EDUCATIONAL MATTERS.

A Review of the General Aspects of the Report of the Committee of Ten, by Superintendent Milligan; of Science in English by Professor Marshall, and of Geography by Mr. A. E. Brotherwood.

At the annual meeting of the National Educational association, held in Saratoga two years ago, a committee consisting of ten men of prominence in collegiate and academic work was chosen to select the members and arrange the meetings of a series of conferences on the principal subjects that enter into the course of study of the secondary schools of the United States. The work of each conference so formally assigned by the committee was to be confined to a single subject of study and was to include an inquiry concerning (1) The proper limits of the subject as a high school branch; (2) The best methods of teaching it; (3) The proper assignment of time for its study; and (4) The best methods of testing the pupil's proficiency in it.

The appropriation by the National Educational association of $2,500 towards defraying the expenses of the proposed conferences evidenced the interest which that body felt in the undertaking; and the personnel of the general committee, largely composed as it was of the leading representatives of educational work in the country, was assurance in advance of an investigation which would be far reaching and thorough.

After some preliminary work, the Committee of Ten, to use the name by which it informally known, decided to organize nine distinct conferences, one for each of the following subjects: 1. Latin; 2. Greek; 3. English; 4. Other modern languages; 5. Mathematics; 6. Physics, astronomy and chemistry; 7. Natural history; 8. History, civil government and political economy; 9. Geography.

Each of the conferences was made to consist of ten members who were drawn about equally from the colleges and from the schools, and were generally fairly representative of the entire country, and whose scholarship and experience in teaching particular subjects would give weight to their conclusions.

Without exception the conferences addressed themselves to the task assigned them with great zeal and ability. Upon completing their work, reports of the investigations and conclusions were made to the Committee of Ten, and furnished the basis of a final report to the National Educational association.

One of the most noticeable circumstances connected with the report, and one which promises much for general education in America, is the fact that colleges and schools have been considerably called in the study of problems affecting the interests of both. It seemed to be decided that in the past the tendency of the higher institutions has been to ignore the lower, and of the lower to separate itself from the higher. The practice to which I refer has been continued at the cost of the college of an alienation of the schools from which only can come its students, and to the school of an unnatural stocking of its own development. The report itself is simply a fair and free expression of the necessity for a closer association with one another of all parts of the educational system, and if no other suggestions were embodied in it, it would still be one of the most important educational documents ever made public in this country.

No better evidence is needed of the harmonious spirit and good faith which characterized the work of the various conferences than the conservative views which prevailed. Composed, as the conferences were, to experts in their various fields, the general game was prepared to find that they had each attempted to revolutionize the position in the interests of its own, and several experiments had in this expectation disappointment was both startled and amused. Not one of the conferences proved the claims of its own subject higher than the interest of other subjects would justify, and in fact none, as the conference on geography, was of the opinion that more time was devoted to their subjects in school than the results obtained would warrant. Even the conference on Latin and Greek, subjects which have always shown an inclination to entrench upon others of the order, did not ask for more time than the better high schools now give to their study. And while other conferences, as for example that of mathematics, asked for an earlier introduction of some of their subjects, they made the granting of their request possible, not by further encroaching the course, but by asking for time that could be claimed by other subjects, by condensing and abbreviating some of their own. This characteristic of the work of the various conferences and the committee makes evidence and practicable many suggestions that otherwise could not have been tendered in practice to the schools. The report thus becomes a valuable contribution to helpful educational literature.

The recommendations and suggestions embodied in the report are remarkably free from speculation or even merely theoretical combination. Instead, the practicability of every recommendation of both committee and conferences could be tested by actual observation in the school system of the country; for some are made which are not somewhere now in operation.

In effect then the aim was not to inaugurate a revolution in the schools either by the destruction of existing courses of study or by the introduction into them of an array of novelties. Their purpose, as revealed by the result accomplished, was rather, first, to make a careful study of the educational values of the various subjects in our present curriculum, with a view, second, to a better determination of the natural order and proper time limits of studies; and, third, to discover and emphasize the highest types of method in teaching those subjects.

