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The Elementary Educational Program in the Rural Schools of Mexico

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Loyola University Chicago

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THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAM IN THE RURAL
SCHOOLS OF MEXICO

By
Jacqueline Lois Cadwell

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
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Approved, Ruth Byrns
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Jacqueline Lois Cadwell was born in Chicago, Illinois, February 8, 1922.

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PREFACE

In the following project the author does not intend to evaluate or appraise the Mexican rural school system, but she intends to present the facts as they actually exist. Some of the facts have been accumulated through actual contact with the problem during her repeated visits to Mexico. The author reads and speaks Spanish fairly well, which enabled her to obtain much information that she could not have secured otherwise.

The author wishes to express her gratitude to the following well-known Mexican educators who have helped her in her project:

Professor Don Rafael Ramírez, former director of Rural Education Courses and professor of the Technique of Teaching and Supervision, at the National University of Mexico; to Professor Rafael Pérez de León, former director of Federal Education in the states of Sinaloa, Querétaro, Puebla, Hidalgo, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, and the Territory of Lower California; to Professor Juventino Naranja Castillo, instructor of Primary and Post-Primary Education, and instructor in the Normal School; to Professor Leonardo Ramírez Gonzalez, General Subdirector of Primary Instruction in the states and Territories of the Mexican Republic; to Professor Juan A. Piña, Federal Inspector of the Municipio del Arenal in the state of Hidalgo; to Professor Domingo Flores Arenas, director of Escuela 20 de Noviembre, in the state of Hidalgo.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

To gain accurate knowledge and an understanding of rural education in Mexico, the author found that extensive research in libraries and personal interviews with well-known Mexican authorities in the field of rural education was not enough. It was also necessary to visit various schools in remote rural areas. Finally, a knowledge of the historical, social, economic, and geographical aspects of the problem was of prime importance.

The Significance of the Mexican Rural Schools

The words "Rural School" do not only imply the simple idea of a school functioning in the peasant regions. It is also a school that fits effectively into the natural and social environment. Most of all, it is a school that strives to educate the rural peoples of Mexico so that they may be able to create for themselves a better life.
CHAPTER II

THE GENESIS OF THE RURAL EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT

From the Epoch of the Aztec Empire to the Mexican Revolution

Among the primitive groups of people in Mexico, the education of youth was left to the older members of the community and priests. These latter adopted a traditionalist method of teaching.

Under the Aztec Empire, two types of schools were established: the 'Calemeecac' for the nobility, and the 'Tepechcalli' for the commoners. In the school, students were given an essentially religious and militaristic education which was essential to maintain the dominance of the empire over the conquered tribes. The only formal or academic education was given at the 'Calemeecac'.

Primary education, preparing the child for the duties necessary for later life, was given at home. The boys had to learn rigorous military discipline, the carrying of heavy loads, and obedience. At the age of six, they were sent to the market place to earn money. Girls were given instruction in domestic duties, which consisted of weaving, the making of clothes, grinding corn, and cooking. Punishment was severe for both boys and girls.

1 J. Jesus Alvarez Constantino, La Educación de La Comunidad, Morelia, Michoacán, México, 1952, 27.

The Spanish Conquest in 1521 interrupted the cultural development of the native tribes and committed them to slavery. At first, religious missionaries carried a rigorous program for the Indians, which resulted in the founding of El Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco. Soon, however, the Colegio was closed because the conquerors feared that the Indians would rebel against the Spanish Empire if they became educated.

During the same period, Vasco de Quiroga, initiator of the rural educational movement in Mexico, founded the hospitales pueblos in the State of Michoacan. There, religion and the alphabet were taught, the sick people were cared for, and new methods of farming and small industries developed. To this day, the Tarascan Indians remember this great man with love and respect.

From 1521 to 1821 the Indians of Mexico were under the rule of the Viceroy of Spain. During these three centuries of despotism, higher education was the exclusive prerogative of Spaniards and their descendants; elementary education was for the mestizos, half Indian -- half Spanish, living in the cities.

Spanish Catholicism was the Indians' first encounter with Christianity. Due to the rapid advancement of Protestantism in Europe, the Spanish Empire in 1571 extended to Mexico the Inquisition and aggressive Catholicism. Christian missionaries, like Fathers Bartolomé de las Casas; Toribio de Bencomo, Vasco de Quiroga, Junífero Serra, and many others went to all parts of the country to Christianize the Indians. A crowning achievement of their work was the founding of the National University of Mexico in the sixteenth century. Rural education, however, was neglected. And, although the Indians were taught
the Spanish language, they remained slaves.

At the end of the Colonial Period, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla revived popular education in his parish of Dolores. He organized instruction in the arts and trades among the Indians. His system subordinated everything else to teaching the people of Mexico how to be free.

In 1810, under the leadership of Father Hidalgo, and later under Father Morelos, Mexico revolted against Spain, and in 1823 the country became independent. However, the Indians remained more or less in the same social and economic circumstances, poor and ignorant. The social principles of Hidalgo and Morelos were not put into practice, and public education was extended by the Lancaster system which introduced instruction by only one teacher assisted by monitors.

With the "Reforma" under the direction of Benito Juárez (1855-1872), a Zapotec Indian of humble origin whose personality in many respects resembled that of Abraham Lincoln, church and state were separated, and a modern Constitution was drawn up. The land was taken from the clergy and declared national property.

Popular education received a great impetus when it was removed from the control of the church and was made compulsory. The educational movement of the "Reforma" continued until the days of General Porfirio Díaz' dictatorship (1876-1910), when Dr. Manuel Flores and Professor Hugo Alcázar introduced "objective teaching." Enrique Rébsamen and Carlos A. Carillo adopted this new system of teaching, and spread the ideas of Pestalozzi and Herbert. Joaquin Baranda and Justo Sierra completed the re-organization of higher education.
Although the cultural development of all was considered important during the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, it was still felt that education should continue to favor the rich classes of society. The Indians, the peasants, and the laborers had no access to it. Mexico continued to be an agricultural and feudal country whose limited industry was under foreign control. Although some rural schools were built, they were of little value, because the teachers were untrained and miserably underpaid, and most of the children undernourished. But nobody thought it necessary to educate the Indians and peasants of Mexico, two-thirds of the population. Millions of people were working from sunrise until sundown as domestic beasts, in order to earn scarcely a livelihood. It did not matter, because they were thought of as miserable Indians and peasants.

From the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) to the Administration of Miguel Alemán (1946-1951)

The Mexican Revolution, initiated by Don Francisco Madero, gave the land to the peasants, and established a broad rural educational system which helped to develop Mexico into a modern country. One of the chief aims of the Revolution had been to provide educational opportunities for all the Mexican people. Out of it came the Rural School of Mexico. Under the administration of Francisco Madero, a system of five hundred rural schools was mapped out. By 1912, fifty schools had been established.


5 Statements of Prof. Rafael Pérez de León, personal interview, Mexico City, August, 1952.
"Land and books" became the slogan of the Revolutionists under the leadership of Emiliano Zapata. More than fourteen million acres of land were returned to the people. More than five thousand new schools were opened.\(^6\)

When the storm of the Revolution reached its peak, a clamor started for the rehabilitation of the Indians and the peasants, and the recognition of their right to be educated.

The Revolutionary governments found two big problems: the agrarian and the educational. They began attacking them by a series of 'aproximaciones sucesivas,' successive approximations.

The first schools which the Revolutionary governments built in the fields were inadequate. The buildings were poorly constructed, and so were the equipment and the program. The budget provided a mere three hundred million pesos per year. In these schools the three R's were taught in a fragmentary and rote manner. But even these schools contributed much to the cultural progress of the nation, because they awakened hopes, and stimulated interests and ambitions in the souls of the peasants and Indians.\(^7\)

The new Rural School set itself the following task: not only to teach the children and the adults how to read, write, and count, but also to develop an integral educational program that would embrace all of the members of the community; to work toward a radical transformation of the country, the

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7 Ramirez, Movimiento, 169-171.
improvement of homes, working and health conditions; and to bring about a spiritually satisfying environment.  

