

CONTINUOUS MUTUAL REVISION

"At its session of December, 1933 the Joint Committee requested all Commissions of Experts to provide for the mutual revision of all future textbooks dealing with Nordic history. Consequently, in the course of 1934-35 a newly-written Norwegian textbook and new editions of one Finnish and two Swedish textbooks were sent in proofs to the Commissions for examination before printing. The Danish Commission found the new Norwegian textbook's presentation of material on Denmark to be very unsatisfactory. "The Commission", the Danish experts wrote in their final report of January 1936, "was then obliged, through the Commission in the country concerned, to ask the author to correct numerous words, phrases and passages. The gratifying result was that the author complied, on the whole, with the requests made, so that the book in the final proof copies could scarcely be recognized -- being by then on a level of objectivity with the best of existing textbooks.

"This sort of experience convinced the Joint Committee that the printer's proofs of newly-written textbooks should be submitted for mutual revision before publication. Again it was left to each Commission to decide how this might best be accomplished in its particular country. In Denmark and Sweden this objective was achieved through the voluntary cooperation of publishers. In Finland voluntary cooperation was combined with provisions laid down by the highest school authorities; and in Norway the Ministry of Education, which must approve all textbooks used in the regular school system, decided in 1938 that it would henceforth approve new history textbooks only after they had been examined by the Commissions of Experts of neighbouring Nordic countries. It should be added that in Denmark a somewhat similar decision was taken by the municipality of Copenhagen. The municipality decreed that