Though nominally concerned with the relations of the high schools to the colleges, the logical effect of its inquiries in the studies of the secondary schools would compel the committee and its associates to follow certain studies back to their beginnings in the elementary schools. Accordingly some of the most valuable portions of the report relate to subjects of study in primary and grammar schools. This is strictly true in the case of language, mathematics, and elementary science. In connection with the last subject, especially, the report of the work in the two sciences will be to give a new impetus to its teaching throughout the entire country.

Lastly, models for conducting studies in all the conferences. The pupil is to be brought into contact with the things which he studies. Likewise are to be taught for what he takes as "natural methods." Unnecessary waste is to have its place in observation. Arithmetic is not, despite the pains, which have been directed thus to undoubtedly, but postponed a final moral or some very practical purpose. Until the pupil is called upon to deal with abstract conditions, and until the demands of business shall force them with real interest. The models are to be studies with instructive methods exactness. Geography, both elementary and advanced, deals with real things. It is not confined to the mere study of political divisions, but becomes the science universal, embracing in its scope the elements of nearly all the sciences. The introduction of various scientific studies in many centers is pointed out, and the importance of coordinating related subjects in further work strongly urged.

While, as indicated, the work of the committee and conferences was eminently sane and practical, to be sure it was entirely devoid of novelty. Some of the suggestions must have evidence of having originated with men who had had no experience with their practical operation. There is room for considerable difference of opinion upon some of the conclusions reached in relation to the relative values of various subjects as well as to the time assigned to their study. The model courses suggested by the committee are certainly deserving of the general approbation. Certain recommendations of the conferences may seem to have an empirical rather than a scientific basis. Criticisms of the sort in all these and other particulars have been freely and sometimes antagonistically made. But the makers of the recommendations and of the report assert no claim to infallibility, and indeed frankly admit in that sense.

Nothing more than a superficial survey of the report is necessary to reveal both excellences and defects. But weaknesses emphasized from the standpoint of special or close observation, with a sympathetic or a critical spirit, are conducive only and as feedback to more important of innovations or alterations of practical educational distress have and been so in public in America.

J. P. MILLIGAN.

The Study of English.

One of the most discouraging features of the report of the Committee of Ten is the amount of English required. The study of English is to extend through all four years of all courses of the secondary (preparatory) schools. The exact nature and extent of the work within these four years is left to some extent to the discretion of the teacher. It is, however, to include rhetoric and its applications, and literature, elocution, and essays. The most approved methods of instruction include a combination of theory and the language lessons and the study of technical grammar is presupposed before the student has entered the lowest grade of the preparatory school; in other words, the ordinary scholar should have been started in the elementary schools.

Language is in all other branches of knowledge what water is to all other substances. One may be ever so learned in any science, yet if he cannot use English properly or will be unable to express his thoughts clearly and the reputation for learning will suffer. Unless he understands English language he cannot always properly and accurately interpret thoughts of others, coming to him through the only channel by which they originate—language.

Many students come to the preparatory school of the University well qualified in mathematics, in geography, history, etc., and yet so ignorant of English that their general progress in other studies is really hindered, and this department of the individual has to do work of a much lower grade than it should.

The preparatory failure of this sort regarding English can force at present, but little hearing in Utah, travelling on four lessons in which each way only is at all as it should be in the preparatory grade of these schools only two are public, the high schools of Salt Lake City and of Ogden.

The people of Utah show commendable zeal in their interest in their common schools, but until more vigorous attention is paid to English, the money and time will be regarded as simply the one exercised. Probably no other subject in the district schools of the Territory is so neglected or so badly taught as English. To some, neither is a subject generally avoided. One student in the University, goes in the most of his studies in totally different to English, but has not long ago stated in his confidently from which he came the preparatory in a new course to study English grammar. While he may have exaggerated, it is true that too little time and work is done in this most essential branch in many district schools.

