

FRENCH IN N. B. HIGH SCHOOLS

Much time and energy are now wasted in N. B. High Schools on the subject of French. Can we call more or less skilful coaching for a stereotyped examination teaching? Can either our educationists or citizens be content to measure results solely by the number of marks won at said examination? Should not our High School graduates be able to speak, to read and to write simple French? French is a spoken, living language, and if pupils gain no practical command of it, why give it a place on our crowded curriculum?

Though keenly conscious of the limitations of the class room, the writer after several years of experimenting, is convinced that by applying the Direct Method to a suitable course some progress can be made even within the limits of the High School course. The acquisition of a language is the work of a life-time, but the High School can reasonably be expected to lay such a foundation as will enable its graduate to continue until he has mastered French.

The teaching of French might be ameliorated: first, by better qualified teachers; second, by improved methods; and, third by such changes in the prescribed course as would give effect to the foregoing.

One ignorant of the multiplication table is not allowed to teach algebra. And should we encourage the teaching of French by those who could not maintain the simplest sort of conversation in that language? Our teachers say that they studied but were not taught to speak French at the University. The University replies that its students are expected to come from the High Schools with some slight knowledge of French; and, further, that the University offers no courses in pedagogy. Responsibility is not fixed.

Unfortunately our Normal School offers no course in advanced pedagogy and many higher grade teachers lack adequate professional training. Could not some relief be found, as has been done in other subjects, through Summer Schools? Or, failing that, might our educational authorities not encourage teachers to attend suitable courses outside of the Province? e. g., "The McGill Summer School for Teachers of French." New Brunswick teachers have ever shown an eagerness to improve any opportunity offering professional improvement.

Many, perhaps most, N. B. teachers are using the Grammar Translation method. Though once the almost universal method of teaching languages in school, modern educationists hesitate to recommend it even for teaching the classics. By the Grammar Method the most skilful teacher does not get results commensurate with the amount of energy expended. This is eloquently demonstrated by the almost universal dislike for Latin, Greek and French, a dislike born of ignorance.

The teaching of French will continue to be a farce



\$25 to \$50

PER WEEK

Earned by ARTISTS and ART TEACHERS

Are you fond of Drawing? Then you have talent. Let us turn your talent into money by using your spare hours. Scores of teachers have studied with us—many are now high salaried illustrators—many are well paid Art Instructors.

After taking our course an Ontario teacher was offered a position as Teacher of Art in a Normal School

We have just issued a handsome new prospectus, "The Art of Drawing for Profit." Send for it. Cut out this ad. and mail today.

SHAW CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL

YONGE AND GERRARD STREETS

Pept. E. R.

TORONTO

until we adopt the Direct Method. The Direct Method—variously known as the Natural, Scientific or Berlitz Method—seeks to give a command of the language studied by duplicating, with necessary modifications, the process by which one acquires his mother tongue. As applied to the class room, the pupil first hears French in the form of simple commands which he executes in silence. This, together with drill in pronouncing vowel sounds, syllables and easy words constitutes the work of the first few lessons. The pupil is next required to make simple statements in French as he executes the commands; at this stage a little reading and writing are introduced. Gradually the pupil passes to question-and-answer and finally to conversation and short stories. New words and forms of expressions are always introduced orally with the aid of suitable objects, pictures or actions. After thorough oral drill come reading and writing exercises. As progress is made the reading and writing occupy more of the lesson period.

Continuity is essential, and to this end there should be a daily lesson. During the lesson French is the language of "communication and instruction;" such anomalies as calling the letters by their English names when spelling a French word are avoided. Thus a French "atmosphere" is created. The pupil tends to forget the English and thinks in French. Thinking in French enables him to speak French freely.