

the Department would recognize more fully the needs of various classes, and were not so enamored of uniformity, there might be evolved in the various kinds of schools as local conditions required, and we should not find every school in the province doing exactly the same kind of work in exactly the same way. For the University and the professions there would be one course, with necessarily for honors, at least, a certain number of options. But for the teacher's course, why should there be half a dozen options? The Public School course is perfectly definite and should be definite; you cannot specialize much there. Does it not follow that there should be discoverable some one course, fixed or more nearly fixed at any rate than now, to prepare those who are to teach in the Public Schools? But as for the third class of students, those preparing for other walks of life, why not leave a great deal to local opinion and the individual headmaster's judgment? Conditions vary in this wide province; the training needed in Toronto may not be the best for Cornwall or Port Arthur. And perhaps more real interest would be aroused in educational matters if more real power were given to local authorities to determine the studies that will fit pupils for the various local conditions of commercial or industrial or agricultural life.

But, it may be said, is that not just what the Bill introduced at the last session of the Legislature is going to do? Not at all. This Bill will allow local authorities to decide which of several courses prescribed in minute detail by Departmental regulations shall be taken in each school. That is quite different from allowing the local authorities and the headmaster to arrange suitable courses themselves, subject of course to Departmental approval. Government inspection will always be a check upon foolish or short-sighted local regulations; and

such inspection could be made very effective and very helpful without at all becoming merely an attempt, in the spirit of a martinet and dictator, to see that above all things certain regulations of the Department or ideas of the inspector are rigidly enforced.

But will all this diversity not lead to greater cost, and, therefore, be unpopular with the taxpayer? I do not think so, though here I cannot go into detail. But even if in certain cases there should be a slight increase, I think it is the fact that men who will grumble at the excessive cost of a thing they do not want or do not really like, will pay willingly when they are getting what does suit them.

Let the authorities in the Department study carefully the principles underlying the new legislation on Secondary Schools in England, and they will find that local independence is carefully provided for, that abundant room is left for the cultivation of individuality, on the principle that, to borrow Prof. Jebb's expression, a living chaos is better than a dead cosmos.

And then let these authorities study some parts of that remarkable book by Edmond Demolins, the great French sociologist, on "Anglo-Saxon Superiority"—a book that ran through a dozen editions at the very time when France was excited by the Dreyfus affair and embittered against England by the Fashoda incident; a book that was generally recognized in France as telling unpalatable but wholesome truths. What does Demolins regard as the great cause of French inferiority to the Anglo-Saxon? Why, nothing but the rigidity of its system of paternalism, beginning with the schools and running all through the social fabric; while throughout life the Anglo-Saxon cultivates a spirit of independence and self-reliance. The connection between this and my subject is not far-fetched, for Demolins himself devotes several chapters to a comparison of the schools