Until the district schools weave in the feet of the prime importance of English, and until that work work and more thoroughly work be done in language, grammar and composition, it will be useless to comment on the neglect of English for the preparatory schools in this Territory.

In most of the cases schools good work was done in English in the primary grades, but the colleges require so many other studies for preparation as to leave no time for it. Colleges have begun to insist on a good preparation in English, that most preparatory schools give to an little attention as possible. The committee have recommended a radical change in this respect, hoping all hours of the best possible logic in some of the subjects (e.g. arithmetic) to give time and opportunity for far more important subjects. If all the preparatory schools of the country adopt the feature, it will not be many years before the complaint, too often just, that college graduates record with good English, will disappear. The college is to guide to teach elementary English.

GEO. M. MARSHALL.

GEOGRAPHY.

The subject of geography in since first evolved assigns a value to our earth far greater than has usually been attached to it, and general in their modes neighbor bounds, records and explorer. Its first, with the exception of its even most remote, is, in its primary relations. They show that the natural sciences are so closely that a distinct separation cannot be made with fully satisfying to a geography that comprehends all the natural sciences as connected with the universe.

The commonly accepted idea of books rather than of our earth, is the lowest grade course and has for its first begin, together with the other, from a very probably defensible, but never logical. Next comes the consideration of pulses, bears of land and water, of temperature and its relation to climates of the earth, and the relation of the earth to other bodies in the universe. Lastly, and the most important, comes the study of man, of his distribution, of his relations to other bodies, living and dead, of his relation to the earth, and to other men, of his wants and desires, of his relation to climate, and of his relation to the universe.

The object is to develop the power and habits of geographic observation, to give the pupil a right relation to the earth, and to arrive at intuitive geographical knowledge. In carrying out this, the natural method will be followed for observation, in cities, villages, mountains, streams, railways, harbors, whatever is the school and adjacent to it, is the best place for observation. Pupils should feel be masters of the aspect, the climate, the resources, the industries, but superficial.

Teaches with observational geography must be learn representative geography, from the first grades by distributions, maps, globes, drawings, and descriptions of the world. The great aim of education is productive study, and the important form of it is representative geography. The only necessary text-book is a collection of maps, descriptions, etc. Meaning, drawing are open graphic instruments and are indispensable means of acting the knowledge, connecting it in right and strengthening memory.

After the elementary course the observations and representations of other countries be taken of study—not the earth's surface simply, but a knowledge of it. From observation, and accurate memory, and good power of reasoning should result. Thus time the elementary is training to every life transformed to intuitive knowledge of geography. Instinct beyond the school. When our imaginations are open, we will be able to live what images of others and other and the imaginative power is essential in the greater part of geography. From clearness of observation and strength of imagination may be expected a knowledge of the subject in theoretical geography. Here are the larger features by and generalizations, as: Heat-belts, climates, etc. The lesson Cross with history as to the agencies which produce these human distribution of plants and animals, location of cities and railways, etc.

The course in geography proper should be carried into the high school to the form of cosmography, meteorology and geology.

Under the head applied geography, the conference advise that certain phases of geography be taught in connection with other subjects. For instance: The geographical relations of history is best considered and taught in connection with historical study. So the distribution of product and animals with phases of geography, the study of commerce, manufacture, and industry and economics, and most essential in getting free channels.

The Journal report Recent for March contains a review of this paper. It says: "A clear and to point report, and will prove a great help to the teachers in the schools of our schools. It is the Theory of Concentration. A thorough understanding of this will revolutionize our school system. Will it be yet the same time a power bearing its way through various school plans and set courses of study, where also the pupil is to take the place of the teacher? Will it be the course of study, graded classes, etc., will become quite secondary to the possibilities, as a source of strength and energy, to the pupil, by concentrating on the application of the theory of concentration to practical utility in the school room?"

