

recognized and observed for many years in the professions. The length of this pre-vocational training must depend in general on the age at which the adolescent leaves school to go to work as a learner or apprentice in his particular trade or occupation.

If he leaves school at fifteen, he will have on the average not more than two years after leaving primary school for this pre-vocational training.

For ordinary trades, industries, and commerce most authorities are agreed that two years is the minimum period that should be occupied in full-time pre-vocational training. This is, for example, the practice in the junior technical schools in England. Where a pupil can remain for a longer time in a post-primary school, intensive pre-vocational training can be postponed to the last two years of school life.

Just as in the primary school the education should be complete, so far as it goes, so in the post-primary school the course for a pupil who will leave at fifteen or sixteen years of age should be *sui generis* and complete as far as it goes, granting always, as in the case of the primary school, its suitability for further extension which may be in the continuation and technical classes of the part-time day and evening technical school.

While it is advisable, even in the most academic treatment, that educational work should not be too far removed from the pattern of everyday life, in pre-vocational training it is above all necessary that the teaching should be in the hands of competent practitioners, whether it be in a medical school, a law school, an engineering school, or in a post-primary-school course for some trade or commercial or domestic occupation.

In the professional schools of University rank the principle has been widely recognized, but it applies perhaps with greater force to pre-vocational courses for young adolescents in post-primary schools. In these it is essential that the teachers should have an intimate up-to-date knowledge of the trade for which they are preparing their pupils, and that the pupils should be surrounded as far as possible with the equipment and environment of the trade. Thus for an agricultural course in a post-primary school with a boys' hostel the school farm should be run as a commercial proposition by skilled farmers on the teaching staff with the boys as partners in its management and working, and the whole course built round its activities. Such a course would not aim at preparing boys for entrance to an Agricultural College of University rank, but rather for practical farming, with short courses from time to time for adult instruction not solely on farming topics.

Similarly, the engineering-trades course should be under the direct management of an engineer, with up-to-date knowledge of engineering-shop practice, if the school is to prepare boys for ordinary apprenticeships, and the shop should contain such machines as may be found in general engineering-works. The course itself should be built round the activities of the engineering workshop in English and civics and history not less than in science, mathematics, and the technology of workshop materials and practice.

It is to be remembered always that there is in all school-work a strong tendency to academize every subject, and that the so-called practical subjects even in the hands of trade teachers are just as susceptible of this process as languages, history, science, and mathematics. Unfortunately, the academizing of a pre-vocational course destroys its essential character as a bridge between school and work, leaving the work end of the bridge in the air.

A direct, intimate, and continuous connection between school and industry is therefore essential in every pre-vocational course. To secure this, all the teachers in the course must have close contact with practical conditions in industry, and it is also advisable that competent representatives of the industry concerned should be closely associated with the management of the course in the school.

The first of these conditions is best satisfied by appointing a well-trained practitioner in the industry as full-time teacher in charge, and others with similar training as teachers in as many parts of the course as possible, and by associating with the full-time teachers as part-time instructors persons employed in positions of responsibility requiring special knowledge and skill in the practice of the industry. If, further, the full-time day pupils in the pre-vocational courses are taught by the same persons and in the same surroundings and with, to the measure of their capabilities, the same equipment as apprentices and learners in the industry who attend for part-time day or evening instruction, then the conditions for a smooth interlacing of the pattern of school life with that of apprenticeship and adult life are greatly improved. The general management of pre-vocational and vocational courses is considerably strengthened when the school authorities can command the services of an advisory committee of experts in each particular industry or group of industries for which a course is provided.

The problem of the provision of suitable pre-vocational courses for boys and girls taking post-primary day tuition for only two or three years after obtaining the Proficiency or Competency Certificate in the primary schools first arose in acute form in New Zealand when Seddon and Hogben instituted the system of free places in post-primary schools in the years 1901-03. The establishment of schools more or less corresponding to the English higher-grade schools of that period had been advocated for New Zealand before that date, in particular in a long and able report to the House of Representatives in 1898 by A. D. Riley, my predecessor at the Wellington Technical School.

In 1900, post-primary education was in the hands of secondary schools, most of which had been established by special Acts before or shortly after the Education Act of 1877 consolidated primary education in New Zealand. There were, however, some thirteen district high schools, eleven of them in the South Island, which had been established under section 55 of the Education Act, 1877.

For district high schools, section 56 provided as follows :

"All the branches of a liberal education, comprising Latin and Greek classics, French and other modern languages, mathematics and such other branches of science as the advancement of the colony and the increase of the population may from time to time require, may be taught in such school. For such higher education fees shall be paid by the pupils at such rates as shall be fixed by regulations."