

that there are two other sides to every question, I mean the theoretical side and the practical side, the ideal and its realization. Ideals are larger than their realization. What we would like to see done is one thing, what we are able to accomplish is often quite another.

You have all found this out and you have all realized two important conclusions which follow:—(1) That in passing judgment upon any piece of work accomplished, a generous allowance must be made for failure to reach the highest possible conception. He who has not found that out will have no peace of mind. (2) That no person is competent to give reliable advice on any practical question until he has tested and amended all his theories on the subject. Now I think it may be said that the French teachers of Montreal have fairly qualified, according to this principle, to discuss the application of the Natural Method of teaching French. For nearly eight years we have been steadily at work, testing and amending or adapting or rejecting every principle and every expedient of that method. During all this time, with the exception of a faint expression of our aspirations at the time our experiment was launched, we have consistently maintained a discreet silence. Today we are able to report that in our public schools, corresponding to the elementary and model schools of the Province, we have established a French course, covering five years, which is conducted entirely in French. This course includes conversational practice, reading lessons, dictation, written exercises and a fair amount of grammar, but not a word of translation, and not a syllable of English. In discussing this subject I shall offer you no speculative opinions. I ask you to bear in mind that the method which I shall now proceed to discuss is that by which some five or six thousand pupils are taught daily by upwards of a hundred teachers.

It is not my intention to enter upon a minute description of this method. That is not the object of this paper. Recent graduates of the Normal School and many other teachers are already familiar with it. Moreover, it can only be acquired by practice, and the best preparation for such practice is to hear a number of lessons given by a competent teacher, when with plenty of practice under wise direction the necessary skill will be acquired. It will be quite sufficient for my purpose merely to indicate the es-