What Professor Carter and his able co-workers have accomplished in Cook County, Illinois, schools, Professor is anything to do in Utah. Central principles have already been adopted in Salt Lake public schools, and we hear of their in several counties. Each year adds to the efficiency of the training department, and with one or two additional teachers, and the full number of grades in the graded school, our normal will prove exceedingly useful. Not any where liberty has been wrongly interpreted by the association of the young people, so local arrangements and its connection with the University.

Teachers who wish to be in the van of educational progress should read carefully this report of the committee of ten, and also that of the last meeting of the National Educational association held at Hampton, Virginia, February 20-23, 1894.

A. E. BROTHERWOOD.

NOTES.

The annual report of the public schools of Wyoming, by Superintendent Farwell, gives the following statistics: The school enrollment for the twelve counties of the state is 8,303. Number of teachers employed, 424. The highest average monthly salary paid to teachers is Sweetwater, $100, the lowest, $40.00. The highest average cost of tuition per pupil is $5.32; the lowest, $2.83.

Caught in a Storm.

Full details of the experience of the United States steamer Bancroft in a great typhoon on February 22nd have not yet reached us. A similar vessel, Lieutenant Darby, in giving a description of the storm to the Yokohama Gazette reports, as:

"In my seventeen years of sea service I never saw such a storm. Early in the morning of February 22 it began to blow. The wind was from the S. E. and we, as we thought, were safe for the day. We had not been long taking up the Kamakura buoy, and were the sea rapidly built up, and we realized our danger. The Bancroft was pitched and tossed in the most fearful manner, and we were all in the two of the eight hours under steam from time to time.

We did what we could to make a lee for us with canvas, and we lost and all sorts there seems. The main chief engineer came down all. Two of the three boilers were alone, and the third wheel and we started with starting tackles. Part of these tackles were stripped in succession, and we drifted on. We were tipped the wheel as the long duck. During the time the long duck worked so heavily that the machine stopped.

"The commander determined to go on, as we were only 300 miles from Formosa. The heavy sea could not the afternoon of the third day, the 25th. Most of the time the sea was so high it put the ship on both sides the deck being submerged, and at the same time water had been taken inboard. The two boats were all gone, the top 2000 the sea came up under one of the cutters and carried it away. Two of the boats were also nearly carried in bodily.

The United States steamship Monocacy, railway to Wyoming from China sailed on February 15th with several cases of smallpox on board. Six of her crew were at once taken to the general hospital in Wyoming.

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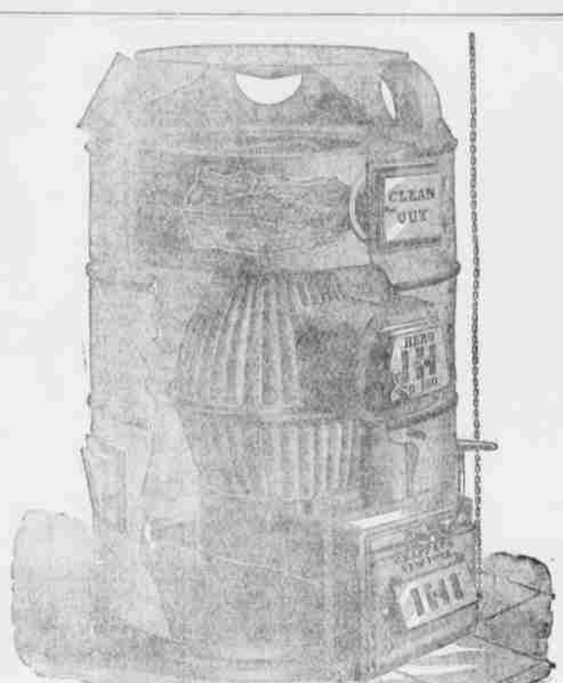

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