

may be explained, in passing, that the first lesson always begins at eight o'clock in the morning. The Germans, though not always clever, are invariably eager and keen. "If I look round my class," a professor said to me, "and mark the most industrious face, it is nearly always the face of a German." The Belgians and Germans are very keen about commercial advancement, and have thrown themselves into commercial life with the keenness and enthusiasm which lead to success in any branch of study. Of late years there has been only one English "regular" student at the Institute. He went through the first year and did very well. But, during the summer vacation between his first and second year of study, an insurance office in Manchester offered him a post, which he accepted, and thus he never completed his full course at the Institute.

III.

The Institut Supérieur de Commerce at Antwerp is under the direct supervision, not of the Belgian Education Department, but of the Board of Trade. It has not always been so. Owing to successive changes in the organization of the Belgian Department of State, the Institute has passed under the charge of various offices, but it has now settled definitely under that of the Minister of Commerce and Industry, just as the Higher Agricultural Schools are under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. I found on all hands an agreement that this is the best plan. It is said to bring the Institute into close connection with practical men of business. The primary object of the Institute is technical, not in the stricter sense educational. Its severance from the Education Department is said, by those who have

given special thought to the matter, to have guaranteed to the Institute a healthy intimacy with commercial, as distinguished from purely educational, interests. There is a general desire to prevent its work from becoming mixed up or confused with the work of Evening Continuation Schools, or of Secondary Education. This separation is held to be for the good of both sides. The Institute is doing work of a kind which requires fresh and very special knowledge of commercial needs and of commercial life. Once cut off from the tendencies of commercial circles, it might (it is said) get into a sort of educational backwater. Its life and growing success depend on the support, the confidence, and the continuous criticism of men actively engaged in commerce. The interest taken in education in Belgium is so widespread that the methods of instruction adopted in the Institute are naturally based on the best principles of educational science. The professors are trusted, being experts at the work. The inspection is wise and fair. The inspectors do not interfere in the purely educational side of the Institute's work. The Ministry takes counsel from experts as to the plans of study, and is careful not to prescribe what is educationally impossible. Thus the care for the educational interests of the Institute is secured and what remains—the care, namely, for its efficiency according to commercial standards—is (it is held) best left to the Ministry whose first care is commerce. It is interesting to note that a similar view is taken in France, where the Schools of Commerce, including the *École des Hautes Études Commerciales* at Paris, and the *Écoles Supérieures de Commerce* at Havre and elsewhere, are under the supervision,