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ENGLISH IN THE SCHOOLS.*

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(Continued.)

The first point at which legitimate criticism may take exception to existing methods appears to be the undue predominance accorded to text-books and fixed subjects of study.

Pupils acquire the mistaken notion that all that they are to learn is to be gotten out of some book, and almost any sort of an interrogation at once sends them upon the enquiry as to what is said about it in the text-book.

We have become a reading people, so much so that the practice of conversation has largely gone into disuse. There seems to be almost nothing of sustained conversation in family circles. A relic of the practice seems here and there to survive in the evening meeting at the village shop-keeper's store, which may deserve to be perpetuated as a source of possible intellectual stimulus. In our elementary schools, however, attempts at having the pupils try to give expression, in the reciprocal way presupposed in conversation, to

* Second part of a paper read before the Teachers' Convention held in Sherbrooke in October, 1895. The first part appeared in the December number of the RECORD.