

As to methods of instruction, the examinational method of valuation is generally depreciated. In the best schools the undue lecturing propensities of teachers are severely limited to a maximum of one-half of each period, the balance being for supervised study and for thus showing to pupils individually the technique of study for each subject. The "project and problem method" of work is highly recommended as infusing vital interest. The old passive memorization method is severely discounted.

The following statistics were compiled by Briggs from his examination of 255 junior high schools: 84 per cent. were equipped with libraries, 85 per cent. with assembly-halls, 51 per cent. with gymnasiums, and 79 per cent. with laboratories. Very few of the schools have more than one science laboratory.

The home-science course is generally provided with excellent equipment, and includes cooking, sewing, dressmaking and pattern-devising, care of children, service of meals, hygiene, domestic commissariat and purchases, house-management, &c. A model cottage is generally provided for this course. The girl students also actively participate in the work of the school cafeteria and in providing and serving teachers' meals. The whole of the work is conceived and executed on practical business lines.

As regards the teaching staff of the junior high school, I was assured in practically all quarters that the elementary-school teachers have proved to be the most suitable. The majority are recruited from this source, the balance being from the upper secondary school. Special classes and lectures have been organized at normal colleges and universities for the purpose of giving specialized training to elementary-school teachers qualifying for the junior-high-school teaching certificate. As in the elementary schools, women teachers have almost displaced men, except in the school-shops department, where the whole of the instruction in manual arts is in the hands of male experts. Special precautions ensure that no untrained teacher shall operate in any of these schools.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON AMERICAN SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Educational innovations adopted and translated into successful practice by a nation of over one hundred millions, constituting the leading democracy of the world to-day, are certainly entitled to dispassionate if not sympathetic consideration on the part of our people. In no other country of the world is a higher valuation placed upon education than in the United States of America, and when the coming sanity of the nations reduces or removes the present frightful incubus of naval and military armaments we are bound to witness educational provision and experimentation there on a scale which will enlist the admiration of a sceptical world. Although the direct application of educational machinery for social and economic efficiency is hotly denounced by the experts of older and more conservative countries as a perversion of its true spiritual aims, this unjustifiable criticism will not turn aside Americans from their educational goal. Academic critics may continue to heap ridicule upon the Gary system as an iconoclastic fraud and a revolutionary concession to a sordid age of materialistic interpretation; they may continue to declaim against the modern school as a betrayal of moral and spiritual values, and as motivated by baneful commercial obsessions; but this storm of vituperative protest from intellectuals and from petrified vested scholastic interests leaves progressive American thought untouched. Their education is definitely divorced from old aristocratic and feudalistic notions. The passive acquisition of knowledge by receptive memorizing has long been relegated to the limbo of educational rejects. Education is being steadily reorganized to develop all late talents and aptitudes for social service so as to endow pupils with proper judgment in vocational choice, and at the same time to engender social sympathy for the other lines in life. The peculiar emphasis attached to manual arts is of course conditioned by the dominant industrialism of the States. In New Zealand our educational system should function commensurately in the interests of our primary industries. A far more generous provision is required for agricultural education.

But it must be again emphasized that the wholesale vocationalization of American secondary education has not displaced cultural education. The practical and the spiritual have joined hands in a harmonious organic system. The full content of English literature, social studies, music, and graphic art, which subjects in the hands of adequate teachers hold a rich potentiality of humanizing and spiritualizing value, fully redeems the national programme from mere utilitarianism. In the whole of the schools I visited I found great importance attached to music, singing, and drawing, and generally very satisfactory provision made for their study. When a pupil has no executive faculty in music he is trained in the best schools, by means of the victrola and the school orchestra, to appreciation of good music. I listened to school orchestras of a personnel of seventy trained members under the baton of an expert musician. The conjoined orchestras of the Berkeley junior high schools put on an annual musical festival of high merit at the famous open-air Greek theatre of the California University. It is recognized that the education of public taste in music is the necessary foundation and the inspiration of higher achievement in that art. I found in these schools evidence of a keen desire to cultivate the æsthetic appreciation of the pupils. At different institutions when I spoke by request—notably at the Californian Southern University and at the Los Angeles Polytechnic, when I addressed audiences of three thousand and two thousand respectively, I was specially asked to deal with the spiritual and idealistic content of English literature. At the Honolulu Conference, too, I was impressed by the importance attached to the spiritual function of literature.

Co-education.—Co-education of the sexes in secondary education is a striking feature to a visitor from New Zealand, where we have almost complete segregation. The Americans as a whole endorse their system as the natural method in a training for life where the sexes are continuously associated and where reciprocal understanding and respect are essential. The American realizes more than we do that sex inequality is purely physical, not mental. From the financial point of view co-education constitutes a great source of economy in school buildings, grounds, and equipment. The American girl is infinitely more self-reliant and unconventional than her British sister, and this independence