

forgets that one can have too much of even a good thing. And one has often the feeling that the Department's tendency in regard to new proposals is not to consider them on their merits, but, above all, to see how they will fit into the system.

Let us take a few examples of the way in which this uniformity works evil and leads to justifiable dissatisfaction.

There are in our High Schools at least three distinct classes of students: those preparing to become Public School teachers, those preparing for the University and the professions, and those who wish to obtain more mental training and more culture before going out into the ordinary non-professional walks of life. It is *a priori* improbable that it should be best for all these to have the same mental food, the same discipline, the same tests of fitness. And, until this has been proved to be the case, it should be the Department's object to discover and provide what each separate class needs. At present we have a curriculum and an examination system which are not the proper ones for any one of these three classes. In trying to suit all, the Minister has suited none. Some people are fond of saying that 95 per cent. of the pupils are being sacrificed to the other 5 per cent. I will assent, if they will also add that the 5 per cent. is at the same time being sacrificed to the 95 per cent. What would our farmers think if the Minister of Agriculture were to become converted to his colleague's idea, and should go up to Guelph and order all the experimenting on different kinds of foods for different kinds of animals to cease; if he were to say to President Mills: "Come, now, we must have uniformity on this farm; it is all nonsense to have a different diet for horses and cattle and sheep and pigs; it is an enormous waste of time and leads to

objectionable duplication; they must all take the same food"?

This, then, is the first evil result, unsatisfactory courses of study for each of the three classes of students; the second is over-pressure. On the common bill of fare for all the students are placed some subjects that the matriculant wants but the teacher does not, and others that the teacher wants but not the general student. To the undue assimilation of the matriculation and the teachers' course of study is traceable much of the justifiable complaining about over-pressure in the High Schools. I need not elaborate the point, you all know the evil. It is useless for the Department to disclaim all responsibility for the existing over-pressure, to which the Ontario Medical Association bore such striking testimony last year. Undoubtedly it is in part due to causes which the Department cannot control, but, even so, the Department so completely determines the conditions under which the pupils work that it will take something more to relieve it of all responsibility than the good advice contained in the circular dealing with this matter which it issued last year.

Similar evil results arise again at the point where the pupils enter the High Schools. I can see various strong reasons for providing for continuation classes and a Public School Leaving examination. If the Department had stopped there, little harm, and perhaps much good, would have resulted. But no—here was a fine chance for some artistic dovetailing; and scarcely anything in recent years has caused so much disorganization in the High Schools, and so vexed the souls of hard-driven headmasters, as the provision by which a course designed to round off the education of those who are not going to have a High School training is made to do service as a preparatory course (and