not only on the pupil, but also make a contribution to educational theory and practice.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Articles