In 1917, during the administration of Venustiano Carranza, a new federal constitution was adopted containing two famous articles, 27 and 123, which completely changed the character of Mexico's Basic Law.

Article 27 attempted to undo the two most disastrous results of the Diaz dictatorship - the alienation of the Indian ejido, and the acquisition of mines and oil fields by foreigners. The nation was declared the original owner of all lands and waters, and was to have power to expropriate property owners.

Article 123 was intended to protect the wage earners, both industrial and agricultural. It combined all methods to protect labor from exploitation, abolish child labor and peonage, establish the eight-hour working day, a minimum wage, profit sharing and compensation for injuries, as well as the right to organize and to strike.  

In addition, Article 123 imposes on the owners of agricultural, industrial, or mining enterprises, the obligation to maintain schools for the education of the children of their workers.  

For some years after the adoption of the Constitution of 1917, unsettled conditions prevailed in Mexico, and very little was accomplished in the field of rural education. But the administration of Alvaro Obregon (1920-1924) began the Reconstruction Era which continues to the present day. The Constitution was amended, giving the Federal Government the right to establish, organize, and maintain all kinds of schools and educational institutions throughout Mexico.

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8 Prof. Francisco Mendez, Programa y Guia de Trabajo de la Escuela Rural en Jalisco, Junto Nacional de Educacion Primaria, 1953, I.

9 E. Evalyn G. McNally and Dr. Andrew McNally, This Is Mexico, Dodd Mead & Co., New York, 1947, 200.

10 Rafael Ramirez, "The Mexican Program of Rural Education," conference held before the IX Seminar in Mexico, July 25, 1954, 3.
the Republic." A Federal Department of Public Education was established, and
specific sums of money were provided by the government for each state, appor-
tioned in proportion to population. All children under sixteen had to attend
either public or private schools.

Until the "Reforma Educativa" in 1921, however, only two hundred rural schools were established.

In 1921, José Vasconcelos, then Rector of the National University was
appointed Secretary of Education. He realized that a new type of education was
necessary. Volunteer teachers, especially women, were recruited, who undertook
the task of teaching one or more persons to read and write. They were called
"honorary teachers." Also, missionary teachers (not priests) were sent out in
1922 and 1923 to study economic conditions. These teachers began little schools
by gathering together groups of people. Once these groups were educated, the
missionary teachers moved on, after selecting their best pupils as rural teach-
ers. Such schools came to be called 'La Casa del Pueblo,' the People's Home.11

In 1923, Professor Enrique Corona became the head of the 'Departamen-
to de Cultura Indígena,' the Indian Cultural Department. During this time, the
'Bases para el Funcionamiento de las Casas del Pueblo,' the Regulations for
Rural Schools, were issued. Their significance lies in the fact that they
break with the traditional concept of the school as a place for teaching chil-
dren, and convert the school into a social agency destined to promote the

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solution of the vital social problems of the community.

To improve the work of the teachers, and help the economic and social development of the community, cultural missions were established. Also, Rural Normal Schools were established for the purpose of training special teachers for the rural schools. 12

Dr. José Vasconcelos described the purpose of the educational reform as the making of men and women able to think for themselves, earn a living, and develop the community in order to attain a comfortable way of life. 13

Another important development in Obregón's administration was the work of Dr. Manuel Gamio, who evolved the theory of integral education including guidance in matters of diet, clothing, shelter, hygiene, and ways of earning a living. Dr. Gamio also established a school and clinic for prenatal and infant care, and introduced improvements in farming methods. In his efforts to substitute milk for pulque, fermented juice of the maguey plant, which the mothers had been giving to their children, Dr. Gamio imported goats for those who could not afford a cow.

Dr. Gamio's desire to develop his program on a large scale was denied when Plutarco Elías Calles became president in 1924. He was reduced to sub-secretary, and five months later deprived of office. Dr. José Manuel Puig Casaurank became Secretary of Education. 14

12 Constantino, La Educación, 30.
By 1924, the rural educational system was well established. At the end of the year, there were 1,089 schools with 1,146 teachers and approximately sixty-five thousand pupils. The forty-eight missionary teachers became school inspectors, and in 1925 the schools were given the more conventional and prosaic name of Rural Schools.15

But the Federal Department of Education was handicapped since its resources were not great enough to meet the needs. Teachers were paid one peso a day, the equivalent of 12½ cents in the United States, and were provided with few, if any, teaching materials. These were the teachers who were to improve the conditions of the community, and among other duties had to vaccinate the people against smallpox and typhoid fever. Perhaps the greatest need was to improve the teachers, but there was no normal school competent to do so.16

In his inaugural address, on December 1, 1924, President Plutarco Elías Calles declared:

The fundamental bases for the betterment of the great communities of my country and of the rural masses in particular -- the working men and the indigenous folk -- are their economic freedom and their educational development until they are fully incorporated into civilized life. The land problem, settled in the way I have mentioned, will bring about an increase in agricultural production and will bring economic freedom to the peasants; the education of the rural districts of the nation, the consolidation of rights, and the legal protection of the working people of the cities and industrial centers will be the special aims of my administration, which will proceed on a basis of equity and justice for all social classes.

The problem of educating the rural peoples will have my complete attention. The special systems will be studied thoroughly by the

15 Sánchez, A Revolution by Education, 25.

16 Frank Tannenbaum, Mexico -- The Struggle for Peace and Bread, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1950, 162.
Secretariat of Public Education; but I am even now able to outline the general features of the work, which will consist not only of controlling illiteracy but also of achieving a harmonious development of the spirit of our rural and indigenous population, in order that this great part of our people may form a responsible part of civilization. In brief, the rural school developed to the limit of our economic possibilities will be our constant preoccupation.17

Early in his administration, President Calles ordered the establishment of at least one thousand new rural schools every year. From 1,089 schools operating in 1924, the number rose to 3,594 by 1930, an increase of 417 rural schools per year for six years.18

The rural schools which existed before 1929 were slightly different from those established from that year on. Very often they occupied the best house in town, built with the efforts and sacrifices of the entire neighborhood. Men and women, old and young, had shared in the work. Usually, the school had one or two class-rooms, a garden, a field for agriculture, a hen-house, a pigeon-house, a bee-hive, a rabbit-hutch, and an athletic field. The class-rooms contained modest furniture, which was usually made by the children with the help of adult pupils, or by other members of the community. Everything in the rural schools was made by the poor under the direction and guidance of the teacher. The Department of Education did not contribute a single cent -- it provided only the teachers' salaries.

Since 1929, by an order of Ezequiel Padilla, Minister of Education,


all rural schools had to build an open-air theatre, and to organize sports and cultural meetings and fiestas to amuse and educate the people. In the corridor of every rural school could now be found a big board hanging on the wall, displaying the mural newspaper which the Department of Education sent each month to the teachers. It was a newspaper for illiterates, and could be understood by its pictures and drawings. Peasants and Indians went to the school every month to read it in their own way, and to learn the news concerning their material welfare. At least one person could usually be found who could read the short sentence accompanying the pictures.

In the teacher's desk could be found "El Señalador," the magazine published every fifteen days and sent by the Department of Education for those who could read, and for the teachers who were to discuss the more important articles at the peasants' reading hour.

Schools like these, in which children and adults were being taught, had almost four thousand teachers paid by the Federal Government. But another twenty-five thousand were needed.

It was necessary to find a way to create schools without having the money for them. The first step was to send a corps of rural supervisors all over the country. On the strength of their reports, zones of homogeneous groups of communities (rural circuits) were established, and schools were opened. The teachers' wages were paid by voluntary contributions from the neighbors, and a specially trained teacher, paid by the Federal Government, was appointed to supervise.

Each of the rural circuits had a Central School, a school of demon-
stratton for teachers.

