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EXPERTS IN EDUCATION.

IT may sound like a mere truism to some to say that all strictly professional work in education should be performed by educational experts; but to many men who have much to do with education in this Commonwealth, such a statement would evidently be quite new and far from acceptable.

In this country, teaching was so long synonymous with lesson-hearing, and the opinion was so long prevalent that teachers were born and not made and that consequently no professional training was necessary, that, although we have outgrown these crude views, yet we are hampered in much of our educational work, by many assumptions implied in those antiquated opinions, which have never been fairly brought to the bar of common sense for judgment. One of these is the assumption that any man of learning, or any man who has received a majority of the votes of his town or city, is on this account competent to direct in all matters of education. One is reminded of the sarcastic advice to the Athenians when short of horses, to vote their asses horses, which advice, if followed, would as soon make a horse of an ass, as the votes of one's fellow-citizens would qualify him to

act as a judge on educational matters of a purely professional nature. I doubt whether it has ever occurred to the average citizen of this state, that he is incompetent to lay out courses of study, to examine and promote pupils, to decide when a course of study has been properly completed, and to examine and direct teachers and pass upon the merit of their professional work. And yet it is just as obvious, to one who is qualified to decide, that all these lines of work cannot be intelligently performed except by educational experts, as it is that physicians alone are capable of prescribing for dangerous diseases, or that lawyers are safer advisers in regard to complicated law questions than shoemakers or butchers. Let us look at one or two of these kinds of work somewhat critically, beginning with the making of programmes or courses of study.

To be specific, put the question thus: What qualifies a man to prepare a course of study for the common schools?

1. He must know the aim, or purpose of education. This implies familiarity with all the essentials of the civilization of the nation in which the pupils live, with the duties which