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BOARD OF EDUCATION.

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SPECIAL REPORTS  
ON  
EDUCATIONAL SUBJECTS.

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VOLUME 7.

RURAL EDUCATION IN FRANCE.

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Presented

to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

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[Introductory letter to Vol. 7 of the Series.]

To Sir G. W. KEKEWICH, K.C.B.,  
Secretary of the Board of Education.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to present to you the accompanying volume of Special Reports descriptive of the work of rural elementary schools in some of the northern and north-western parts of France, with particular reference to the nature and effects of the instruction given in subjects bearing upon agriculture.

In many parts of the world the question of country schools is one of special interest and difficulty at the present time. There is a widespread feeling that something ought to be done to bring them into closer touch with the practical needs of country life. But opinion is greatly divided as to how this could or should be done. The question is felt to be in the main a social and economic problem, not simply a school problem. The work done in the schools affects the question at issue, but no mere change in school programmes could arrest or reverse a great process of economic or social change. Perhaps I may be permitted to sum up in the following paragraphs, for the information of readers of this report (with a brevity which will, I trust, not be mistaken for dogmatism), what appear to be the conclusions of many of those best qualified to form an opinion on this intricate but urgent question.

The country school is in a position to render a great service to the nation. The country districts are the recruiting grounds for the towns. Urban communities have a direct interest in the welfare of the rural schools. The better training that is given to the boys and girls in the country schools, the better will it fare with the industries in which those boys and girls may be engaged in later life. Moreover, it is hoped that the drift into the great cities may some time be reversed, and that a current of population will pass out from the great cities into the country districts again. Electric traction, electric power, rapid means of communication, and the growing congestion of many city areas may cause a greater decentralisation of industry. In order to encourage such a movement back into purer air and more open surroundings, it is desirable that the country schools should not be allowed to drop below the intellectual level of the town schools. We have now, and have always had, many very excellent country schools which may serve as a model for imitation. What is wanted is to level up the average to a higher standard.

Education is a much greater and more difficult thing than the mere imparting of intellectual instruction. A good school

makes the children think; it makes them interested in what lies around them; it makes them ask questions; it makes them keen. It does not cram them with undigested knowledge. It trains them to think for themselves; it teaches them how to learn; it makes them want to learn; it interests them in the why and the wherefore of the common details of life; it makes them realise that the simplest questions are often the hardest questions, and that the simplest things are often the best. But a good school does not stop here. It trains the body as well as the mind, and it cares most of all for character. Its deepest and noblest work is a moral work. It makes the children not simply brighter and cleverer, but better, than they were before. It aims at producing not only self-reliance but self-control and readiness to sacrifice selfish interests to duty.

It cannot do this, however, unless it is inspired by a strong and noble tradition. All good education involves sacrifice. And the essential things in a good school are not a well-chosen timetable or skilful organisation (though both are necessary), but the personality and example of a good teacher. That is the force which makes the school. And, in order to attract the best men and women to the work of education, no pains should be spared to make the position of schoolmaster and schoolmistress as honourable and as well-founded as possible. We need schools of first-rate quality and in good heart. This can only be when the teachers are the best, and when they are happy in the conditions of their work.

It is useless to turn a school into a mere labour-house. Men and citizens have to be trained, not only workmen and "hands" for employment. But the best education combines what is practical with what is ideal. It does not overlook the economic future of the pupil in attempting to safeguard his spiritual and intellectual future. The best schools teach the children to value and reverence what is near at hand and "common," as well as what is distant and rare. But no school can flourish which aims at keeping the scholars down, or back from the best at which they can aspire. It should always be remembered that in times past many of our greatest scholars and leaders were bred as lads in country schools.

A few, at all events, of the children in a country school are likely to earn their living in some calling which is not very closely connected with country life. It would be inexpedient, therefore, to omit from the course of study in such schools the elements of that education which is necessary as a foundation for success in commerce or industry. Still less reasonable would it be to model the curriculum on the assumption that every boy in a country school will be, or ought to be, an agricultural labourer. It is partly as a safeguard against any such assumption being made that the literary elements in the curriculum have tended to oust the practical elements. Most people will agree in thinking

it right that the elements of a liberal education should be given in all schools, urban and rural alike, but that, in all cases, an education need be none the less liberal for being given partly through the medium of practical studies. At the same time there is a no less general conviction that, even in the remotest village school, the desire to keep labourers "in their place" should never be allowed to encroach on the proper claims of a liberal training.

The elementary school seems not to be the place for [the technical study of agriculture in any specialised form; but the general influence of the school and the drift of its work may do much to foster, or to discourage, an interest in country life. Some generations ago it was the practice to sacrifice elementary education to the claims of industry. There followed a sharp reaction, and a too violent recoil from practical studies in the elementary schools. Happily there is now an increasing disposition to regard literary and practical studies as compatible elements in education. Perhaps the most effective of all kinds of rural education is that which combines the practical with the more literary elements, and which teaches a child to love nature and to admire skill in handicraft, while at the same time making him share in the great inheritance of moral ideals and noble literature. But such a training, though it sounds simple, is really the outcome of long study on the part of the teachers, coupled with practical skill in the selection of subjects and in the choice of methods in teaching them. Children learn to love a subject through learning from a teacher who loves it. The best country schools have always been those which are taught by teachers who love country life, who appreciate its beauty and varied interest, who themselves prefer to live in the country than in the town, and who are in every way the intellectual equals of their colleagues in the town schools. The country is the ideal place for the education of children, and the greatest efforts should be made to keep the country schools up to a high level of educational efficiency, enthusiasm, and equipment. Country teachers need special encouragement in their work and many special opportunities for keeping up their studies. They need books, pictures, opportunities of travel, opportunities for cultivated intercourse. Above all, they need to feel that the nation at large appreciates the immense importance of their task, and honours them for their patience in overcoming the difficulties which beset it. No part of the national system of education needs, or will repay, more systematic encouragement or more constant care.

In France there has been during recent years a remarkable movement for the improvement of the rural schools. A sort of missionary enthusiasm for national education through republican institutions has inspired the leaders of this reform. And it is generally acknowledged how much of the moral earnestness of the movement is due to the labours and example of Professor

F. Buisson, now Professor at the Sorbonne, but formerly Director of the Primary Branch of the Ministry of Public Instruction. In view of the practical importance of the subject, it has been felt that a short account of what has been done in France will be of interest to many English readers; and that, though direct imitation of a foreign system of education would be fruitless, even if it were practicable, there is much that is suggestive and encouraging in parts of the French experience. The political and economic conditions in the two countries are, however, so very different that in very many respects French precedents would be as unfitting to English circumstances as English methods of adjustment and compromise would be distasteful to the genius of French administration, with its dislike for half lights and its insistence on logical distinctions.

The reports which follow are from the pens of two writers who have made a long and careful study of some of the aspects of rural education, and who are well acquainted with the difference between French and English life. Mr. Medd, as an active member of the Executive of the Agricultural Education Committee, and Mr. Brereton, as Vice-President of the Jury on Primary Education at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, have had excellent opportunities of coming to close quarters with the practical problems connected with the welfare of country schools. In the course of the inquiries upon which the following reports are based, they met with the most courteous welcome on the part of the educational and other authorities in France, and received the greatest kindness and assistance from all concerned in the welfare of the schools. On behalf of the Special Inquiries Section of the Board of Education, I desire to associate myself with the writers of the reports in their expression of hearty thanks for the consideration and friendly interest with which they were received.

To each report is appended the name of its author, and it should be understood that the latter alone is responsible for the opinions therein expressed.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MICHAEL E. SADLER,

Director of Special Inquiries and Reports.

December, 1901.

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By Mr. Cloudesley Brereton, M.A., L. ès Lettres, Vice-President of the Jury on Primary Education at the Paris Exhibition, 1900; Temporary Inspector to the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland.

**Rural Education in France - - - - -**

By Mr. John C. Medd, M.A., Member of the Executive Committee of the Agricultural Education Committee.

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# THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF NORTH-WEST FRANCE.

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THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF NORTH-WEST FRANCE,  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AGRICULTURAL  
TEACHING.

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INTRODUCTION.

A course of education, in any grade of school, is rightly regarded as a whole, made up of many ingredients, nearly all of which are closely inter-related. But there has been a tendency, especially noticeable in England, to ignore this essential unity of any course of education, and to regard the latter as a more or less fortuitous aggregate of subjects practically independent of one another. Happily this way of looking at the matter is much less common than it used to be. One of the indirect benefits of the Technical Instruction Acts has been to open people's eyes to the fact that technical instruction cannot be tied down to mean the teaching of one or two strictly industrial subjects. The wide extension given to the term by responsible Government officials is due to the reason that the experiment has brought to light the vast ramification of knowledge that lies at the root of every truly scientific training, and the interrelation between different subjects that had hitherto been regarded as more or less distinct. From the recognition of the universal kinship among subjects to their formation into well-defined families or groups was an easy step. The creation of Schools of Science, the Block Grant for Elementary Education as a whole, and the latest division of the new Board of Education into sections representing distinct groups of Instruction, have brought us a long way on the road of looking on processes of education in the various grades as entities more or less complete in themselves, rather than fortuitous concurrences of subjects that custom immemorial had sanctioned, or some specialist craze had squeezed into the "indigesta moles" that formerly passed in some cases for the school time-table.