From January to June of 1929, two thousand schools of this type were opened. Their external appearance was as humble as the communities that created them, but their possibilities were as great as the hopes of the people.

The following act, drawn up for one of these schools, may serve as an example:

We the people of the Community of Bonaxini, Municipality of San Salvador in the State of Hidalgo, engage ourselves before the teacher, José del Carmen Solis, representative of the Department of Education, to establish and support our own school according to the following points:

I. Each one of us shall pay the teacher one cent a day. Since there are fifty-three of us, we shall deliver each day fifty-three cents to the Treasurer of the Committee of Education, and the teacher shall be paid on the last day of every month.

II. We shall give the teacher a house to live in.

III. We shall take turns in feeding the teacher in accordance with our standard of life.

IV. We shall provide the school buildings and the annexes when they are needed.

V. We shall send to school all our children who are of school age, both boys and girls, and we, the adults, shall attend as often as our work will permit.

Mr. Solis will choose a teacher who will accomplish his duties as a teacher by instructing the children and adults, and advising all of the people about their progress. In order to keep our promise, we will execute the present act on Saturday, February 9, 1929, at 5:00 PM. Those who are able will sign their names, and the rest of the names will appear on the list, regardless.

(Here follow three signatures and an additional list of forty-nine names.)

The small community of Bonaxini, located in an arid and rocky region, is composed of Otomi Indians, one of the poorest and most backward groups in the Republic.

20 Ibid., 175-177.
During the administration of Calles, the following results were achieved:

1. From 1924 to 1927, 3,550 new Rural Schools were established, enrolling approximately one hundred and eighty thousand children.

2. The House of the Indigenous Student was founded in Mexico City.

3. Seven great agricultural schools were opened in seven of the states.

4. Eight large schools were established in the Capital.

The nation's educational budget was still limited to twenty-five million pesos a year. The government provided teachers, books, and supplies at a cost to the government of only one thousand pesos per school per year; the teachers were paid about two pesos a day.

With such wages, finding teachers was a serious problem. Usually a native was appointed who had a little more knowledge than the others. This system worked out fairly well at times, but mostly it did not. 21

The Rural Educational program continued with indifferent success until the year 1935, when Ricardo Lazaro Cárdenas was elected President of the Republic (1934-1940).

In 1936, President Cárdenas introduced a new program, including certain methods on the Russian model. According to Article III of the new Constitution, the teachers were made leaders of the Community.

Fernando Dvorak, State Director of Public Education in the State of

21 Cuenning, Mexico and Its Heritage, 521-522.
Sonora in 1934, gave the following definition of the Socialist Schools:

It is the workers of education who stretch out their hands to the workers of muscle. The teachers become the social factors in the state, instructing the workers in their rights and how to organize and obtain them. Socialized education must lift the workers so that they can live better, can fight for and maintain their rights. Socialist Schools aim definitely at improving economic conditions so that all may be well fed and none go naked, so that all may have benefits of hygiene and bodily health, and enjoy the pleasures and diversions of richer living.22

A so-called Six Year Plan (Plano Sexenal) was approved by the National Revolutionary Party in November, 1933, and put in effect in 1934.

According to the Statistical Division of the Department of Public Education, there were 13,719 rural schools in 1932. The Six Year Plan called for twice that number within a period of six years.23

The Six Year Plan was directed toward the attainment of three main goals:

1. The final solution of the agrarian problem.

2. Complete organization of the United Front of Workers to effect a marked elevation of the national standard of living.

3. Development of an adequate educational program for all Mexicans whether children or adults.24

22 Anita Riedon, "Special Correspondence -- The New Schools of Mexico," School and Society, XI, July-December, 1934, 880.


For the period 1934-40, the Six Year Plan provided that the Federal Government, the local governments, and the corporations should reduce their budgets for education. Fifteen per cent of the national income was to go directly to rural education. The Federal Government promised that its own budget would increase its contribution to education by 1 per cent each year, reaching 20 per cent in 1939.

The Government declared that the major part of its attention would be devoted to rural education. Federal rural schools were to be increased by one thousand in 1934, and by two thousand a year from 1935 to 1938; in 1939, three thousand were to be added. The total number of rural schools would amount to twelve thousand.

The Federal Secretary of Public Education further promised that the following steps would be taken for the current year:

1. A new specialist in rural education, and twenty-two additional rural school inspectors, would be appointed.

2. Two new cultural missions would be established, making a total of sixteen.

3. Six additional regional agricultural schools would be opened, bringing the total to eight.

4. One thousand five hundred additional schools would be established as a result of a campaign carried on, forcing ranch and factory owners to provide schools for their workers.

The Government and the Revolutionary Party denied the right of any private party or organization to establish and direct educational institutions
not under the jurisdiction of the Government. The State was to have control over all schools and to see that they were scientific, non-religious, and socialist in orientation; jurisdiction over the professional preparation of all teachers or supervisors, and over the hygienic conditions of instruction.25

The rate of illiteracy in 1940 was quite high. Illiteracy existed among 51.6 per cent of the population ten years of age and over. In 1944 nearly half the Mexican inhabitants were found to be illiterate. As a result, the President declared an Emergency Law which compelled all Mexican residents, between the ages of eighteen and sixty years who could read and write, to teach those people, especially those between the ages of six and forty who were illiterate.

By 1947, of those 7,161,109 people who were illiterate in 1940, 1,094,845 had been taught to read and write.26

According to Jaime Torres Bodet, who was then the Secretary of Education, the expense of the Campaign Against Illiteracy had amounted to a total of 2,722,535 pesos.

In 1946, the Federal budget for education was 207,900,000 pesos, 17.5 per cent of the entire budget. In 1948, the Federal school budget was 262,700,000 pesos.27

25 Ibid., 666-667.
27 Whetten, Rural Mexico, Chicago, 1948, 422.
There are in Mexico 120,000 rural communities. Today, there are 16,467 schools in the larger communities. To educate all of the people, at least fifty thousand rural schools and one hundred thousand teachers are needed. This crucial need probably will not be met for years, or perhaps generations. 28

28 Tannenbaum, Struggle for Peace and Bread, 169-170.
CHAPTER III

PANORAMA OF RURAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO

General Objectives of the Rural Educational Program

The present rural school in Mexico is one of the most vital agencies of national integration. In addition to teaching the children, it also assumes the responsibility of educating the adults. It is built around four cardinal subjects of instruction: how to conserve and prolong good health; how to earn a living; how to establish a home and a family and improve domestic life; and how to enrich and enjoy life through physical, intellectual, recreational, and spiritual activities.

In addition, it is concerned with teaching the Spanish language. There are still three million Indians who do not speak the language of the country. The school does not teach Spanish formally, but incidentally to other activities. Another important objective of the school is to bring about intellectual culture. Reading and writing are major ways to civilized living.

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Types of Education Offered in the Rural Schools

In an address given by the former Minister of Education, Señor Licenciado N. Bassols, before the Seminar in Mexico on July 19, 1932, four main aspects of education for rehabilitating the rural masses are mentioned: biological, economic, cultural and technical, and social or human.

Biological education is of special interest. Child mortality is quite high, and diseases are prevalent throughout the backward regions.

In its economic aspect, educational work will pursue all the knowledge and ways of modern technique which are of primary significance in increasing the income of the population.

Technical or scientific education of the peasant is also significant, but the problem is to find adequate pedagogical systems to impart to the peasants the rich and coordinated ideas which constitute scientific culture.

In speaking about social education, it must not be forgotten that before the Spanish Conquest the Indians possessed all of the elements of a true culture, with rich spiritual and moral values. Attempts have been made to achieve a synthesis of this dormant Indian culture with that of the contemporary Western world by preserving the positive values of the Indians, and taking from Western civilization everything that may strengthen them. These attempts have been effective in calling forth certain external expressions of Western culture rather than its spiritual values.
Specific Objectives and Program of Work for the
Rural Schools in the State of Jalisco

The Mexican Rural School is an agency of social action, with the following main aspects:

1. Economic Improvement
2. Health
3. Civic and Cultural Achievements
4. Amusements and Sports
5. Home Improvement
6. Roads and Material Improvement
7. Conservation and Proper Usage of Natural Resources.

