

Conservation and Technical Education

part of its general training than if and when they are taught as separate subjects. I find that the schools in which children learn to read about the things they are doing and to write concerning what they have seen and to figure on the questions coming up in the school, learn reading, writing and arithmetic in half the time. If we give our attention to the essential method for efficiency, viz.: training the children to observe closely, to think clearly and to manage without waste and with goodwill, the use of the literary tools for further education will come easy to the pupils. The subject matter for such training need not be less cultural because it is closely related to the lives and occupations of the community. Perhaps the closer the relation, the greater the cultural value of the necessarily few subjects and courses. So much for my personal opinion.

We find this also: the lure of high wages for the boy at fourteen or younger takes him out of school. And, there being no apprenticeship, he gets into a blind alley—he drives an express wagon or is a messenger boy. At eighteen, he is too big for his job and yet not willing and qualified to go into any calling that will make him a good workman with command of a trade. We have been allowing that sort of thing to go on; but we do not stand for the continuation of its handicap on the boys.

Some indications of our urgent needs have emerged into clearness from the testimony. One is the need in all schools of some opportunity for boys when they are past twelve, whereby the boy will reveal to himself and his teacher and parents the bent of his ability—some