

Department of the Interior,
BUREAU OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.,

February 8, 1890.

Hon. George W. Ross, Minister of Education, Toronto, Canada:

MY DEAR SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ult., in which you request to be furnished a "statement showing the various States of the Union in which any other language (and what) than English is allowed by the law of the State or by usage to be taught in any of the elementary schools."

To enable me to answer respecting State laws, I have caused an examination to be made, and find that there is no legal provision, either prohibitive or permissive, of foreign languages in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The law expressly requires that the schools be taught in the English language in California, Colorado, Indiana, and Kansas.

Several States have special provisions, viz.:

Indiana.—German shall be introduced as a course of study in any schools where the parents of 25 or more pupils demand it.

Kentucky.—In any district where one-third of the pupils are children of other than English-speaking parents, their respective languages may be added to the course of study.

Maryland.—Where there is a considerable German population, school commissioners may cause German to be taught.

Ohio.—The School Board of any district shall cause the German language to be taught when a demand is made in writing by 75 resident freeholders representing 40 pupils.

With your permission I will add here the substance of a letter which I wrote on January 3rd to Mr. H. E. Clark, a member of your Legislature, in reference to permitting instruction in a foreign language in the Public Schools. I said:

"It is a subject on which I have decided convictions and much experience. It is the question of assimilating in the best manner a foreign element found in the community, either as the remnant of a once conquered people, like your Canadian French, or the residuum of a wave of immigration like the German population in our Northwestern States.

"I am decidedly in favor of a plan that has proved equal to the emergency in our Northwest. I inaugurated it in St. Louis, Mo. I gave instruction in the writing and speaking in the German language one lesson a day to all German pupils and to all Anglo-American pupils who desired to learn German. This provision was carried out in all schools where there were enough pupils to warrant the appointment of a teacher for a half or for a whole day. (By the word 'school,' as technically understood by us, is meant an organization under one head teacher assisted by from one to thirty assistant teachers, and having from one hundred to fifteen hundred pupils or more.) The result in St. Louis was to bring all German children into the Public Schools, and to break up entirely the private schools which had existed before. Many Anglo-American children availed themselves of the opportunity to learn German. A great advantage was found in this in the