1. Economic Improvement

In a general way, the economy in the rural communities is very weak. To the productive resources that are now being exploited (agriculture, cattle raising, etc.) new resources, such as commerce, the exploitation of raw materials and so on, must be added. The organization of 'Cooperativas de Producción y de Consumo,' Production and Consumption Cooperatives, aims to find the best markets for both buying and selling; to make available cheap credit; to improve the agricultural produce of the region by the use of improved seed; to rotate crops and improve the soil; to improve the live stock; to train men in new methods of fighting diseases, and to protect the animals by vaccination; to find a way to industrialize the crops; to develop floriculture and to produce honey; and so on.
2. Health

Large segments of the rural population are still living under poor sanitary conditions. Much has yet to be accomplished in the line of health education. Cleanliness must be taught. A very important aspect of social work is the health of the community. Garbage must be collected and burned, and swamps and other sources of infection eliminated. A service for the transportation of water must be provided. People have to be taught to use periodic vaccination; to build simple, hygienic homes; to use a healthy, nutritious, balanced, and reasonable diet; to drive witch doctors out of the community; to establish emergency hospitals; to train young women as nurses; to combat vice and venereal diseases; and to train midwives.

3. Civic and Cultural Action

One of the ends of education is the formation of man as a citizen. He must be a citizen in the widest sense of the word -- that is, he must possess moral and political values.

To educate the Mexican peasant in this direction, an outstanding member of the community organizes civic events to honor the heroes of Mexican history, and to develop reverence for the Mexican flag and the National Anthem; arranges lectures and the showing of motion pictures; brings young men and women together in cultural organizations, and obtains scholarships for the best pupils; and establishes a library and encourages people to read. This civic leader will be very close to the school, will help the rural teacher, and will develop and improve the school in every way. His principal tasks will be to get children and adults to attend school; to obtain for the teacher and his
family decent living quarters within the community; to provide the school with
an adequate building, land, furniture, a theatre, and a sport field; and to
try to instil in the community an understanding of the work of the school. 2

4. Amusements and Sports

Happiness has to be brought to those people who appear to be indif-
ferent to every pain but feel the bitterness of misery, without having
healthy recreation so that they may have a smile on their lips and op-
timism, faith, and trust in the future in their hearts. Life in the
country is monotonous regardless of the sunrises, the melancholy of the
sunsets, and the enchantment of moon-lit nights. In the country there
are no recreations, and the hours which the heavy work leaves free are
empty and lead men to vice, choking the consciences of those tired
bodies and hungry spirits. It is urgent to bring to the country
peoples recreation of the kind that will strengthen, raise, and stimulate
the spirit. 3

The person responsible for this task should work toward the coopera-
tion of the members of the community, by setting up a game field, a playground
for children, and an open-air theatre. In addition, it is his duty to organize
a sports club where fiestas and dances can be held. The organization of wrest-
ling and other gymnastic competitions is important. Groups of singers and
musicians must be organized, and social meetings, excursions, banquets, and
other recreational activities must be arranged.

5. Improvements of the Home

The appalling state of subjection in which the Mexican woman, and es-

2 Mendez, Programa y Guía de Trabajo, 2-3.
3 Ibid., 3-4.
pecially the Indian woman, lives, is known only to those who have been close to Mexican peasant life. The centuries which have passed since the Conquest have not been sufficient to elevate her.

This problem is difficult to solve. The school dedicates part of its work to obtaining recognition for the peasant woman; as mistress of the house, the guide of the children, and the helpmate of the husband.

The woman assigned to the task of director, guiding the woman of the community, must organize the Feminine League of Social Action; organize a collective work-shop; train women in the cultivation of home gardens and the use of herbs for medicinal and other purposes; encourage women to participate in all of those organizations founded with the purpose of making them capable of exerting their political, social, and cultural functions; train women in the care and use of domestic animals; help them to create a clean atmosphere in their homes; and teach them how to cook a well-balanced meal.

6. Roads and Material Improvements

The school also has the task of making the community cooperate in the construction, reconstruction, and conservation of highways and roads. The community must have enough highways and roads, serviceable even during the rainy season, to keep in touch with other communities.

This work is done by a community member chosen by popular vote. His duties are to direct activities for the public welfare, dealing with such matters as the market place, the cemetery, streets, stock-yards, public utilities, public gardens, and the like. He must also provide road signs, construct a waiting room for railroad or bus transportation, try to secure a post office
for the community, and organize transportation services for passengers and
freight.

7. Conservation and Proper Use of Natural Resources

The conservation of existing timber, and the planting of new trees,
are vital to the health and economy of the community. The rural school gives
special attention to this matter. A community resident is chosen to prevent
the unnecessary cutting of trees, and to set up tree nurseries; to prevent
forest fires; to teach men the scientific care of trees; to organize a perma-
nent campaign for the planting of fruit trees; to select the proper type of
tree for ornamental purposes, and to provide sufficient irrigation for the
trees.

The Rural School organizes the people of the community in order that
they may jointly solve the problems which they could not solve individually.
Its aim is not to solve the problems for them, but to stimulate the community
and instil into it a spirit of self-reliance with which the problems can be
attacked, and solved.

The following list gives the agencies concerned with social work,
arranged by the year in which they were set up:

1926 Committee on Education - Secretary of Public Education

1932 Leagues on Peasant Improvement - Board of Federal Education in the State
of Sonora.

1945 Committee on Cultural and Economic Action - Department of Cultural
Missions.
1948 Committee on Public Improvement - Board of Federal Education in the
Region of Lagunera.
1950 Auxiliary Committee on Social Action - Presidential Body.
1950 School Patronage - Secretary of Public Education.
1951 Pro-Community Coordinating Committee - Torreon, Coahuila.
1953 Board of Moral, Civic, and Material Improvements - Secretary of State.
The most recent agency listed, the Board on Material, Civic, and
Moral Improvement, consists of:

1. A delegate for Economic Improvement.
3. A delegate for Civic and Cultural Action.
4. A delegate for Amusements and Sports.
5. A delegate for Home Improvement.
7. A delegate for the Conservation and Use of Natural Resources.

Those delegates should be outstanding members of the community,
elected by the residents. They are invited by the school to collaborate with
it in securing the consent of the residents in their plans. If necessary, the
delegates can have assistants, but they themselves remain responsible.

The following are the Agencies of Social Improvement from which the
school can get support. Also, the authorities and teachers must cooperate with
these institutions.
Economic Improvement

1. Banke of Land and Agricultural Credit.
3. Delegations for the Promotion of Public Land.
4. The National Board of Nurseries and Forests.
5. Sanitation Delegates.
6. The Secretary of Agriculture and Cattle Raising.
7. The Board of Material Improvement.
8. Procurers on Indian Affairs.
9. Cultural Missions, and Camps of Agricultural Experimentation.
10. Secretary of Hydraulic Resources.
11. Secretary of Economy.

Health

1. Centers of Artificial Insemination, Mexican Institute on Conservation of Natural Resources.
2. Sanitation and Service.
3. Infant Welfare Centers
4. Secretary of Health and Assistance.
5. School Medical Services.
6. Regional Hospitals and Dispensaries.
Improvement of the Home

1. Social Workers in various Secretariats.

Cultural and Recreational Improvement

1. Director of Physical Education.
2. Radio Stations and Moving Picture Theatres.
5. Publicity Departments of the State Governments and State Secretaries.
6. Lion and Rotary Clubs, and Labor and Peasant Organizations.
7. Cultural Institutions, etc.

