

That I am not alone in this criticism of the English of the intermediate school may be seen from the following extracts from the Reports of the Inspectors of Continuation and High Schools to the Minister of Education, Ontario, 1915:—

"I gave some figures to show the unsatisfactory nature of the pupils' work in reading, writing, and spelling. Pupils who read fairly well in the oral reading-lessons are permitted to mumble their words or to speak rapidly and indistinctly in giving oral answers or in reading aloud work in other subjects; pupils who write and spell well in the classes in these subjects are permitted to scribble or to write in a slovenly way in the other subjects. Too often the teacher, who neglects the pupils' work in the subjects of reading, writing, and spelling, except in the class periods devoted to these subjects, excuses himself for the poor work of his class by the old, old story of poor preparation in the public schools. I confess I have no patience with this excuse, time-worn as it is, and well founded as it also sometimes is, but my experience has shown me that the teacher can easily secure fairly satisfactory results by ceaseless vigilance."—(Report on Continuation Schools.)

"As it is, I am convinced that many pupils after three or four years in a high school go out into life with a writing vocabulary—certainly with an oral vocabulary—not much more extensive than that with which they began their high-school studies.

"The ignorance and clumsiness of the average pupil in expressing his thoughts and sentiments are appalling. In every class of every school there are, of course, brilliant exceptions, but the general average of capacity is low. I fear that a considerable number of teachers are at present relying too much on the text-book as a means of producing the desired results, and are not allowing sufficient scope and swing to their own initiative."—Report on High Schools.)

(2.) *The General Secondary Course.*—Latin would be left out. The foreign language taught should be conversational French. There should be a thorough English of a direct type based on wide reading, also a course of mathematics, but only of a directly applied character—*e.g.*, in connection with the economic and statistical side of geography and calculations in connection with science experiments. Among other subjects, science of a general type based on practical work related to industries and surrounding natural conditions should be a dominant feature. This course would provide for that 50 per cent. of our secondary pupils who would not choose a University course, or who had not decided on a trade or calling, or who were prepared to postpone special preparation for it.

Further, pupils should not be driven into a course of study unsuited to their needs, merely to pass an examination necessary for entrance to the Public Service, the teaching profession, pharmacy, or other occupation. A pupil should, from any one of the above courses, be able to prepare for any of the qualifying examinations above mentioned. The Matriculation Examination should be used only for qualifying for University entrance and closely kindred purposes.

It is possible so to arrange affairs that each child may have the benefit of the broad, general, or universal foundation before he finds it necessary to direct his energies into narrower channels. It has been freely admitted that the State should make this possible by extra expenditure if necessary. It is simply, in this connection, a policy of self-defence. "A specialty founded upon ignorance" is a detriment to the specialist, and a menace to the State. "A specialty founded upon knowledge"—upon breadth and richness of experience—is a social asset, an insurance against narrowness and self-seeking.

There is also another good reason why general training should come first and the choice of a specialty be deferred. Those who know children know how disastrous it is to try to make life choices and to differentiate courses during the years of the elementary school. Wise choices cannot be assured when choice is made before the child is fourteen years of age. It is doubtful if in most cases they can be made until much later than that. Children at the end of the elementary-school stage are at a changeable rather than at a decisive period. They cannot know, nor can it be certainly known for them, what specialty is best. One day they have decided to pursue one vocation, and the next day another.

(3.) *The Continuation Course.*—The continuation course would provide for pupils who go direct from primary schools to a definite trade or occupation. This course, with the evening classes for definite technical training, would represent all