

does mean a common interest running right through Canada, not affecting all alike in the same way by any means, but nevertheless universal.

Should not a professional body like the C. T. F. then make the teaching of English its very special concern? Each Province has its own peculiar problems but all have a common interest. What, for example, of English "speech"? Can we all feel happy about it? Local differences of accent and pronunciation there must be; they can be found in plenty in England itself. No one who is free from priggish affectations will bother about that matter. But clearness, conscientiousness, self-respect, and good taste in the spoken use of English; these are other and much more serious matters. Circumstance has given to the "book," especially the text-book, an undue prominence in most Canadian schools, and the cultivation of speech has been neglected. Language becomes then a utility to serve its purpose in a rough and ready way rather than an aspect of personality to be cultivated. Many a boy grows up to pay far more attention to the crease in his trousers than to the articulation of his speech.

What, again, of the effects of a text-book régime upon the adult attitude towards literature? What consequences may follow from making poetry-teaching an appeal to the eye and to visual memory rather than to the ear and to a sense of music? What loosenesses of logic are creeping into our idiom; usages that cannot be defended as pleasing local variations, but are to be condemned as the product of slovenly and lazy thinking? What of the clear misuse of words as when a headliner says "flaunt" when he means "flout"?

What, again, of the special peculiarities of local problems? Has the last word been said in regard to the teaching of English to the foreign-born? Canada, unlike

South Africa, seems to have rejected quite definitely the bi-lingual school. South African experience suggests a doubt whether the genuine bilingual school has ever been fairly tried out in Canada. But we will let that pass and ask rather what are the conditions which should govern the "direct" teaching of English to those for whom it is not a mother-tongue?

Again, what of Spelling and Grammar, and the language drills? How far are these integral to the teaching of Composition, and how far must they be taken as independent "subjects"? The almost ubiquitous use of the "Speller" and the grammar text-book leads one to doubt whether all the problems have been fairly raised yet.

The Association of Protestant Teachers of Quebec has recently carried out a useful enquiry into the teaching of English in that Province. The results have considerable value and the effort has received the cordial approval of the C. T. F. But the undertaking is limited both in its scope and in its application to the special conditions of Quebec. Should it not now be made the starting-point of a systematic enquiry throughout Canada, carried out under the auspices of the Associations of which the C. T. F. is composed? The Quebec Association would gladly make its preliminary contribution in the shape of a suggested form of questionnaire based upon its own enquiry.

If such a project were seriously taken up it seems highly probable that substantial help might be forthcoming from outside the C. T. F. The results would have undoubted value for us all. But what would have even greater value would be the increased consolidation of the C. T. F. itself and the enhanced sense of its own mission that would come from a systematic joint effort undertaken in a great common cause.



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