This unification of grades and groups in Education to which we seem to be tending has long been an accomplished fact in France. There the province of each type of school has been clearly, and maybe in some cases too rigidly, thought out and defined. This is due, perhaps, in part to the French habit of tackling administrative problems in a more philosophical spirit than our practical English minds are accustomed to. The one starts with a pattern; the other makes its pattern as it goes along. Be that as it may, the definition of each grade or group inextricably involves the thinking out of its own particular aim. And so the practice grew up comparatively early in French Primary Education of asking what type of individual the Primary or Higher Primary School ought

to produce, and then framing or adjusting the programme of studies to meet the new requirements, so that the numerous additions and modifications that have from time to time been introduced into the school system have nearly always been proposed, not so much with an idea of favouring the teaching of this or that particular subject because of its individual merit, as of remodelling the whole curriculum by the inclusion of a new element like *la morale* in order to respond to some freshly discovered want that the authorities have felt or admitted in the aims of the school. They have not proceeded on the piecemeal and patchwork principle of tacking yet another 'ology on to an already overburdened curriculum, but even when such an apparently isolated subject as *l'enseignement agricole* has been admitted, they have at once tried to locate it, and have never rested till they have fitted it into the curriculum, altering and adapting the latter wherever it was necessary in order to render the integration and assimilation complete.\* Thus the whole course of studies is modified and leavened by this new element, which thereby brings it more in accord with a fresh and fuller conception of the aims of the school.

It is therefore imperative for an inquirer into agricultural education in rural schools in France, if he wishes to judge impartially of its effects, to do his best to regard the question from the same standpoint as its originators; that is, he must begin by acquiring a sufficiently complete knowledge of French Primary Education in order to see where the particular part fits in with the working of the whole, just as one must acquire an adequate notion of the general structure of any engine in order to appreciate the true function and economy of any particular piece of its mechanism. But when one has further to enquire into the "educational influence" of the rural school, it is clear that this subsidiary knowledge of the system as a whole now becomes one of the main objects of investigation, for agricultural instruction, which is only a part, is clearly inadequate to explain the entire function of the school in the country. Hence, therefore, while only a few words on the central authorities are necessary, it is essential to obtain a fairly clear idea of the work of the school, the teachers, and the local authorities. These, in the main, are, fortunately, fairly easy to describe, thanks to the uniformity that a strong centralisation always produces—uniformity which is currently regarded in England as an absolute rule in French education, and possesses, in this case, the exceptional advantage of allowing frequent comparisons of the schools in the departments under observation with those of France as a whole.

Yet, here a word of warning is necessary. This uniformity, which seems so universal, appears singularly modified on a nearer acquaintance. We are so apt to forget that education is a thing whose mechanism is not built up out of lifeless elements,

\* Divers en ses applications, l'enseignement de l'école est un en son principe. M. Doliveux in the *Revue Pédagogique* for October, 1900, page 363.

but composed of creatures of flesh and blood like ourselves. That is to say, the working and efficiency of the machine in such cases depends essentially on the abilities, energy, and skill of those who make up the administration. In a word, however excellent the administrative system may be on paper, the real driving power comes from the character of the *personnel* which compose it—in this instance, the officials, the inspectors, and the teachers. And since men differ more or less, and some are prone to lay greater stress on one part of the programme than another; since even the same rules and regulations depend for interpretation on the spirit of those who administer them; since some regions in France seem to be inhabited by more vigorous and industrious races than others, there exists underneath the outward and visible appearance of rigid uniformity no inconsiderable amount of variety and difference. That it might be greater still would, no doubt, in some cases be an advantage. But the actual diversity is so great that anyone who had not really visited a sufficient number of typical departments among the eighty-six of which France is composed would be certainly rash in always drawing wide and sweeping conclusions about the state of things in regions other than he had visited, especially as each department seems to possess, as far as education is concerned, its own physiognomy, a subject to which later on reference will be made.

Nor must it be forgotten, as many critics of schools forget, that the school, although one of the chief factors in education, is only one of three others almost equally important—the home, the social *milieu*, and the religious influences\*. We must therefore, in an enquiry into the position and educational influence of the rural schools in France, not heedlessly ascribe everything to the school, whether good or ill, but try to discriminate to a rough extent the effects of other factors at work; and this leads us straightway into an inquiry into the social and economic forces which seem to be affecting French country life to-day. Everywhere in Europe the centripetal force of the towns appear to be growing. Does the French rural school exert its influence in favour of town or country? What is its influence, measured in terms of good or evil repute, among the peasants? Is there a rural exodus, and if so, what are the general effects on this exodus, of higher wages in the towns, of declining population, of alcoholism, of protection, of taxation, of land tenure, of conscription? Is the school a centre and

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\* Since writing the above I have come across Mr. Sadler's monograph on "How Far can we Learn Anything of Practical Value from the Study of Foreign Systems of Education?" "Education is not," to quote his own words, "a matter merely of schools and school-rooms. Surely what we in England really mean in our hearts by education is that great aggregate of the influences which come to us in our homes, at church and chapel, in daily life, in intercourse with our contemporaries, in love of home and father and mother—in all the thousand streams of influence and suggestion which in a free country converge upon each individual life and shape ideals of conduct."



rallying point of all social reform, or is it merely content to interpret its duties in the narrower sense of instruction pure and simple?

In fact, it is only when we have formed a certain idea of the relative function and importance of each of these different factors that we can disentangle from the social and economic life of rural France in a rough and approximate fashion the actual influence and value of the school in the country and venture to draw any general conclusions about its work, and hazard a few suggestions in the way of application to English education—suggestions which must practically be limited and confined to details; for when the two educational machines are so unlike as those of English and French primary education, it is obvious that only what in engineering are called “interchangeable” parts can be with success adopted or adapted.\*

The materials of which the present report is composed are practically derived from two sources. One consists of a large number of official documents, bulletins, etc., and more especially of the four fine volumes published by the Ministry dealing with the statistics, the organisation, and the reports of Inspectors and Academy Inspectors of Primary Education, which every student of the subject should read. The other source is derived from a large body of notes which represent in its briefest form the summary of long conversations with over 100 persons during a tour of some 600 miles (more than 300 of which were “en bicyclette”); made last spring through the five Departments of Calvados, Orne, Sarthe, Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher. The tour extended over a period of five weeks, during which the writer visited some 60 primary schools for boys and girls, as well as nine normal schools. Among the persons interviewed were two rectors, the five academy inspectors of the departments, three secretaries to the academy inspectors, fourteen inspectors, the heads and some of the staff of the nine normal schools, four professors of agriculture, some 60 teachers, and a certain number of peasants, parents and boys, and inhabitants of the country in general. On his return to Paris he had further long conversations with the members of the official world, and especially with his French colleagues on the Jury for Primary Education, which contained, among others, a former Minister of Public Instruction (M. L. Bourgeois); the past and present heads of Primary Instruction (M. Buisson and M. Bayet), the Comte de Fontaine de Resbecq, former Under-secretary of Primary Instruction and representative of the *écoles libres*; several heads of departments (M. Charlot and M. Fougère), and “inspecteurs généraux” M. Jost and M. René Leblanc (the “godfather” of agricultural education in France); M. Bédorez, the Director of Education in Seine; M. Baudrillard, Primary Inspector; Madame Chegarey, the head of the higher primary school Sophie

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\* Cf. M. Sadler, op. cit., page 18, on this question.

Germain; and the late M. Achille Deum\* and M. Comte, the teachers' representatives.

Among the schools visited were several belonging to the religious orders. "*Le mieux est toujours l'ennemi du bien*"; and while the writer was always courteously received, he experienced in more cases than one considerable difficulty in obtaining permission to visit individual schools, especially those for girls, despite the credentials he carried, which included a general letter of introduction kindly furnished by His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan. Even when permission was obtained, there were further delays. "*Il faut prévenir*" was a not infrequent expression, and the idea that his visit was being carefully prepared for, despite the honour that was perhaps therein intended, contrasted most unfavourably with what was met with in the case of the école laïque. This was all the more unfortunate as the religious schools of Paris, or at all events those of the Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne, seem to be easily accessible to foreign visitors.

As it seems rather too formidable a task to draw up the bead-roll of persons to whom thanks are due, since it would contain at least some 120 names, perhaps the simplest task to adopt is to place on record here the admirable reception that the writer met with everywhere, and to insist especially on the frankness and freedom with which officials of every grade debated with him the weak and doubtful points in the system with all that tact and nice sense of give and take that render a discussion with any cultivated Frenchman so attractive and instructive. It is, indeed, highly remarkable that a system round which the fiercest light of polemical strife has played should not merely permit, but invite and even encourage criticism. Surely we have here what can only be regarded as a very healthy sign. On the one hand it implies that sense of strength which can only come from the consciousness that when one has written off all doubtful assets and written down everything to its lowest value, there still figures on the balance sheet a solid reserve of merit to draw on. On the other hand, it typifies under its best and most living form the spirit of progress ever on the alert to better itself, counting, as it were, the present gain but loss in its strenuous effort to improve and keep the school abreast of the wants and aspirations of the age.

