

clear line of progress, the Department has, it would seem, made a decidedly retrograde movement. It has recently authorized one grammar only, and has made a portion of the literature permanent, which is to make one book with the grammar, and which is called the "High School Grammar and Reader," *authorized by the Department of Education*. It is true that at the same time the Department issued a sort of saving regulation, giving masters the liberty to use other editions of the literature which they might prefer. But, considering that the use of the grammar is compulsory, and that an edition of the literature is bound in the same book, this permission seems rather illusory.

This movement on the part of the Department is a retrograde one from every point of view. In the first place, it is playing into the hands of certain publishers and editors and creating a monopoly in the production of these text books. Then a permanent reader is injurious to teacher and pupil. After the first year of its use, the teacher is freed from further reading or thinking, if he is so inclined; he may stagnate mentally as the regulations of the Department reduce his work to a sort of treadmill performance, and he will doubtless infect the pupils with the same spirit. Further, the same text books used year after year are in many cases apt to pass second-hand from one generation to another. As they pass along, they receive, very likely, additional marginal annotations and full annotations, as these are likely to become, are not conducive to mental activity. It may be answered that the teachers themselves demanded this change, viz, a fixed "Grammar and Reader" bound together in one book. A resolution to this effect, it seems, was passed by the modern language

section of the Ontario Teachers' Association at its last session. The meeting at which this was done may have been representative, or it may not. Very likely it was not. The mover, too, may have acted on his own initiative, or he may not. It may be hoped that he did. It is to be noted, however, that this resolution was passed last Easter, and that about five months thereafter one of the books embodying the desired change—the French "Grammar and Reader"—appeared. This is a book of 550 pages. To produce it the old High School Grammars had to be re-written, exercises on the added literature composed, and a long vocabulary made; and then the whole printed and bound. All this was done in five months. That must have been a strong and urgent resolution, the Department must have been even unusually susceptible to public opinion, such as it was, and those editors and publishers who then received the mandate must have been "hustlers."

The new hybrid book is very bulky, and bulkiness is not a quality likely to make a text book more attractive. It rather tends to make the subject-matter more repulsive than it inherently is. For this reason text books generally should be reduced to as small a compass as is consistent with efficiency. This is best done by the omission of non-essentials. There is a marked tendency to this in Britain and the States, particularly in the publication of foreign grammars for Secondary Schools. Economy is ostensibly the prime motive for the production of this hybrid book. Granting this to be correct, would it not then be carrying the economy still further if the non-essentials were omitted? There is, in the first place, a mass of illustrated exercises that probably would never be done,