

RECOLLECTIONS OF A BOARD SCHOOL TEACHER

THE interminable discussion of a series of Education Bills makes it difficult for a practical teacher to believe that the interior of a public elementary school is yet known to political geographers. With astonishingly few exceptions, the speeches and debates on the subject of education are marked by a single characteristic, ignorance of the facts of elementary teaching. The expert authorities in the House, such as Dr. Macnamara, appear to have lost their way and fallen into the pits of diplomacy. Dr. Macnamara, at least, does know what goes on in the four walls of a school, and if he seldom reveals the facts, perhaps his reasons satisfy him. The Labour Party, generally so well informed on subjects of the kind, appear as ignorant as the ordinary politician of the real issues, and move resolutions in favour of secular education as if they were back in the eighteen-seventies.

It is not my business to set the education muddle straight. As Confucius says: "When not in office, devise not the policy." But a few recollections of a dozen or so years spent in various Board schools as an assistant teacher may interest those who feel that the present education discussion is remote from the practical issues. For when all is said and done, the two factors to be taken into account are the child and the teacher. It is these two who come into the most close and influential relations, namely, personal relations; and every