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\* Perhaps it is permissible here to express one's profound regret at the sudden death of M. Deum. It came as a painful shock to one who recalled his boundless energy and unflagging spirits of a year ago. His wide sympathies, his unflinching tact, his sound judgment, his rare sense of justice, his frank independence, and his absolute unpretentiousness won for him the regard of his superiors, and endeared him to all his foreign colleagues. France is poorer to-day by the loss of one who was not only the beau idéal of a teacher, but also the exponent of many of the best national traits.

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NOTE.—There is an excellent series of bibliographies appended to each of the chapters in the *Rapport, E. P.*, above.

### HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Up to 1789\* Primary Instruction in France was looked on as a religious work† (*œuvre pie*), and was mainly in the hands of the Christian Brothers. The notion of considering it as a branch of National Education that society was bound to encourage and maintain existed only in the minds of a few philosophers. The Constitution of 1791 declared in favour of the creation and organisation of a public system of instruction common to all citizens, and gratuitous for such parts of instruction as are indispensable to all men. It further decreed compulsory attendance and the liberty of teaching. All this legislation remained a dead letter owing to the wars in which the Convention became involved. Napoleon centralised all existing forms of education in the university. The right to teach was, however, conceded to the Christian Brothers, subject to the leave of the University. Furthermore, all schools were compelled to adopt as base of their instruction the precepts of the Catholic religion. Under the Restoration a keen struggle was waged between the partisans of the rival systems of mutual and simultaneous instruction. The champions of the latter, the Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne, who remained faithful to the teaching of their illustrious founder, de La Salle, re-opened their schools.‡ Their superior pedagogy told in the long run. The mutual system of instruction was ousted, and schools were closed.

The first great era of reform in French primary education begins with the July monarchy. After taking a preliminary census of the stock of educational machinery in the country, which thereby revealed the nakedness of the land, M. Guizot, laid in 1833, the foundation of the present system of elementary and higher primary education. There was no compulsory attendance. Each commune was, however, obliged to maintain a school and pay the teacher, who also received the children's fees. Free education was to be provided for the children of the indigent only. The religious element was maintained by the retention of the *curé*, or *pasteur*, as a member of the local committee of management. An *ordonnance* prescribed in 1836 the foundation of girls' schools. The inspectorate was organised by the appointment of one inspector to each department. Normal schools were founded, and amounted to 84 in 1848. The liberty of teaching (*i.e.*, of opening a school) was secured and regulated by the law of 1833 (Gobron). The result of these reforms

\* See Rapport E. P. Introduction historique, page 2.

† For a fuller account of the "origines" of Primary Education in France, and particulars of private initiative before the Revolution, see Report M. A., pages 18—25, and for after that period, L'Enseignement Primaire Catholique Histoire-Législation, 1789-1900, by M. le comte de Fontaine de Resbecq.

‡ Official Statistics, page ccii.



is best denoted by the fact that in 1827 the number of illiterates among the conscripts was 58 per cent., while in 1847 it had fallen to 36 per cent. The Second Republic, under the influence of the Prince President, passed in 1850 the law Falloux. It suppressed the higher primary schools by ignoring them in its list of the various forms of primary education, and drew up a new programme for Primary Education, which consisted of the three R's and religious instruction. Among the optional subjects elementary instruction in agriculture was mentioned for the first time. It recognised two new sorts of schools—the public schools maintained by the communes, and the private ones founded or maintained by private individuals or religious associations. Teachers were to be properly housed, and provision was made for starting girls' schools in communes of over 800 souls, and for the creation of classes for adults, and professional training for apprentices. *Conseils académiques départementaux* were started to supervise all grades of education. In 1854 France was divided into 16 academies (universities to-day), each administered by a rector with an academy inspector under him for each of the departments in his *circonscription*. The *conseils académiques* disappeared. New bodies, dealing only with Primary Education—*les conseils départementaux*—were created. The nomination of the teacher was transferred from the rector to the prefect.

The ministry of M. Duruy (1865–1869) is another landmark in the history of French Primary Education. In three years he raised the classes for adults from under 4,000 to 32,383, containing 829,555 pupils. Teachers' salaries were improved; primary schools for girls in communes of over 500 souls were rendered obligatory; free schooling could be adopted at the option of the commune; hamlet-schools were created, and departments obliged to come to the aid of necessitous schools. He further encouraged the creation of *caisses des écoles*, whose receipts should be utilised for improving the attendance by prizes, and by relief allowances to indigent children. The fruits of this liberal *régime* are best seen from the following figures. The number of schools which in 1850 stood at 60,579, in 1866 had reached the total of 70,671. The pupils who in 1850 were a little over three millions and a quarter, amounted to more than four millions and a half, and the percentage of illiterate conscripts had fallen to 23 per cent.

When the history of the first 30 years of the Third Republic is written some hundred years hence, it will probably be admitted on all sides that its most permanent and enduring work is the reorganisation and re-creation of the system of Primary Education in France. The first law of importance is that of June 1st, 1878, which imposed on the communes the necessity of acquiring their school buildings. The State at once set aside the sum of £2,400,000 as a grant-in-aid for this purpose, with a like sum for loans, which was applied for "the construction, reconstitution, and fitting up of these schools." Further grants on a still more munificent scale

followed. The magnitude of the reform is best seen from actual figures. From 1878 to 1897, 35,145 maternal or primary schools and 163 normal schools have been built or acquired, and 19,817 have been fitted up and furnished. In all, the central and local authorities together have spent alone under this heading £34,000,000. In 1879 a law was passed compelling every department to maintain a training college for male and female teachers respectively. This law has now been practically carried out, and France possesses to-day, if anything, too many normal colleges. The two superior normal schools of Fontenay (1880) and St. Cloud (1881-2) were also founded in order to supply the normal schools with professors. During the same period a large number of *certificats* or professional diplomas were established, notably the *certificat d'aptitude pédagogique* for probationers in teaching, the *certificat d'aptitude* for primary inspectors and the heads of normal schools, and a *certificat d'enseignement agricole*. Still more important is the law of the 16th June, 1881, which rendered obligatory for all teachers, whether public or private, the *brevet de capacité*. The fruits of this law are evident to-day. In 1877 there were 41,712\* teachers without the *brevet*. According to the statistics of 1897, they number only 9,181,† and of these a large number are in the kindergarden schools, which were not comprised in the census of 1877.

Having set the school buildings in order, and raised the profession of the teacher to that of a skilled profession, the Republic turned its attention to the carrying out the triple reform with which the name of Jules Ferry is indissolubly associated—abolition of fees, compulsory education, and laicisation of the schools. The law of June 16th, 1881, abolished all payments in kindergarden, primary, and normal schools. This law on free education naturally paved the way for compulsory education. It furnished, in fact, one of its arguments. "It is just," said the Rapporteur on the Bill to the Senate, "to render accessible for all what is rendered obligatory for all." The law on compulsion, which dates from 1882, established compulsory education, not compulsory attendance. Parents might send their children where they pleased, or even have them instructed at home. The liberty of ignorance was alone proscribed. School attendance commissions were to be appointed in every village to draw up lists of children under the Act; and in case of non-declaration on the part of the parent in favour of any school, the child was to be inscribed on the list of the village school. To provide funds for the encouragement of attendance, the *Caisse des Ecoles*, which has been already mentioned, was rendered obligatory for all the communes. The legal institution of the *certificat d'études*, or leaving certificate, also belongs to this period.

These two reforms, drastic as they were, were, however, nothing in comparison with the third law of October 30th, 1886, which decreed the laicisation of the schools, and cut the painter once and for all

\* France.

† France and Algeria.

between the public and private schools, between the State and the different cults. The laicisation was to be established in two fashions. The school programme was to be purged of all denominational teaching distinctively Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish, the teaching of *la morale* being put in its place. A large number of the State schools were under the direction of the *congréganistes*. In the boys' schools these persons were to be displaced by a lay *personnel* within the space of five years, but the *religieuses* at the head of the girls' schools were to be left in possession till their death or resignation. On the other hand the new law confirmed the principle of the liberty of teaching. Article 35 left to the directors and directresses in private schools entire liberty in the choice of their methods, programmes and books, reservation only being made in favour of the State's right to prohibit the use of such books as are contrary to morality, the constitution, or the law. These schools are subject to inspection, but only as regards morality, hygiene, sanitation, and the carrying out of the duties imposed on teachers by the law of March 28th, 1882. Certain formalities were also laid down for the opening of any new private school. Higher primary schools were once more recognised. The right to appoint teachers was reserved to the prefect as before, but his power is limited, by the fact that the right of proposing candidates rests with the academy inspector. The same law regulated the jurisprudence to be employed in the case of offending teachers, and with this idea the *conseil départemental* was remodelled in order to give the pedagogical element the majority.