Adult Education

Present Day Program

At the present time, adult education is not of the conventional type night school, but a meeting place for the adults of the village to discuss their problems. The following description of a night school is given by a rural teacher:

Many come, both men and women. Sometimes there are as many as fifty in a group. They do not attend with the regularity which one would like to have them do, as their occupations do not always permit this, but always when they do come, it is gladly and with real delight. We teach them what we can, but mainly what they especially want to study. Some study reading, some writing; some ask for instruction in small industries and others in agriculture. Women ask for lessons in home economics, especially with reference to cooking and sewing. We have found different groups, according to their interests and needs. While adults study these practical things, they are also learning to sing and to play some instruments, as they have a native love of music and beauty. I am delighted with the social progress which we are making. The streets are swept now;
the outsides of the houses have been whitewashed; the people dress with more cleanliness, are cleaner; excessive drinking is disappearing somewhat; the fly plague is abated; the people vaccinated against smallpox; the whole village comes to the festivals and concern themselves with the progress of the children in school. 4

From its beginning, the Mexican Rural School included in its program the education of adults, with two points in view: (1) the economic, and (2) the cultural. It thought of giving to the first school annex for educational extension and for the second school night courses for adults. Due to the scanty results and the errors committed, the school staff was obliged to abandon this vital field. Later on, however, this program was supplanted by the national campaign against illiteracy.

An integral organization of the community is the best possible school for education of adults. Their problems are concrete, produced by their daily life, and must be treated in a practical, functional, direct manner. The school must help the peasants in their social life.

The rural school, through the integral organization of the community, can promote, organize and direct this type of adult education. The rural teacher, with the help of various officials and institutions will be the guide. In this way, the whole community becomes a school. 5


5 Constantino, Educación, 88-92.
CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAMMING

Types of Rural Elementary Schools and Organization

All Federal activities concerned with education in Mexico, including rural education, are centered in the Secretaría de Educación Pública, the Secretary of Public Education. He is appointed by the President of the Republic.

Before 1921, education was largely a state function, and each of the twenty-eight states in Mexico maintained its own system. The Federal Government organized and kept schools in the three territories -- the Territory of Quintana Roo and the Northern and Southern Districts of Lower California.

During the administration of Obregón the Constitution was amended, and the right to establish and organize schools throughout Mexico was given to the Federal Government.

At present, two distinct types of rural school systems exist, the public, and the private.

The public school system includes the schools under Federal control, and those under state and municipal jurisdiction. The municipal schools are

1 In 1935, the Territory of Baja California Norte became the State of Baja, California. Thus, there are now twenty-nine states and only two territories, besides one Federal District.

2 Cook, The House of the People, 44.
very few in number.

The private schools are of two types: the schools of Article 123, and those growing out of private initiative. The latter exist mostly in the cities. According to the census of 1942, only ten such schools were then operating in rural areas, while there were 529 in the cities. 3

The "Schools of Article 123" evolved from the labor law of the Constitution, the Organic Law of 1942. Kneller describes them as follows:

Employers are held personally responsible for the social, cultural, and educational welfare of their employees. Article 67 specifies that owners of agricultural, industrial, or mining organizations, or associated industries, located more than three kilometers from the nearest town, must establish and maintain elementary schools for the community in which they operate, provided there are more than twenty children. Aims, programs, procedures, and methods are set by the Ministry of Education to accord with those of other elementary schools throughout the nation (Article 68). The law imposes definite obligations upon employers: they are required to furnish complete and hygienic school quarters, adequately equipped with minimum necessities such as libraries, textbooks, and general school materials (Article 70). They must also pay the teachers the same salaries as those paid by the Ministry of Education (Article 71). The number of teachers to be appointed must be in the ratio of one for every fifty pupils or fraction thereof greater than twenty (Article 69). Thus, a school of 120 pupils normally would have two teachers, and a school of 121 pupils would have three. 4

It is not easy to establish Schools of Article 123, because many employers will do all they can to evade this law. The following is a description of two instances of such evasion, by Professor Ramírez:

Mr. X, who was working his farm himself, and employing workers on a salary, in order to evade the obligation imposed upon him by the Consti-

3 Whetten, Rural Mexico, 413.

tution to maintain a school, changes his methods of developing his farm, and gives his lands to be worked on shares. Thus, it is no longer he who is working the land but his share-croppers. We say then: 'It is true, you are not exploiting those lands yourself, but since you continue exploiting men, establish a school.' In the other case, Mr. Z. obliges his workers to make their homes outside of the boundaries of his farm, to free himself in this way of the obligation to maintain a school. Every evening after a hard day's work and when the sun has already set, the peon makes his way home over a distance of four, five, or more miles from the farm on which he works, to return the next day at sunrise and continue his labor. This is what they do, but we advise the peons to establish their homes all in the same place, and we say to the proprietor: 'Build a school for them there.' We often say here: 'For one sly fox, a sly fox and a half,' or as you say in the U. S., 'We go them one better.'

We shall not weaken, difficult though the task may be, in the creation of schools which we designate as of 'Article 123.' We shall not weaken, because of their educational benefits; and because (what follows is a secret) we are also using these schools as the means for the division of the land. Mexico is a country of large estates and these schools must put an end to them. That is why land proprietors don't like them.5

The Federal rural schools are under the supervision of the Department of Rural School and Incorporation of Indigenous Culture into Mexican Life, in charge of a director of rural schools who is appointed by the Secretary of Education. Most of the non-Federal rural schools receive Federal support.

Federal control of education stems from Article 3 of the Constitution. Until 1946, there was much controversy over the meaning of the first part of this article. At times, it was interpreted as denouncing the teachings of the Church. In 1945, President Avila Camacho recommended to Congress that this article be amended. It was done in 1946.6 Before the amendment, the first paragraph of the article read:

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5 Ramirez, The Mexican Program of Rural Education, 3-4.
6 Whetten, Rural Mexico, 430.
The Education to be imparted by the State shall be socialistic, and in addition to excluding all religious doctrine, it shall combat fanaticism and prejudice, for which purpose schools shall organize their teachings and activities in such a way that youth may form a rational and exact idea of the universe and social life.

It now reads:

The Education to be imparted by the State -- Federation, States, or Municipalities -- shall tend to develop harmoniously all of a person's talents and shall at the same time develop in him a love of his country and the consciousness of international solidarity, in the spirit of independence and justice.7

In each state, a Federal Education Officer is appointed for the general supervision of schools. States are organized into districts, corresponding to our counties, and each district has a Federal school official. State directors are responsible for supervising and improving the work of the district supervisors, while the State Inspector's job is to improve the entire organization by visits, conferences, working committees, professional reading, and the like.

The district supervisor has considerable authority and freedom in conducting school affairs in his district. He is responsible for the selection and placement of teachers. His ability to work in amity with the school and community is an essential for his success.

The supervisor is not burdened with administrative work. This is in part due to the simplicity of the physical plant program, in part to the fact that the arrangement between the Federal Government and the local community assigns clear-cut responsibilities to each.

7 Ibid., 430.
The district supervisor must make frequent visits for supervisory purposes. He must organize frequent meetings with groups of teachers. He must attend and cooperate with the annual institute for teachers in his district, in order to further his supervisory work for the following year.  

School Buildings and Equipment

School buildings are put up and equipped at little cost to the Federal Government. They are simple structures. At times, the school house is an old church or an abandoned building, but usually the school is a new one-story structure, made of adobe, white-washed, and with a shiny red-tiled roof. According to many, it is usually the most sanitary place in town.

The school furnishings are also simple; desk, benches, tables and chairs are usually homemade. Such equipment as maps or blackboards is often painted on the walls. The walls are usually decorated with children’s art work in bright colors.

The few books that are used are quite instructive and interesting. Some are published by the Federal Government, but most of them are furnished by the Secretariat of Public Education. Special readers, written especially for the rural schools, are prepared by members of the staff of the Secretariat. Such books are reasonably priced, and bound in attractive covers.

The First Book has two parts. Part One is an adaptation of the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears; Part Two is mainly concerned with the home

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3 Cook, The House of the People, 47-49.
and the school, and lessons in patriotism, and national heroes.

