

The Training of Secondary Teachers in Prussia.

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Secondary schools in Prussia, as in other states of Germany, are of three types: the *Gymnasium*, the *Realgymnasium* and the *Oberrealschule*. These all have a nine years' course, and contain pupils from nine or ten years of age to eighteen or twenty. As a condition for entrance, the pupils must have taken at least three years in an elementary or preparatory school which may, or may not be, in connection with the higher school. The work covered in the nine years corresponds roughly to our work from Grades IV to VIII inclusive, the high school course, and at least our first two years at college. The graduate of any one of the three types of school is admitted without further examination to the university, and may begin to study for his chosen profession.

The difference in the three classes of schools are differences of curricula, which in turn represent correspondingly different educational aims and demands. The historic gymnasium still has its nine years of Latin and six of Greek; the oberrealschule has nine years of French and six years of English, but no ancient language; while the realgymnasium, a sort of compromise between the classical traditions of the past and the practical demands of the present, has nine years Latin, seven years French and six years English, but no Greek. Natural science and mathematics receive the most attention in the oberrealschule and the least in the gymnasium. The struggle in favour of equal rights for the graduates of the realgymnasium and the oberrealschule with those of the gymnasium has been long and bitter, and was not fully accomplished until 1900, when by imperial edict the three schools were put on the same official footing, and the universities opened their doors to the graduates of all three alike.

In attempting to answer the question how it is that the graduate of the German secondary school with but the same number of years actual school work as the graduate of the American high school (normally, twelve years in all) is in scholastic attainments at least two years in advance of the latter (in *languages*, whether ancient or modern, three or four years in advance), various factors must be reckoned with, one of the most important of which is *the superior training of the teacher.*

What the requirements are that must be met by the prospective Prussian secondary teacher (or *oberlehrer*) I shall now endeavour to indicate.

The first uniform requirement, to be sure, is that he himself shall be a graduate of one of the three types of high school; the second that he must pass the state examination, which in turn presupposes a minimum of three years at the university. In conversation with a number of teachers and with official examiners, I find that four years university attendance is the average time, while five and even six years is not uncommon. (Back of this protracted university sojourn there, however, usually "hangs a tale.") During this time the prospective teacher may have taken his doctor's examination, but as this has no particular bearing upon the more important state examination, the doctor's degree is regarded as more or less of a luxury.

The state examination is divided into two parts: (a) *required*, consisting of philosophy (including history of philosophy, logic and psychology), pedagogy, German literature and biblical and church history; and (b) *elective*, in which each candidate presents himself in three subjects, with such combinations as Latin, Greek and history; mathematics, physics, chemistry; English, French and German, etc. In coming up for examination the candidate states which of his three subjects he wishes to teach in the upper classes and which in the lower, and the examination is varied accordingly. The examination is conducted at various university centres by a commission composed of one or more of the university professors, a "schoolman," usually the director of a secondary school and a member of the provincial board of education. The examination itself in both parts is oral, but it is preceded by the writing of two theses, for which a period of four months is given, though an extension of time may be granted. In the case of perspective teachers of French or English, there is the additional requirement of a French or English impromptu composition, for which three hours' time is allowed.

When theses have been accepted and the examination passed, the would-be teacher is ready for the two years required professional training. For the first of these two years he is assigned to a *Koenigliches Paedagogisches Seminar* or teacher's training class in connection with some selected secondary school. The number in a *seminar* at any one time is usually limited to six. These begin at once an extended course of observation of the work