These reforms necessitated a certain number of financial changes that took place in 1889. The financial burdens shared between the State, the department, and the commune were simplified and defined. Up to this date public teachers had been paid by the proceeds of a surtax on each commune, the law only having fixed a minimum.\* Henceforth they are paid direct by the State, and only receive certain allowances and extra grants from the communes in certain cases. Under the present arrangement, therefore, the State pays the salary of all functionaries, and bears, in addition, the cost of the *élèves-maîtres* in the normal schools.

The department has to maintain the normal schools (fabric, furniture, and teaching materials); it has also to meet a few minor expenses, such as an *indemnité* to inspectors of 300 francs. The commune must keep in good repair the school buildings, with the master's house, pay for heating and lighting the class-rooms, find the wages of the *gens de service* (where they exist), support the cost of the acquisition, maintenance, and renewal of school furniture,

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\* According to the official report (E.P.), the situation was far from satisfactory. The poor communes could hardly pay their teachers the minimum wage. The rich communes often made a large addition to the legal salary. "These liberalities possessed the disadvantage of creating veritably startling inequalities between teachers in the same department and the same canton, and managing schools of equal importance" (page 176).

including the registers, etc., allow the teachers "lodging money" where no proper house exists, and an *indemnité de résidence* in all cases where the village population is over 1,000, and pay for the sewing mistress in mixed schools under a male teacher. The same law which made the payment of teachers a State affair established a regular scale of salaries for teachers and probationers, by dividing them up into six classes. Promotion is therefore no longer a question of locality.

In 1893 probationers' salaries were raised to 900 francs. In 1900, the question of teachers' salaries having come once more to the front, the number of *stagiaires* was reduced, and the percentage in the higher classes augmented, in order to accelerate the rate of promotion. Meanwhile, the school programme has undergone numerous revisions. The need of bringing the school more into practical relation with everyday life has led to several important modifications. Yet the ideal aim of the school has never been sacrificed. M. Bayet says in an eloquent preface to the latest report on Primary Education: "Nous poursuivons la culture générale du caractère et de l'esprit, mais nous cherchons en même temps à orienter l'enfant vers la vie pratique." The most notable of these changes are the attention given to manual training in the towns, and to the teaching of agriculture in the country.

The work of the Third Republic may be briefly resumed under the heads of free education, compulsory attendance, and laicisation of the schools, simplification and adjustment of the cost of education between the three contracting parties—the State, department, and commune—generalisation of primary education by the construction or maintenance of a public school in every village, with a marked improvement in school furniture and equipment, thanks to the generosity of the central authorities; teachers' salaries raised and teachers themselves paid directly by the State, while everywhere training colleges have been provided in abundance. At the same time the instruction given has been rendered at once democratic by the teaching of "civics and *la morale*," and practical by the introduction of manual training and agriculture; and lastly the higher primary school—which is the natural crown to a primary education—has been successfully re-established. The bitterest enemies of the Republic must admit that, however short it may have come of carrying out the extensive programme of reforms proposed by the Convention, it has been singularly successful in realising, for good or ill, the educational ideals traced out by Condorcet a hundred years ago. In the respect of the progress effected during the last 20 or 30 years, the following statistics are given in the official catalogue to Class I. of the Paris Exhibition. In 1897, there were 41,568 teachers more than in 1877;\* the children have increased to the extent of 1,012,052, and now amount to 6,326,324 pupils (of whom one quarter are in the religious schools). In 1877, 15

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\* The number in 1896-7, in all grades of primary schools, was 158,872.

per cent. of the conscripts were illiterates; in 1896 there were only 5·3 per cent.\*; and finally the total of pupils who passed the *certificat d'études* has risen from 36,841 in 1877, to 186,031 in 1897.

And lastly, the school, interpreting for itself the idea of national education not merely as a matter of programmes and syllabuses, or even the mere training of the youth during the narrow cycle of the school life, but as a work whose sphere includes the education of pupils of all ages, and embraces in its widest sense the bringing forward and uplifting of the masses, has thrown itself with extraordinary ardour into the field of education extension and social regeneration. The official world has indeed given its consent and even approbation and encouragement; but the real living force behind the movement has come from the teachers themselves, who have spared neither their own time nor themselves in their efforts to found continuation classes for ex-pupils and adults, to provide evening recreation and amusements, and to encourage thrift and mutual assurance among their pupils, form old boys' associations, or combat the growing evils of alcoholism. In this work they have been ably seconded by the numerous societies which exist for the promotion of popular instruction in France, the most notable of which is probably the *Ligue Française de l'Enseignement*.

## CHAPTER I.—THE AUTHORITIES AND FINANCE.

### THE CENTRAL AUTHORITIES.

It may interest Englishmen to know that, whereas in their own country the post of President of the Board of Education (as distinct from the President of the Privy Council) is only a creation of yesterday, the office of Minister of Public Instruction in France dates from 1828. Of his power over the public schools it is unnecessary to speak here. His rights in relation to the private and confessional schools are confined to seeing they are properly staffed, kept in a sanitary state, and conducted in accordance with the law. As has been already pointed out, even teachers in private and religious schools are obliged to possess the *brevet de capacité*. There is no "free trade" in teaching. In England a school may exist without the cognisance of the State. In France schools of every kind must come under State supervision. The effect on the general standard of teaching is obvious.

There are three permanent directors for primary, secondary, and superior education respectively. The primary section is divided up into five bureaux. The first is concerned with the *personnel* of Primary Education, the second with the discipline, examinations and programmes (it was from this bureau that the celebrated circular on agricultural education was issued);

\* According to a Ministerial circular quoted by *Le Temps*, November 3rd, 1901, the percentage of male and female illiterates in 1898 was 4·7% and 7·2%, against 25% and 37% respectively in 1870.

the third superintends the construction of schools, etc.; the fourth deals with the primary teachers, and the fifth with the accounts.

A sort of consultative committee for all grades of education assists the Minister. Such a council naturally makes for the oneness and harmony of education, and thereby prevents the various grades from getting too far apart, as well as insuring against any undue overlapping or local redundancy in the school supply. Of its 57 delegates six are elected\* to represent Primary Education, which is further represented by several official members. An account of their proceedings is published in the *Bulletin Administratif*, but the actual deliberations of its members are secret.

The Inspecteurs Généraux act as the eyes and ears of the central authority. They also serve as its mouthpiece. They are not glorified primary inspectors, but pro-consuls of the Minister. Their chief duty is to inspect the normal schools, appraise the value of the higher officials, whether academy inspectors, primary inspectors, or heads of training colleges, and record the progress of instruction in any department. As the mouthpiece of the Minister they serve as a channel of communication for any new idea that the central authorities may wish to put into circulation. The utility of their rôle may be judged by the indefatigability of one of their most distinguished members, who, a few years ago, made a tour of all the normal colleges for men in France, in order to deliver a lecture on the precise orientation to be given to agricultural education. They are nominated by the President of the Republic on the proposition of the Minister of Public Instruction. They are paid 10,000 francs a year, and divide up among themselves 27,000 francs for travelling expenses. Their number to-day is eleven (reckoning in two who are "hors cadre.") Along with the *recteurs* they have a voice in the promotion of primary inspectors. There are also four lady General Inspectors for the *écoles maternelles*. Their salary is 3,500 to 5,000 francs, with travelling expenses.

For the purpose of General Inspection France is divided up into seven districts. Ordinarily each inspector preserves for two years at least the same district.† Among those most capable of judging, the prevailing opinion seemed to be that districts are changed rather too frequently. Certainly it is an undoubted advantage for an Inspecteur Général to be acquainted with more than one district in France, yet the districts themselves are so extensive, it probably takes an Inspecteur Général the best part of four years to thoroughly master its manifold idiosyncrasies. On the question of appointing specialists for separate subjects or all round educationists as General Inspectors, the opinion of those I consulted was greatly in favour of the latter. In fact, the most recent tendency of the central authorities was in

\* The electorate is composed of the general, academy, and primary inspectors, the lady inspectors, the heads of normal colleges, and the teachers who are members of the *conseils départementaux*.

† These divisions are by no means rigid. It is left to the Minister every year to divide up the work between the Inspecteurs Généraux.

favour of Inspecteurs Généraux who were really *general*. Formerly there were inspectors for *la morale* and manual instruction. These posts have now been suppressed, as it was felt they sinned against the cardinal rule of regarding the school's curriculum as a whole, and not a collection of separate subjects. As far as I could learn, the only special subject still inspected separately was the "drawing" in the normal schools, which is looked into by an inspector sent by the Ministère des Beaux-Arts. An Inspecteur Général (*hors cadre*) looks after the Musée Pédagogique. Apart from being a museum in which many relics of the past are preserved, as well as a pedagogical library, it has served of late years as a perfect arsenal for lantern slides, which it despatches by the thousand during the winter to teachers who propose to give popular lectures. It further maintains a circulating library of volumes requisite for the preparation of these lectures.

Musée  
Pédagogique.

Effect of  
intelligent  
centralisa-  
tion or  
centralised  
intelligence.