The teacher's home is usually close to the school. Even the smallest school has a workshop. Almost invariably there is a garden, chicken coops, and rabbit pens. Also, a model home is built on the school grounds, a simple three-room whitewashed adobe house, with a tile roof. It contains a living room, a bedroom, and a kitchen with a built-in combination stove and sink.

The typical rural school has one room, accommodating approximately forty boys and girls of all ages. At the present time, it offers a six-year course. Pottery-making, embroidery, weaving, tanning, and carpentry are taught. The following is a description of a school, by a rural teacher:

The children's school now has a department of personal cleanliness, a medicine chest, a library, a little dark room for developing pictures, a chicken house and rabbit pen, a flower garden, a playground, an outdoor theatre, and three hectares of crop land. When I arrived to take charge of the school, the children sat on the floor or on stones provided for that purpose. Now we do not have up-to-date furniture such as I hear called pedagogical, but we do have strong, comfortable benches and good tables for our work. All this our children have accomplished themselves, aided by the different organizations formed by me in the community. 9

Teacher Recruiting and Training

Rural Normal Schools

In 1922, the first Rural Normal School was established at Tacámbaro in the state of Michoacán. Until 1926, only two others were added, because of uncertainty in the absence of an official curriculum. A curriculum was set up,

9 Ibid., 12-14.
however, in 1926, which is still in force.\textsuperscript{10}

Until 1942, the rural normal schools were coeducational. The National Congress of Education was opposed to coeducation, however, and it was abandoned in 1942. As a result, nine of the larger schools, with the best facilities for teaching agriculture, are now reserved for male students. The remaining nine schools, reserved for women, give instruction in homemaking. One normal school in the state of Baja California has so far remained coeducational.\textsuperscript{11}

Under Articles 73 through 39 of the Organic Law of 1942, the Federal Government has complete control of all normal schools, with the sole exception of a few privately owned institutions which, however, must meet governmental regulations. Article 79 specifies that the main objective of any type of teacher training is to prepare teachers to meet educational needs of the country. Upon completion of their studies, the graduates are required to join teaching staffs in areas where there is a demand. Furthermore, they are to instruct illiterate adults.

In 1946, there existed in Mexico thirty normal schools, two-thirds of which are near the Federal District. Several of the southeastern states have only two schools, while there are three in several of the southwestern states. Fourteen states are without a normal school.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{10} Whetten, \textit{Rural Mexico}, 407.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, 408.

\textsuperscript{12} Kneller, \textit{The Education of the Mexican Nation}, 151-152.
According to Jaime Torres Bodet, Minister of Education in 1946, miserable conditions and lack of equipment prevail in the nineteen Federal normal schools throughout the Republic. In 1942, the total enrollment in these schools was 3,803, of which 72.8 per cent were men.

According to information taken from the records of the Secretariat of Public Education, of 4,227 rural teachers in eleven states, only 42.6 per cent had gone beyond primary school, and only 21.8 per cent had a normal school certificate. 13

In order to gain admission to a rural normal school, the student must have successfully completed elementary school. In the past, graduation from such institutions has been allowed after three, four, or five years, instead of the regular six years. The reform of 1946 specified that students must attend for six years.

There is a demand for teachers in rural areas, and a scarcity of equipment. The Mexican Government has had to cope with a number of problems, such as low salaries and the attractions of city life. Recently, the Government has begun to admit students on full scholarships in order to deal more effectively with the shortage of rural teachers. 14

Central education officials select, supervise, and direct the staff members of the normal schools. They must be good community leaders, in addi-

13 Whetten, Rural Mexico, 409-410.
14 Ibid., 156.
tion to possessing high moral qualities and scholastic attainments. The faculty includes instructors in workshop and small industries, health, physical education and recreation, and home economics.

Most of the students are recruited from the poorer classes. The normal schools provide cultural environment, recreation, a home atmosphere, and training and opportunities for scholastic and professional growth. 15

The building in which the normal school is housed may be an abandoned church, convent, or hacienda, and if reconstruction or rehabilitation is necessary, instructors and students perform the needed labor. The community usually donates enough land for a school farm.

The minimum amount of equipment is furnished, but as time goes on more is acquired by the efforts of the students and faculty. 16

The curriculum of the rural normal school has the following objectives: (1) To prepare the prospective rural teachers academically for their cultural duties, (2) to prepare them professionally for efficient teaching in small communities, (3) to give them practical training in agriculture, the raising of livestock, and in crafts and trades so that they may be able to promote the economic development of the community to which they are assigned. 17

The local Federal school is used as a laboratory by the students and staff of the rural normal school. Prospective teachers can thus participate

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15 Cook, The House of the People, 35-36.
16 Ibid., 40.
17 Sanchez, A Revolution by Education, 33.
in the activities of the school and community, as they will be expected to do once they become teachers. 18

The Tables that follow show the course of study for both the rural and the urban normal schools. 19

18 Cook, The House of the People, 39

19 Agenda del Maestro, edited by Rubic J. Villagran and Carlos Peza, Monte de Biedad No. 1, Mexico, D. F., 1948, 569-572.
**TABLE I**

SECONDARY CYCLE (HIGH-SCHOOL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First year subjects</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. First Course in Mathematics (Arithmetic, Elements of Algebra and Geometry)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. First Course in Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. First Course in Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. First Course in World History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. First Course in Language and Spanish Literature</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. First Course in a Foreign Language (English or French)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. First Course in Civic Education (Moral, Economic, and Social). (The man in society, with special reference to the problems in Mexico)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. First Course in Musical Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. First Course in Drawing (Imitative)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. First Course in Workshop and Home Economics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. First Course in Physical Education (including Preliminary Instruction)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours 32
### TABLE II

**SECONDARY CYCLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second year subjects</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Second Course in Mathematics (Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Physics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Second Course in Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Second Course in Geography (Human)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Second Course in World History</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. First Course in History of Mexico</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Second Course in Language and Spanish Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Second Course in a Foreign Language (French or English)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Second Course in Civic Education (The man and his economy, with special reference to the problems of Mexico)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Second Course in Musical Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Second Course in Art (Constructive)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Second Course in Workshop and Home Economics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Second Course in Physical Education (including Premilitary Instruction)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours 32
## TABLE III
### SECONDARY CYCLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third year subjects</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Third Course in Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry, and Trigonometry)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Third Course in Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chemistry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Third Course in Geography of Mexico</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Second Course in the History of Mexico</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Third Course in Language and Spanish Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Third Course in a Foreign Language (English or French)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Third Course in Civic Education (Moral, Economic, and Social). (The man and his rights, with special reference to the problems of Mexico.)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Third Course in Musical Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Modelling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Third Course in Workshop and Home Economics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Third Course in Physical Education (including Pre-military Instruction)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours** 33
TABLE IV

SECONDARY CYCLE

The Third Year Electives are

I. With Workshop
   A. Two hours in addition to four additional hours in Workshop
   B. Two hours in addition to Mathematics, Arts and Sciences

II. Without Workshop
   A. Six hours in addition to three other courses, one in Mathematics, and other two in Arts and Sciences
   B. Six hours of Special Instruction

Workshop 6 hours
Mathematics 5 hours
Physics and Chemistry 5 hours
Biological Sciences 5 hours
Social Sciences 5 hours
Art 2 hours

III. The director of the school may add two hours a week for extra-curricular activities.
### TABLE V

**PROFESSIONAL CYCLE** FIRST YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Philosophy of Education (First Course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Technique of Teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Economic Problems of Mexico</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Principles of Mineralogy and Geology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Spanish Etymology</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>7. World Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>8. Logic</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Penmanship</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Musical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Drawing and Plastic Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Physical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Workshop</td>
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Total hours: 35
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Philosophy of Education (Second Course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. General History of Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Paidology (Kindergarten specialty)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. School Hygiene</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sociology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Technique of Teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Cosmography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Musical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Drawing and Plastic Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Physical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Workshop</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours** 35
TABLE VII

PROFESSIONAL CYCLE: THIRD YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Philosophy of Education (Third Course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. History of Education in Mexico</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Technique of Teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Child Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. School Organization and Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. History of Art and Principles of Aesthetics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Musical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Drawing and Plastic Arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Dancing and Dramatic Art</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Physical Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Workshop</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Elective</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following subjects may be added:

- Technique of Drawing in the Primary School
- Technique of Teaching Music in the Primary School
- Adult Education
- Biology
- Elements of Abnormal Psychology
- School Statistics
In-Service Training

In-service training is an important project, by which teachers obtain their teaching certificates. In 1938, a school for In-Service Training was established in Mexico City. A few instructors donated their services. The experiment was at first informal; however, in 1941 the project was formally started in accordance with Article 82 of the Organic Law which provides for the professional improvement of teachers in service. In 1941, the enrollment was three hundred. At present it exceeds six hundred. The program is strenuous. But an example of the eagerness with which teachers take advantage of it was given in 1945, when classes met for a total of seventy-two hours in a three-day period.

