

The result is that the children often miss what they ought to have, and have what they ought to miss; while the teachers are thrown into such a state of confusion and uncertainty, of nervous tension, and effort to find the right matter and the right method, as largely to diminish their efficiency. Subjects of study are crowded into an already over-crowded programme, and additional work is ordered into days already more than full, till the teacher hardly knows which way to turn. The positive harm that results both to teachers and pupils from frequent and ill-advised changes in courses of study is beyond computation.

Another result of the present system of managing our schools is the over-crowding of the class rooms. Little children need personal sympathy and direction, and this cannot be given except to small numbers at a time; and yet the classes often number fifty or sixty children. Were the determination of numbers left to experts the numbers would at once be reduced one-half. The individuality of pupils will never be highly respected so long as half a hundred are ground through the same machine at the same time. But I must not continue these details. Here are positive evils that ought to be removed. What is the remedy?

I have already stated it in general terms. The remedy is simply this, to put the direction of all strictly professional work in education into the hands of educational experts.

We have made immense progress during the last fifty years; for it has come to be generally admitted that one who knows how to teach can teach better than one who does not know how, and that consequently teachers should be trained for their work. Now we need to go one step further, and to learn that trained

teachers cannot be properly directed by those who are not trained.

The serious question now confronts us,—How is this reform to be brought about? I presume the change from the present practice to what the practice ought to be will be slow and gradual. The history of the race shows that men will not willingly relinquish power,—and school committees are men. The best school boards in Massachusetts retain in their own hands all the power that the law gives them. They never delegate power to anybody. In the largest city of New England, the Athens of America, as I am credibly informed, the superintendent and his six fellow experts, the board of supervisors, do not have the power to grant a diploma to a single grammar school pupil, which passes him on to the high school, till their action has been reviewed and its propriety passed upon by a sub-committee, not even when the giving of the diploma is recommended by the grammar master who has watched the progress of the pupil for nine successive years. And I think this accords with the general practice throughout the state.

I confess I see no remedy for the evil of which I complain except in a revision of the school law. A change in the law to be effective must be radical and thorough. It must provide for:

1. A term of office for teachers and superintendents, permanent during good behavior.
2. A court of appeal in case of dismissal for cause.
3. The employment of educational experts.
4. The direction of all strictly professional work by such experts.—*Larkin Dunton, LL.D., in Education.*