If one goes for a moment beneath the surface of this powerful hierarchy of officials, one comes at once in contact with a directive and controlling intelligence whose traces one had already remarked in perhaps some of the most sleepy hollows of rural France; and what is still more precious, one encounters the same spirit of devotion to the education cause, of *esprit de corps* that seemed so striking in the humblest of the teachers. In fact, anyone who attempts to estimate the influence of the rural schools in France must take into account the steady pressure that the central authority exerts. It is like a "power station" which, though often unseen and at a distance, furnishes no inconsiderable quota to the sum-total of the schools' energy and efficiency.\*

The Budget.

It is interesting to note that the money voted for any particular year is only available for that year and no other. Nor can the money voted under one chapter be used for another without the sanction of the Chamber. Hence the need of supplementary credits. Another interesting point is that the French Budget has to be voted by both Houses, and that credits are often proposed and carried by private members,† instead of there being only one Steward of the Commonwealth, as is practically the case in England. If the Budget is delayed for some reason or other, votes on account for a month's expenses, or *douzièmes*, are taken. In one instance as many as ten *douzièmes* were allotted. The Primary Education Budget consists of no fewer than fifteen chapters. In 1899 the Budget amounted to 153,220,255 francs, against

\* Of course there is another side to the shield, though I venture to think it is the less important. But those who dilate on the dangers of excessive centralisation in England will rejoice to hear that I came across one or two functionaries in France who complained of the state of tutelage in which they were kept by the "administration." One official was exceedingly bitter on what he called the "caporalisation" of the department, and its military regime. It discouraged initiative, and confounded obedience with routine. New ideas were only acceptable from certain persons—*bien vues*, etc., etc. Unfortunately this "liberationist" seemed the least likely to profit by a sudden extension of liberty.

† The rights of the French Deputy have, however, in this matter been reduced (*see* Séance de la Chambre du 16 Mars, 1900).

9,988,300 francs in 1870 and 26,677,813 in 1880. Of this sum no less than 121,813,620 francs went for teachers' salaries (not including those in towns of over 150,000 inhabitants).

It is probably worth noting here that the Ministry of Public Instruction is not the only Government office dealing with national education in France. The various agricultural schools and institutions are under the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Commerce looks after the commercial schools of various grades, as well as the technical schools, some of which are entirely under its control, while it exercises over others a joint supervision along with the Ministry of Public Instruction. Other educational authorities.

#### THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

The local authorities are either professional or lay, or a mixture of both.

France is educationally divided into seventeen academies (now The rector, universities). At the head of each is placed a rector, who is appointed by the President of the Republic. He is the head of all three grades of education within his province. The normal schools are directly under him. Of the members who form the *conseil d'administration*, four are his nominees. The higher primary schools are also under his immediate control. But the elementary public schools depend directly on the academy inspector, and the teachers are appointed by the prefect, who, in this case, is regarded as the delegate of the Ministry of Public Instruction. The schools visited on the present occasion were in the three academies of Caen, Poitiers, and Paris.

Every department has its academy inspector. Apart from The Academy Inspector, his duties in secondary and higher education he is the real head of the educational authorities for primary education in each department. As regards teaching methods and pedagogical matters he is under the rector; in questions concerning the *personnel* and the administrative side of primary education he is independent of his authority. For a short period the teachers were appointed by the rector. But in 1854 the right passed to the prefects. "This measure, inspired by political considerations, was intended to fortify the authority of the administration represented by the prefects" (Rapport E. P.) This right has subsequently been modified, and any movement in the *personnel* can only be made on the proposition of the academy inspector, who has also the sole right of appointing probationers. This system of dual control rarely leads to conflicts. (Rapport E. P.) The teachers are not, however, always protected thereby against the workings of political influences. In fact, one of the teachers' grievances is that of *déplacement d'office*, in which a teacher is sent from one post to another without being consulted. The case seems to be comparatively rare; and in some departments, where the



academy inspector is opposed to it on principle, it is practically non-existent. Considering, however, the strong party feeling which exists in some of the districts I visited, it seems only wonderful that instances are not more frequent; and, after all, absolute immovability would probably not be an unalloyed blessing.

Pivot of the system.

The academy inspector strikes one as being the real pivot between the central authority and the schools. He is not too far removed for the latter to have a thorough working acquaintance with their ways and their wants. His intercourse with the central authority is sufficiently close, and his rank sufficiently elevated, to make his voice listened to and respected. As quasi-independent, for much is necessarily left to his judgment and discretion, he has the opportunity of giving an active and steady support to any ideas he wishes to encourage. On the other hand, his diplomatic duties are scarcely less important in keeping the school in good odour with the population, and inducing the department and the communes to grant to education subventions over and above the *strict nécessaire*.

The following quotation from the preface of the bulky volume just issued by the Ministry on l'Inspection Académique gives an excellent idea of the multifarious duties of these most useful of public servants :—

Their duties. [Their duty is] "to see to the application of the laws, decrees, and circulars which have established compulsory, free, and lay education, reformed the programmes, and assigned the place of honour in the schools to moral and civic instruction. [Their task it is] to make the teachers under their direction understand its spirit, to guide them with their counsels, sustain their courage, and strengthen them against any momentary weakness. [It is also their task] to see that the schools are properly installed, to provoke the zeal of the governing bodies, enter into relations with the authorities of every degree, with elected councils, with local notabilities, in order to create around our schools that current of sympathies which is necessary to their prosperity and development."

The volume is practically made up of selected circulars on all sorts of subjects addressed by the academy inspectors to the *personnel* under them, or of general annual reports to the Conseil départemental, which are taken in both cases from the *Bulletin départemental de l'enseignement primaire*. A cursory perusal of its contents gives a very fair idea of the enormous output of pains and thought lavished on primary education in France since each separate department has its monthly Bulletin. The latter is further utilised for launching an inquiry into any new question which the central authorities, or the academy inspector himself, consider has come within the range of practical politics. Suppose, for instance, the question proposed be that of agricultural education. A copy of the Bulletin containing a long string of inquiries is sent to every teacher, who is obliged to return a complete set of replies. No one, in fact, escapes. Even the teachers in the towns are obliged

to answer, though the subject be a country one like agriculture, if they have passed some of their time in a rural school.

The circulars and general reports are often largely made up of the reports of primary inspectors, or of the debates that take place at the teachers' conferences. Although the academy inspector occasionally presides at these functions, they are officially considered as part of the duties of the primary inspector, and, as such, will be noticed under that heading.

The academy inspectors are taken from the ranks of secondary Recruitment education. I was told that in some departments they showed a somewhat scholarly indifference for primary education. I can only judge them from what I saw of them, and my verdict must be emphatically the reverse. They seemed to me to be rather one of the factors that are bringing about that individualisation of the departments to which reference has been made. Their influence, already considerable, seems likely to be further increased, as the decentralisation of functions that the need of catering for local requirements is gradually bringing about will leave them with more initiative than ever—a decentralisation that M. Bayet, in the preface to the Rapport on Primary Education, regards as the direct outcome of the legislation of Jules Ferry.

The prefect not only appoints the teachers, he also is president of the *conseil départemental*, which bears the same relation to him as the *conseil supérieur* does to the Minister. The latter must not be confounded with the *conseil général du département*, which corresponds fairly to our county council. Prefect and Conseil Départemental. The former, if anything, resembles slightly our technical committees, inasmuch as it contains delegates chosen by the *conseil général*, and though it has no power of actually levying a rate, it can indirectly make the communes spend money on education. It is not in any sense a representative body of the rate-payers, as the pedagogical members are in a large majority. The academy inspector acts as vice-president. Other members are the heads of the two normal schools, two male teachers and two female teachers elected by their colleagues, and two primary inspectors. On the discussion of certain questions the private schools have a right to be represented by two delegates. Experts also can be summoned. The duties of the Council are pedagogical, administrative and judicial. They see that the programmes are duly carried out and discuss the educational condition of the schools. In many departments in which a special programme for agricultural teaching has been drawn up, they have been consulted. Their administrative functions permit them to determine the number, nature, and situation of the primary public schools as well as the number of masters. They thus decide on the creation of new schools, determine whether or no a school is properly built or finished, and have powers to allow small communes to unite for school purposes. This, however,

does not often happen, as the smaller the commune the more jealous is it of its independence.

The council further allows the detachment of a hamlet from one commune to another for scholastic purposes, where distances are great. It grants permission to teachers to take boarders, allows a male teacher to conduct a mixed school on condition that the commune appoint a sewing mistress, keeps a register of teachers who have rendered themselves capable of being fully certified (*titulaires*), gives its opinion on the number of pupils required in the normal schools, can depute a third of its members to inspect any school, and further appoints one or more delegates by canton to supervise public and private schools. Its judicial attributes make it an appeal court in the question of the opening of a private school. It is also a fountain head of rewards and punishments. It has a voice in the promotion of teachers, and it is on its recommendation that the Minister awards medals and diplomas for distinguished service to the teachers. Its disciplinary powers are very great, extending to a complete prohibition to teach in any school.

The Primary  
Inspectors.