For those rural teachers who cannot attend the normal schools in the cities, the Ministry, in 1945, established the Federal Institute for Teacher training, the Instituto Federal de Capacitación del Magisterio. In 1946, a total of 2,610 teachers in thirteen scattered centers received their certificates. 20

Teacher Benefits

In 1940, the Ministry carried on a campaign to improve the salaries of rural school teachers. The 70 to 100 per cent increases which resulted is not much of a gain in view of the higher cost of living. 21

In 1944, the salaries for Federal rural school teachers ranged from

21 Ibid., 156.
eighty to one hundred pesos ($15.00 to $20.00) while those who taught in state and municipal schools received still lower pay.  

At present, special benefits are being offered to teachers working in unhealthy climates. In 1946, the total budget for this purpose amounted to 3,600,000 pesos.

In order to retain experienced teachers, bonuses for length of service and pensions are given.

At present, there are in Mexico four classes of rural teachers: (1) State and Municipal teachers -- those who are supported by the state of the municipality; (2) "Article 123" teachers -- those paid by the owners of large industrial or agricultural centers; (3) Federalized teachers -- those paid half by the state and half by the Federal Government; and (4) Federal teachers -- those paid by the Federal Government.

The salary of the rural teachers ranges from two hundred to four hundred pesos per month, according to his position and place of work. However, teacher enrollment is still far from satisfactory.

Personality of the Rural School Teacher

In a recent address, Ignacio Ramírez Lopez, General Director of Primary Instruction and Supervision in the States and Territories, stated:

Good health. -- We agree with the theory that in a healthy body exists a healthy mind, because we believe that mind is an educated body.

22 Whetton, Rural Mexico, 410.

A Cultivated Spirit. -- The uneducated man is a particularist, an individualist, and exceedingly selfish. The educated man is less of an individualist, less selfish, tends toward the universal, and has an attitude for free cooperation.

The Association of American Colleges has recently attempted an analysis of the elements of culture -- that is to say, that which civilization demands of the individual for the sake of his own formation -- as follows:

1. To speak and write with full effectiveness his own language.
2. To know at least one foreign language.
3. To understand, organize, and interpret the current events in the physical and social world.
4. To use properly and with an adequate understanding, and each time with greater perfection, the elementary principles of the arts and sciences.
5. To understand and be capable of judging with discrimination and a flexible mind the great works of art and the moral and social systems.
6. To know how to live and cooperate with his likes, in a spirit of human sympathy, justice, and understanding.

To train children in social cooperation -- which is nothing else but democracy -- is one of the great needs of the present.

Democracy has been explained by Dewey as a consequence of social conditions. He has said that as the forces disappeared which found their expression in feudal society, other forces took their place that worked in favor of democratic institutions.

The Revolution has stimulated man to intervene in the social struggle. It has been a fighting faith. Thus the present era is distinguished by an ardent crusade against absurdities, against vested injustice, and against the old evils.

We do not think of teachers as ascetics who work for themselves alone, apart from their kind and locked in a cell. Nor do we hold with those who show themselves full of pride, as arrogant men who think themselves above the worker and the peasant.

On the contrary, like the heroes of Dostoevsky, we believe that teachers are knights errant who have the urge to act, to fight, to triumph without ever pausing, not even in victory. They march on, untiring, driven by a superior spirit which torments them because they want to ease the misfortunes of others.
Teachers who, being the craftsmen of an outstanding piece of work, use as their tools no falsehood, no lie, no self-interest. Because their field is the human soul which must be sheltered and nourished. Men and women whose task is both to sow the wheat and to scatter through the world the seed of the spirit.24

CHAPTER V

RURAL CULTURAL MISSIONS

Organization

Duties of Staff Members

The first Rural Cultural Mission was established at Zacualtipán in 1923, and was under the direction of Professor Rafael Ramírez who later became Chief of the Department of Rural Education in the Secretariat of Public Education. His staff included an instructor in soap making, a tanner, two agronomists, a carpenter, and a teacher in homemaking.

The missions program continued to grow, and by 1926 there were six missions in operation. More than two thousand rural teachers attended, for teacher training had become a regular part of the cultural missions program.

In 1933 and 1934, the cultural missions changed from traveling to stationary institutions. However, traveling institutions were more needed than those of the permanent type, and soon groups of cultural missionaries went again to remote communities.

From 1938 to 1942 the cultural missions were administered by the Ministry of Indian Affairs. In fact, the program was discontinued. In 1942, however, the cultural missions again became a part of the Secretariat of Public Education, and there was established the Auxiliary Office of Cultural Missions. In 1943, the Auxiliary Office was changed to the Department of Cultural Missions.
In 1942, a budget of 952,480 pesos was set up for the operation of the cultural missions. Of this amount, 626,680 pesos was spent for salaries, 251,810 pesos for equipment.

The 1943 budget was 1,093,227.50 pesos. In 1942, a plan had been initiated which provided for (1) twenty rural cultural missions to improve the social, economic, and educational standards of rural areas; (2) ten workers' cultural missions to conduct specific activities among the workers; (3) two urban missions to improve the training of primary teachers in the larger cities of the Republic.  

The workers' missions remain in a locality for a few weeks at a time, while the rural cultural missions remain from one to three years before moving on.

The staff assigned to a rural cultural mission consists of a director or chief of the mission, who must be a normal school teacher with at least five years' experience, and must be acquainted with rural life and its problems; a social worker; a nurse and midwife; a teacher of agriculture; several construction teachers; two or more teachers of trades and industries; a teacher of mechanics who must have knowledge of operating a motion picture projector;


2 Ibid., l.

3 Whetten, Rural Mexico, 433.
a music teacher; and a leader of recreational activities.

The duties of the mission chief are the following: he organizes, guides, and supervises activities and contributes to the construction, preservation, and improvement of municipal roads, highways, telephone lines, and post offices. In addition, he organizes a store house for tools, machinery, and raw materials where these items may be purchased at cost.

The duties of the social worker are varied. Among her most important assignments are training in cleanliness, and the extermination of insects and vermin in the houses. She encourages the improvement of the homes, and instructs the women in making clothes, weaving, and the like. She gives advice regarding marriage and the rearing and educating of children, and encourages family recreation through various activities. Young women in the community who show special ability and interest in social work are trained to carry on this work when the mission has left.

The nurse and midwife must take the necessary steps to prevent and control disease; establish a health and maternity clinic, and set up a small pharmacy. She must try to bring about cleanliness in the streets, markets, and public buildings, and urge compliance with the laws concerning burials. She cares for expectant mothers, continuing after delivery, and for the sick. She also gives instruction in nursing to rural teachers, and trains four or five capable women to continue her work when she leaves.

