

Publishing Office:
1100 Bute Street, Vancouver, B. C.
Telephone:
Seymour 6048



D. A. CHALMERS
Managing Editor and Publisher
With an Advisory Editorial
Committee of Literary
Men and Women

The Twentieth Century Spectator of Britain's Farthest West
For Community Service—Social, Educational, Literary and Religious; but Independent of Party, Sect or Faction
"BE BRITISH" COLUMBIANS!

VOL. 25

SEPTEMBER, 1925

No. 2

Educational Notes

(By Spectator)

The reopening of the schools for the work of the fall term again brings up the vexed question of school curricula. It is held by some critics that in our Canadian schools these are too rigid; that principals and teachers should be given much greater latitude in the selection of what is to be taught. Such a system might be the best possible in the hands of a teacher of ability and experience; but to the beginner a curriculum fairly definite is of very considerable value. And as the great majority of our teachers are unfortunately in the apprentice stage, or very little beyond it, the educational authorities and guides need not be regarded as altogether pigheaded and reactionary when for the sake of "safety first" in the instruction and training of pupils every teacher is not left free to map out a course of his own.

* * *

It is also argued by many that our curricula are overcrowded, although some of the really valuable studies have been dropped. In this contention there may seem to be a germ of truth. It is, for instance, a thousand pities that such a subject as English grammar has been crowded out of the general course in the British Columbia high schools. And yet, to make room for it, what subject of the present prescription could be omitted?

The remedy is probably not to be found in the leaving out of this subject or that, but first of all in the elimination of every unnecessary detail in the treatment of all subjects. The employment of skilled teachers furnished with time-saving equipment is also important. In this connection an abundant supply of supplementary reading matter would prove most helpful, especially when pupils through training in silent reading have become expert in getting the thought of a written or printed passage quickly and accurately. When they have reached this standard they may be safely left to themselves, to gain from books much of what is now imparted by the teacher in the regular recitation periods of the school day.

* * *

In the United States there are a number of universities or colleges exclusively devoted to the higher education of women. Among these Bryn Mawr holds an enviable place. In this institution it is possible to carry out an unusually satisfactory programme. The enrolment is limited; the professors are numerous and able; postgraduate work has been given a place of honor from the very foundation. In a recent year the students numbered four hundred and twenty, the professors a hundred. Every teacher must be competent to take part in the most advanced work: he or she must share in the teaching of the courses offered in the graduate school. With conditions such as these it is

impossible for the student to escape the personal touch of the professors, and the professor is almost sure to be one whom to know is a high privilege.

One thing more, to quote from a recent article: "The college refused at the outset to adopt the system then in vogue, of admitting students upon certificate from their preparatory school, a method only recently abandoned by some of the first-rank colleges for women and men."

* * *

At present in most parts of Canada the supply of teachers is greatly in excess of the demand. In recent appointments of inexperienced teachers it is presumed that fitness has been the one qualification demanded by boards of school trustees; that the interest of the pupils has alone been considered. To appoint the inefficient is to rob boys and girls of one of the most precious elements of their birthright. More than this, it discourages the efficient, and is an invitation to our ablest and worthiest young men and women to choose other callings, callings in which merit is likely to find a fair field and no favor.

* * *

"That juvenile delinquency decreases with the opening of playgrounds has been further verified by recent reports from Cincinnati, Ohio. In a period of three years since the opening of a playground in one neighborhood in that city the court records show a reduction in delinquency of sixty-seven per cent."

This conviction no doubt inspires the untiring efforts of the Vancouver Gyro Club in its determination to put participation in organized play within the reach of every boy and girl in our fair city. The Club has

Contents

	Page
EDUCATIONAL NOTES	
By Spectator	1
VERSE BY WESTERN CANADIAN WRITERS	
The Word, by Bertha Lewis; Wings, by M. Stoddard; A Lyrical Lunch, by Alice M. Winlow	2
SIMON THE COBBLER	
By Laura Goodman Salverson, author of "The Viking Heart," etc.	3
WHAT ABOUT THE CANADIAN DRAMA?	
By Lionel Stevenson	6
THE WAYSIDE PHILOSOPHER	
Conditions in the United States: Our own Dominion Election	7
NEW FABLES BY SKOOKUM CHUCK (R. D. Cumming)	
The Getting of Gus	11
BOOKS WORTHY OF NOTE	14
MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS	
By C. C. Fuller, Victoria, B. C.	15