"The inspectors of primary education are the delegates of the State charged with the oversight of the establishments devoted to that form of instruction." They depend on the academy inspector. Roughly speaking there is about one to each *arrondissement*. Their actual number to-day is about 441 for France. To these must be added three female inspectors for the maternal schools and three for girls' schools in Seine and Seine-et-Oise. It is worth noticing that there are no sub-inspectors. According to the statistics for 1897 there is one inspector for every 149 primary public schools, with 230\* departments and 232 masters, or for 198 schools of all kinds for 324 departments and 356 masters and mistresses. The biggest *circonscription* is Roubaix, with 1,041 departments, and the smallest Batna, with 115. An inspector told me he was once in the old days in a very poor and mountainous *arrondissement* where there were only 27 schools. This has since been suppressed. There is a tendency to-day to reduce the number of inspectors and equalise the *circonscriptions*.

Size of  
districts.

Most of the *circonscriptions* in the districts I visited seemed to be rather above the average. One of the biggest I came across was that of Argentan, with 207 public schools and 22 private schools. This is some way off M. Paul Bert's ideal of an inspector to every 100 schools. Mere figures do not always give a fair idea of the work. The actual dimensions of the *circonscription* must be taken into account, and the accessibility by rail of its various parts. Thus one *circonscription* through which I passed has a school as far distant from the *chef-lieu* as 73 kilomètres [45½ miles], of which 65 kilomètres are by rail and eight by road, and the furthest schools in the opposite direction are nearly as inacces-

\* Classes (French).

sible. The majority of inspectors use bicycles. In fact, the possession of a machine must be practically indispensable. As one of these hard-working officials remarked, "If the bicycle had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent it for the primary inspector." With such distances to cover, it is obvious that the majority of schools can only be visited once a year, or even less; as a high official said to me, this is far too little for the few unsatisfactory schools which are to be found in every *circonscription*. He preferred, therefore, that the inspectors should leave the better schools unvisited for even a longer period and concentrate their attention on whipping up these educational laggards.

In England the primary inspectors are appointed by the President of the Board of Education. In France the inspectors are selected by a system of examination. The conditions of eligibility are so drawn up as to insure a high standard of knowledge on the part of the candidate. The examination itself, which is also the same for the heads of normal colleges, is usually held twice a year, and is divided into three parts. The first, which is a written composition in pedagogics and school administration, is held simultaneously in the *chef-lieu* of all the departments, the subject set being thus the same for all the candidates. For those who pass the written examination, there is an oral examination at Paris, each candidate having a *viva voce* on certain set books, on a question of theoretical and practical pedagogy, and finally on questions of school law and administration. Lastly there is a practical examination, which consists of a visit to a school, followed immediately by a verbal criticism of the same by the candidates.

Recruitment  
of the  
Inspectorate.

The following are the list of subjects for the composition, in Pedagogics, Subjects set at examinations pedagogics.

1898. *Subjects Common to Male and Female Candidates.*—Toleration.—How can one give to pupils of the primary schools a simple and clear idea of it? How can one develop in them the sentiment and practice of it?

1899. First Session.—*Male Candidates.*—A common cause of complaint is that the spirit of initiative has diminished in France. To what extent can the teacher in the elementary, primary, or higher primary school manage to awaken and fortify it?

*Female Candidates.*—Education at the maternal school. Its principles.

1899. Second Session.—The teacher, whether male or female, ought to teach the children order and economy. How are they to set about it in order to do so with moderation? What precautions will they take to prevent the exaggeration of these qualities from leading them into those faults from which it is of the highest importance to preserve childhood?

1900. First Session.—What is the meaning, as regards primary education, of the phrase *préparer sa classe* (prepare the lessons beforehand)? How will you bring it home to teachers who have had several years' experience of teaching that it is necessary to prepare the work for one's class all one's life long?

ol The following are the list of subjects set for the composition in school administration for the same period :—

1898. *Male Candidates*.—Explain the legal regulations relative to the representation of primary education on the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Instruction Publique*. What are the functions of this council as regards primary education? Have you any observations to offer on the subject?

*Women Candidates*.—What are the regulations relative to internal supervision in the normal schools for girls? How should the directress organise it? In what spirit ought the teachers to interpret their participation in the supervision?

1899. First Session.—*Male and Female Candidates*. The *Certificat d'études*. Its organisation and the modifications it has undergone. Your opinion of the criticisms to which it has been subjected.

1899. Second Session.—What are the obligations of the commune in respect to primary education?

1900. First Session.—The higher primary schools: their general organisation and staff. Candidates should avoid discussing details in the programme.

The list of set books for the last few years is as follows :—

1893-97 :—

Fénelon—*De l'éducation des filles*, Chap. I. à VI. et XI. à XII.

*Les pédagogues de Port-Royal*, par. I. Carré (*Extraits de Nicole, de Sacy, Guyot, Coustel, règlement de Jacqueline Pascal*).

J. J. Rousseau—*Emile*, livre III.

Rollin—*Traité des études* (édition F. Cadet).

Anthoine—*A travers nos écoles; les 42 premières pages*. *Notes d'un inspecteur*.

Herbert Spencer—*De l'éducation* (édition populaire), Chap. II. *De l'éducation intellectuelle*.

Gréard—*L'éducation des femmes par les femmes*.

Blackie—*L'éducation de soi-même* (traduction F. Pécaut).

Channing—*De l'éducation personnelle* (traduction Laboulaye).

For 1898-1900 the authors set included, among others, Fénelon, J. J. Rousseau, Condorcet, Emile Boutroux, F. Buisson, and Horace Mann. For 1901-1903 the extracts are taken from the works of Montaigne, Rousseau, Channing, Michelet, Bain, Pécaut, and Jules Ferry. It is worth noting the large use made of English and American writers on education, and the absence of any German books on the subject.

oe. The so-called "explanation" of these texts consists in a *vis-à-vis* comment on one or two pages, which the candidate is given an hour to prepare.

retical The question on theoretical and practical pedagogy and the questions  
etical on school law and administration are assigned by lot to the candidates.  
gics. Each candidate is allowed two hours to prepare his replies, during which time he is under lock and key.

The following are a few specimens of the questions in pedagogy :—

1. In a pedagogical conference you set forth the principal reasons why the school attendance has been defective, and you indicate to the teachers what they can do, without having recourse to the school commission, to improve it.
2. Discipline. How do you understand its application to the pupils of all ages in your primary schools?
3. How, in your opinion, can a teacher in his commune extend his educational influence outside of and beyond the school?
4. How would you regulate the use of monitors in the elementary school?

Specimens of questions on school law and administration :—

In school law.

1. The functions and rôle of the inspector of primary education in the matter of examinations.
2. Right of opposition to the opening of private schools. Closing of these schools.
3. Class-books, prizes, and supply of school materials.

At the end of the examination an exhaustive report is addressed to the The Minister by the President of the Board of Examiners (consisting of the examiners' Director of Primary Instruction, the *inspecteurs généraux* for primary instruction, four lady inspectors or directresses of normal schools, an academy inspector, four university professors, and two primary inspectors). Taking that of 1899, the President, M. Jacoulet, after enunciating the number of candidates and the classes from which they were drawn, complains of the low marks in pedagogy obtained by many candidates, and enumerates the qualities most essential in a good inspector. Returning to the composition, which was concerned with the supposed lack of initiative in France, he criticised some of the most common faults in the treatment of the subject, and gives an admirable *résumé* of how the question should have been dealt with and discussed. The administrative problem treated of another burning question—the *certificat d'études*. Here most of the candidates failed to treat the subject with sufficient philosophic breadth. The *lecture expliquée*, according to the same authority, is one of the most difficult and more decisive tests. Not only must the candidate be master of his subject, he must also give it the tone and style of an inspector addressing his subordinates, a somewhat difficult feat before such an august assembly of examiners. The *épreuve pratique* at the end is also one of the most decisive ordeals. It is essentially a test in powers of observation and judgment. Such is the mere gist of M. Jacoulet's report, which abounds in the most practical hints for the unsuccessful quite as much as for the successful candidates; but those who desire to obtain a more thorough knowledge of the searching nature of the examination should read pages 47–133 of the Report I.E.P., which gives an exhaustive *résumé* of the subject. Severity of examination

The extreme severity of the examination is further shown by the small percentage of candidates who have passed in the last five years.

—	Examined.	Passed Written Examination.	Successful.
1895	159	27	8
1896	337	50	21
1897	261	42	23
1898	105	21	10
1899	229	38	22

Up to 1887 teachers were eligible for the examination, which was, indeed, open to all persons of a certain academic standing, In fact, in the years 1880–1888 they formed the majority of the successful candidates, numbering 122 against 93 professors from the normal and higher primary schools, 29 secretaries and clerks from the offices of academy inspectors, and only 12 professors of secondary education. The comparative failure of the latter is

significant. It is probably due to their ignorance of a grade of teaching whose methods and regulations are so unlike their own. After 1888 the regulations were framed to further raise the intellectual standard of the candidates by demanding the possession of certain degrees as a *sine quâ non* of admission to the examinations. This had the effect of practically reducing the examination to a close competition between the professors in the normal and higher primary schools. Since then the regulations have been again widened, but the significance of the change is best seen from the fact that of the total who passed during the period from 1889-99 inclusive, only 30 have come from the ranks of elementary school teachers; the Secondary professors have furnished four, the clerks and secretaries one, while no fewer than 161 belong to the category of professors in normal or higher primary schools.