The teacher of agriculture seeks to settle disputes over the use and distribution of water, and the regulations on the use of municipal water for irrigation. He works for the improvement of crop cultivation and rotation,
the control of plant diseases, and so on. He attempts to improve the quality
and use of pasture land, and to better the quality of livestock through selec-
tion and cross-breeding. He contributes to the establishment of plant nurser-
ies, and broadens the program for the planting, transplanting, and propagation
of trees. Finally, he instructs the rural teachers in important aspects of
agriculture.

The construction teacher gives instruction in the uses of such mate-
rials as lime, brick, and adobe, and guides the construction of homes and public
conveniences such as bridges, sewers, and the like.

The teachers of trades and industries give training in such subjects
as the preservation of meats, fruit, and vegetables; the making of milk prod-
ucts, candy, and baked goods; tanning, shoemaking, and saddlemaking; carpentry,
the weaving of wool and cotton; and so on. In addition, they set up workshops
in the schools and instruct the teachers in their use.

The music teacher directs music and singing for the children in the
community; imparts some instruction in music teaching methods to the teachers;
and promotes and organizes festivals and other social events. In addition, he
studies and collects all types of regional musical compositions, and encourages
their performance.

The leader of recreational activities encourages meetings, contests,
and festivals within the community. His aim is to have everyone take part in
at least one sport. He also directs adult military training. Members of the
community are encouraged to provide at their own expense the necessary build-
ings and equipment.
Specific Objectives and Working Program

The specific objectives and working program, as set forth by chiefs and supervisors of missions during various conferences, are as follows:

1. To develop communities economically by improving techniques in the customary occupations in order to increase productivity, and by introducing new occupation if necessary.

2. To introduce new crops, increase the number of domestic animals, and bring about the production and sale of products which will result in a higher living standard for rural workers.

3. To improve public health and hygiene through community campaigns and the establishment of the organizations necessary for such programs.

4. To improve nutrition and clothing standards.

5. To develop improved recreational opportunities.

6. To establish well-organized, well-equipped homes.

7. To awaken an appreciation for education, and to establish community schools.

8. To eliminate any foreign influence which tends to undermine the basis of our national life.

9. To provide opportunities for further training for the rural teachers in service. Teachers should be helped to improve the physical condition of their schools, to complete those school buildings which are unfinished, and to organize and conduct their schools.4

The working principles, as given by the mission chiefs and supervisors, are as follows:

1. Fundamentally, the work entrusted to the rural cultural mission is that of promoting the rehabilitation and improvement of rural communities, raising their economic standard of living, bringing the level of their development closer to the accepted living standards of our times,

and improving them as social units so that they may become integral parts of the Mexican nation. We hope to reach this goal by teaching rural groups, and through well-planned, vigorous, and continuous action, to make full use of their own resources and latent powers.

2. The rural cultural mission will promote the organization and further the development and progress of educational institutions that serve the vital needs of the people.

3. The rural cultural mission shall serve the regional groups of the lower economic and cultural levels which, because of their geographic and social isolation, are still living under such primitive conditions that they are unable to contribute to the general progress of their country. At the same time, the rural cultural missions shall work with more advanced groups which need guidance in order to retain their small gains and to work profitably under the private property system guaranteed by law.

4. The region where the cultural missions are to operate will be determined by the Cultural Missions Department after careful consideration of economic and cultural problems, and location with respect to mountains and rivers, distance between communities, and means of communications and transportation available. 5

The rural cultural missions are faced with two difficult problems. Lack of trained personnel and low salaries are the first problem. The second is the limited amount of time available to the mission in any one community. Since the mission's objectives are so broad, it cannot achieve all of them. 6

Report on Achievements

Accomplishments relating to the Home and to Health.

All Missions did these things:

1. Constructed elevated cooking places.

5 Ibid., 31.

6 Whetten, Rural Mexico, 439-440.
2. Installed corn grinders.
3. Built home furniture.
4. Started flower and vegetable gardens and orchards.
5. Campaigned for better clothing and nourishment for children.
6. Vaccinated against disease.
7. Established community medical service.
8. Attended at births.
9. Cleaned springs and wells.
10. Improved household equipment.
11. Combatted endemic and epidemics.
12. Constructed buildings for domestic animals.
14. All missions except the ones at Ixmatlán constructed sanitary bridges.
15. Maternity homes were established by the missions at La Trinidad, Cuatempan, Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Jalpán, Xichu, Ixmatlán, Concepción del Oro.
16. Suitable drinking water was introduced at Cuatempan, Tequixtepec, Coyutla, Bolaños, and Concepción del Oro.
17. Midwives were trained at Cuatempán, Chietla, La Trinidad, Ciudad Guerrero (Chihuahua), Tingambato, Villa Victoria, Acatempan, Motozintla, Tequixtepec, Jalpán, Ixmatlán, Bolaños, and Tepehuanes.

Accomplishments relating to Recreation and Culture.
In schools, all missions accomplished the following:
2. Construction of athletic fields.
3. Organization of schools.
4. The missions at Chietla, Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Acatepec, Motozintla, Tequixtpec, Jalpan, San Antonio, El Fuerte, and Santiago Ixcuintla constructed and arranged teacherages.

5. The missions at Tanlajas, La Trinidad, Kanzac, Guerrero, Chih., Guerrero, Tlax., Acatepec, Motozintla, Tequixtpec, Zacatepec Mixes, built playgrounds.

6. The missions at Chietla, La Trinidad, Kanzac, Guerrero, Tlax., Villa Victoria, Acatepec, Motozintla, Tequixtpec, Jalpan, El Fuerte, Santiago Ixcuintla, Tepehuanes, Concepcion del Oro constructed open-air theatres.

In the communities, all missions accomplished the following:

1. Social and cultural campaigns.
2. Choral groups.
3. Dramatic groups.
4. Athletic groups.
5. Preliminary education.
6. Festivals, fairs, contests and regional expositions.
7. Social-recreational committees.
8. Bands or orchestra were organized by the following missions: Acatepec, Huayapan, Chietla, Guerrero, Tlax., Tixtambato, Zacatepec Mixes, Jalpan, Kanzac, Paballan, Palizada, Motozintla, La Trinidad, Coyutla, and Iliamatlan.

9. Dance groups were organized at Tixtambato, El Ticui, and Concepcion del Oro.

Accomplishments relating to economic improvement.

All missions, with the exception of Cuatempan, Puebla, accomplished the following:

1. Taught seed selection.
2. Introduced new crops.
3. Improved labor techniques.
4. Planted trees.
5. Established carpentry shops.
6. Introduced various small industries.
7. Organized economic action committees.
8. Opened and repaired roads.
9. All missions except the ones at Cuatempán, Guerrero, Chih., and Guerrero, Tlax., arranged for the repair of agricultural implements.
10. All missions except the ones at Tingambato and at Cuatempán demonstrated and established crop rotation.
11. All missions except those at Cuatempán, Chietla, Tanlajas, Tihosuco, Guerrero, Chih., Villa Victoria, Zacatepec, Coyutla and Comalcalco were active in preventing and combating livestock diseases.
12. The missions at Hueyapán, Tanlajas, La Trinidad, Tihosuco, Kanzac, Guerrero, Tlax., Jalpán, El Fuerte, and Santiago Ixcuintla introduced water for irrigation.
13. The following missions established hatcheries: Hueyapán, La Trinidad, Tihosuco, Kanzac, Guerrero, Chih., Guerrero, Tlax., Tingambato, Villa Victoria, Acatempán, Motozintla, Bolanos.
14. The following missions established smithies: Kanzac, Motozintla, and El Fuerte.
15. The following missions established tanneries: Hueyapán, Kanzac, Guerrero, Tlax., Acatempán, Coyutla, Motozintla, San Antonio, Santiago Ixcuintla, San Antenogenes Poonas, Faballón, and Pali-

16. Pottery factories were established at San Antonio and Jalpán.

No mission was able to provide for the storage of harvests.7

7 Bonilla, Report, 47.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Jacqueline Lois Cadwell has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 20, 1954
Ruth creek
Signature of Advisor