Pros and cons  
of the actual  
system.

On the vexed question whether the elementary school teacher or the normal professor makes the best inspector there seems to be considerable difference of opinion. The elementary school teacher is often more at home in the school and knows what its real capacities are and what it is reasonable to expect from it; in a word, his pedagogical equipment is often superior. On the other hand, the normal professor, from having more frequented the world, has learnt something of its ways and diplomacy, qualities which are by no means unimportant in districts where political feeling at times runs high, while they have also a positive value in helping their possessor to persuade the communes into taking a larger view of their duties towards the schools.

Emoluments.

The inspectors are divided into five classes, receiving 3,000 francs in the lowest class, with a rise of 500 francs for each class up to the maximum of 5,000.\* These salaries are paid by the State. They are also allotted so many travelling days' expenses at the rate of 10 francs a day, according to the size of their *circonscription*, and finally the department allows them a minimum indemnity of 300 francs.

Duties.

The duties of the inspector in the private schools are confined to examining the register and the sanitation of the school. They cannot inquire into the teaching except to assure themselves that it is not contrary to the morality of the constitution. Not infrequently the teachers in the private schools beg the primary inspector to examine the class, but the latter nearly invariably refuses. They seem to have a pretty general notion that the methods in these schools are inferior, and have no particular wish to improve them. † This is probably not far from the truth as regards the religious rural schools, considering the pecuniary difficulties under which they are labouring.

\* In some cases the inspectors are paid on a higher scale.  
† See page 150 (passage from Matthew Arnold).

\* In S.  
† See page

In the public schools the inspectors' duties may be summed up under three main heads. They are appointed to keep an eye on the hygiene and morality; to see that the programme and regulations are duly observed; and, thirdly, to act as "masters of method" to the teachers. They naturally have a voice in the opening of any new school, whether public or private, and also in the appointment of teachers. They preside over the examination for the *certificat d'études*. They can also, as a last resort, set the law in motion in case of non-compliance with the school attendance regulations. On the other hand, it must not be assumed that they rank *pari passu* with our English inspectors. The latter have a wider province to overlook, and under certain restrictions are far more free than the French inspector, who in all things reports directly to and depends on the academy inspector. The latter is, of course, also the authority for higher education, but otherwise, as far as primary education goes, he is in some ways more the French counterpart of our elementary inspectors than the French primary inspector is.

One important branch of the inspectors' duties is the organisation and direction of the cantonal meetings of teachers. The fine volume just published by the Ministry on the "Inspection de l'Enseignement Primaire" is an eloquent monument of the pedagogical value of these conferences, specimens of which occupy quite half of the book itself. The public teachers' travelling expenses are paid, and even assistants are obliged to attend. Private teachers can be present by permission. In most departments there are two conferences a year, one devoted to the theory and the other to the practice of teaching. The former is generally held in the spring, and the latter in the autumn. Preparations are made a good time in advance for the first conference. At the last meeting of the year a list of subjects is proposed and drawn up; these are submitted to the approval of the academy inspector, and published as soon as possible in the Bulletin départemental. Each teacher is supposed to write a thesis, or contribute his impressions in the form of notes. These compositions are classed according to districts, and the set from any particular district are given to one or two teachers to condense in a memoir. This is again sent to the inspector, who thereupon prepares a report or address on the subject. A discussion follows, and at the end the inspector, if necessary, sums up what seem to him to be the conclusions arrived at, and, if necessary, puts them in the form of resolutions to the meeting. This theoretical discussion is generally followed by a short criticism by the inspector on any points of teaching, methods, discipline, or conduct that have struck his attention during the past six months.

At the autumn conference a practical lesson is often given by a teacher, very generally on a subject which has been discussed theoretically at the preceding reunion. At the close of the lesson the teachers gathered in council criticise their colleague's methods and suggestions, and draw practical conclusions for themselves.



A specimen conference.

I had the good fortune to be present at one of these spring meetings in Loir-et-Cher, which was presided over *pro hac vice* by the academy inspector. The subject, which speaks volumes for the good relations between the authorities and the teachers, was the thorny question of overwork and extraneous tasks, and suggestions were invited on how to lighten the already heavy burden of the teachers. The conference over, the inspector read an illuminating essay on the civic education of women, and for which we may perhaps find space here for a very rough and incomplete *résumé*.

"The education of the citizen was accepted by all to-day, but not of the woman as citizen. There was always the fear of woman being rendered unfeminine. The dominant idea still was that of the housewife. *La femme ne donne son parfum qu'à l'ombre*. Still there was a place well marked out in civics for the wife and the mother. She has a stake in the country, if it is through her sons and her husband, who may one day have to fight for it. She has a right to know about the laws and politics, for these affect her and hers in a most vital fashion. She, too, has a personality to develop. She also, in France at least, should know something of business, for she takes a considerable part in the commerce of the country. It is necessary, then, she should learn to appreciate the full sense of such expressions as 'fatherland,' 'law,' 'citizenship.' Otherwise they will be but little more than mere words to her. Once she leaves the school she is lost to it, if she cannot be drawn into the *cours d'adultes*. Without a proper civic training she will fall back into the old rut, and her daughters will go to the *école religieuse*, and the separation which cuts France in two, even in the humblest homes, will be perpetuated. The sole remedy is *l'enseignement de la citoyenne*. Reading will prove a fruitful source for moral teaching. Napoleon, from the moral point of view, will appear to her, on thinking of the tears and bloodshed he caused, as a subject not for pride but execration. *Ce bronze que jamais ne regardent les mères!* Not hatred, but love should be the motto, fraternity within the Fatherland, and fraternity without. Sympathy for inferior races a necessary subject to be taught. The woman, maybe, will never leave her village, but her son will go into foreign lands, and practise there what he has learnt at home. Woman must be educated, not like a man, nor like a child either. Hence you can teach her heroism by the example of the women during the terrible year of 1870. Such is the rôle of the *école laïque*. Neglect this form of education and there is no essential difference between the teaching of the nuns and that of the lay schools. This civic training is the real *raison d'être* of the education of women, an education which does not demand the abjuration of sex, but makes the woman still more feminine, because it completes the education of the wife and the mother.

This eloquent address, of which the above quotations are but the *disjecta membra*, was followed by a criticism on school matters by the primary inspector, which will help, perhaps, to give a fair notion of these meetings.

In speaking of the *certificat d'études*, he advised the teachers to discourage the pupils from asking permission to enter when under the legal age. The "composition agricole" should be above all things simple, containing scientific ideas and notions in moderation. He reminded his audience of the Orphan Asylum for the children of teachers, which contains 2,000 children up to fifteen. A lottery was being got up for it. Female teachers might work

small articles for prizes. "C'est une œuvre de solidarité." The subscription was light—3 francs for members and 6 francs for honorary members. All should subscribe, for the asylum was common to all France. The Society for the Protection of Animals rendered a real service. Children should be encouraged to join. Instances were given of children who had given up birds'-nesting. Need of looking after the school furniture. Care to be taken during sweeping. A word for temperance societies—need of encouraging them. The contagious diseases—scarlet fever, measles, chicken-pox. Necessity of warning the academy inspector, who will send down doctor\* ; child meanwhile to be kept from school. Children suffering from ringworm can be taken back at a pinch. Impartiality to be practised by the teacher, especially in the capacity of Secretary of the Mairie. Remember you are functionary of the Republic, and nothing more. Need of husbanding one's voice. Loud speaking deprecated ; produces bawling on the part of the children, and laryngitis on the part of the teacher. Agricultural education must be as *practical* and *experimental* as possible. A few words on the date of the holidays. Certain books suggested to the teachers by the inspector for reading-books.

I talked to a good many persons about the utility of these conferences. Some of them spoke of the difficulty of getting the teachers to speak ; others complained that the composition was "trop peu sérieux." In one case the inspector found seven teachers had simply copied an article out of a pedagogical journal, and this seems to be a very common occurrence. On the other hand, another inspector was strong on the benefit derived from these conferences, though he admitted the composition was not very valuable. The real key to the solution seems to me to lie in the remark of an academy inspector, who said "they were excellent things with a good inspector, affording a sort of neutral ground on which the two parties can meet and discuss. The whole thing depends on whether the inspector regards them as a task or an aid to his work" ; and this opinion I found reiterated in various quarters. In short, the personality of the inspector is everything. It is very obvious that an inspector with strong ideas on the exact way in which everything should be done is less likely to elicit the ideas of his subordinates than one who believes in a multitude of councillors. But, given a sympathetic inspector as chairman, who is anxious to receive advice as well as to give it, and who believes in the supreme merit of letting teachers as far as possible puzzle out questions for themselves, only coming in at the end to give a *dernière main* to their conclusions, such meetings no doubt are a big pedagogical success. Apart from this, however, they possess the advantage of allowing the inspector to see and talk to many teachers whom otherwise he only meets once from year's end to year's end, and that, too, when they are not under the ordeal of having their schools inspected. It also gives the teachers the oppor-

Use of the  
conference

\* School doctors were created by the law of October 30, 1886.

tunity of making each other's acquaintance, and through these semi-official gatherings laying the foundation of many pleasant professional friendships, and participating in the various good works of solidarity, whether it be a society for mutual aid or an association for providing for the widow and orphan. These meetings are especially useful to the teachers in lonely communes "six miles from anywhere," who find in these meetings a healthy stimulus against the lethargy that lurks in sleepy hollows.

In 1881 Jules Ferry, in a circular addressed to the rectors, spoke of the Primary Inspectorate as follows:—

appreciation  
the Inspec-  
rate.

During the half century that this institution has existed with us it has proved its value, and the services it has rendered are such that one can say it has no longer any adversaries. Established at first on the weakest of bases as a sort of benevolent and temporary committee of the arrondissement councils, long condemned to feel its way slowly and to recruit its ranks with volunteers who were more remarkable for their goodwill than their competence, the primary inspectorate has won for itself by the force of circumstances, or, rather, by its own merit, the important place it occupies in our school organisation. Other countries have been able to surpass us in the perfection of their equipment and methods; but none, perhaps has so speedily and resolutely linked the destinies of its national education to the homogeneous composition and incessant activity of an official body of lay inspectors. To-day, when the primary inspector is necessarily recruited among the flower of the teaching body, and appointed on the results of competition in professional knowledge, the standard of which has recently been once more raised,\* he is one of the functionaries of State whose authority in its modest limits is the best established and the readiest accepted.

A visitor in the rural schools of North-west France in 1900 would have little hesitation in endorsing this apt *résumé* of twenty years ago.

*The Mayor.*—The mayor of each commune has the right to visit all schools, whether public or private, within the area of the parish. He can also have them inspected by a doctor. He is supposed to preside over and convene the *commission scolaire*, whose duty it is to look after compulsory attendance, and himself to assure the execution of the law on the subject. He receives demands for opening new schools, and has a right to oppose these proposals. He also commissions the plans for new schools, and signs all contracts.

délégués  
cantonaux.

The *délégués cantonnaires* are apparently meant to represent the lay element in the educational hierarchy. It is worth noting that they are often *délégués* in villages other than their own. In this case they seem to stand for the wider interest of the canton, against the sometimes too narrow ideas of the commune. Their duties, in some ways, resemble school managers', but are much more limited. Their functions are confined to looking after the state of the buildings, school furniture, sanitation, and behaviour of the pupils.

\* The French have evidently taken to heart the advice of M. Van den Ende to M. Cousin, when he visited Holland in 1836:—"Take care how you choose your inspectors; they are the men whom you ought to look for with a lantern in your hand."—(Report *M.A.*, page 136.)

They may not meddle with the teaching. They can, however, be present when lessons are given, not as educational experts, but as representing the family and social element, and can even address the children if they wish. They are further looked to for helping to improve the attendance, for giving prizes, and encouraging the complementary work of the school—the evening classes, the school libraries, the *sociétés de patronage*, etc.

The idea of these school patrons is evidently an excellent one, but it is far from being generally realised. One inspector went so far as to call them the fifth wheel in the school coach. Another declared their chief value was the pecuniary aid they gave to the schools. A third said they only put in an appearance on the day of the school inspection, and one of the teachers I spoke to on the subject seemed to regard their presence in his school as a veritable intrusion. Others, however, spoke more favourably. At Mayet in Sarthe I heard of a *délégué* who has done much for the school. The academy inspector of Loir-et-Cher (1899) speaks of several delegations which function regularly, and in Calvados, according to the academy inspector's report, the system seems to produce good results. It certainly has a good deal to recommend it. Probably the chief reason it is not so successful as it should be lies in the difficulty of finding persons of *bonne volonté* to undertake the task. The international congress on primary education proposed its suppression. This seems to have had the good effect of awakening considerable interest in the matter, which culminated in a congress of *délégués cantonaux*. (October, 1900.)

All this hierarchy of central and local officials will doubtless seem complicated to English minds. The extraordinary thing is that, as far as I could learn, the machine, for all its complexity, works smoothly enough. The truth is the province of each particular functionary is so clearly thought out and defined that there is no debatable ground over which ambitious rival authorities can wrangle, and, with a place for everything and someone to see that it is always in its place, any encroachment of more or less doubtful legality in the field of national education is absolutely impossible. The *cadastre* of French Education has, so to say, been completed; fresh delimitations may take place from time to time between primary and technical education (as last year), or higher primary and secondary, but there is no possibility in a country, where the whole educational field has been mapped out and allotted, for some debatable sphere of influence to be fought for by two local educational authorities.

How the machine works.

This clearness of plan has naturally led to clearness of policy. For when an individual sees clearly what is to be done, he only waits his opportunity to do it. Whereas we in England, for reasons which historically are easy to explain, have only legislated by fits

and starts in education, the Third Republic has, especially in Primary Education, carried out a consistent policy, and consistency in policy, as Lord Rosebery has shown, is an important factor in success.

As a corollary to this, it is clear that, all money spent in French education, being spent on a definite plan, has, no doubt, been spent with the greatest economy, because unnecessary schools have rarely been built except in a few of the smaller communes, which refused to be united to another commune. And lastly, this clearness of plan has singularly facilitated an intelligible adjustment of the financial burden between the three contracting parties—the State, the department, and the commune. No doubt these different blessings are directly due to the working of centralisation, and, as Matthew Arnold pointed out as long ago as 1861, we are too sensitive as a nation to any idea of State control. Yet if we go still further back in our history, we find that this distrust of the central authority is not a part and parcel of our national being, and that, on the contrary, it was precisely the magnificent State control and State regulation of the reign of Elizabeth that welded and consolidated the nation together, and helped to place us where we are to-day. From other sources we have derived that freedom, elasticity, and variety of which we are so justly proud, and which manifests itself in our institutions, and especially our education. Surely we can do what our fathers have done. The mere introduction of some system of general State oversight and delimitation in education would help to prevent the unedifying spectacle of one branch of education being starved for want of adequate pecuniary assistance while another has had to be pulled up by the law courts for its very natural zeal to give instruction in the higher grades of education.

#### FINANCE.

The two local authorities concerned with the raising and spending of money on the schools are the department and the commune.

The *conseil général du département* corresponds, more or less, to our county council. It bears the cost of the maintenance of the normal schools, with the exception of the staff's salaries. It pays a small indemnity to the primary inspectors (300 francs minimum), and supports the expenses of maintaining the academy inspector's office, which for convenience is generally situated in the prefecture itself. It likewise furnishes the travelling expenses of the agricultural professor of the department, and pays for the masters, foremen, and workmen entrusted by it with the teaching of agriculture in the primary schools of all grades. It further votes subventions to poor communes for building purposes, founds scholarships, grants aids and rewards to

teachers, presents prizes to successful candidates in the *certificat d'études*, and pecuniarily assists evening continuation classes, the formation of old boys' societies, etc.

Up to 1889 teachers were paid by the commune. Inequalities of salary were great. By the simple expedient of handing over to the Treasury instead of the communes the proceeds of the four centimes levied on the four *contributions directes*, the teacher at once became a full-blown functionary of State, the money for salaries was pooled, the gross inequalities which hitherto existed were abolished, a minimum living wage was adopted, and the teacher rendered once for all independent of the local authorities as far as his salary was concerned. In order, however, to take into account the greater cost of living in the towns, an indemnity of residence on a sliding scale has been arranged for localities where there are *agglomérations* of over 1,000 souls and for the *chefs-lieux* of cantons, the minimum *indemnité* being 100 francs. (It is worth noting the *octroi* only begins with towns of 4,000 inhabitants.) The schools, however, are built and maintained by the communes. Every commune not united to another for scholastic purpose is obliged to have a school. In certain instances communes are allowed to hire buildings, but the tendency is to make them build schools of their own. In case of refusal on the part of a commune to build, the prefect has the right to order the construction of a school, and to inscribe the cost on the budget of the commune. This only occurs comparatively rarely. The most obstinate commune finishes by yielding to the gentler means of persuasion. Under 500 population, the school is a mixed one. Over 500, the commune is obliged to have separate schools for the two sexes. Even in this case only a few communes, and those just on the border line of 500, are still unprovided with the two schools. Only communes with 2,000 inhabitants, or with *agglomérations* of 1,200 persons, are obliged to have maternal schools. The presence of a religious school in the commune in no way dispenses the commune from having to provide a school or two, as the case may be, even if the school is not in the least desired by the inhabitants. It occasionally happens, more especially with girls' schools, that one finds a school with only one or two in it, and in one authenticated case I heard of, the teacher was left a whole summer through without any pupils at all. This was in the Centre where religious feeling at times runs high, and the administration has difficulty in placing Protestant teachers. On the other hand, the communes cannot subsidise with public money any private religious schools within its borders. In places where the population has fallen below 500, once the commune has built a school, it is bound to maintain it for thirty years if it has received State aid. The same rule applies to the maintenance of higher grade schools, or *cours complémentaires* (ex-standard classes), once they have been created. The commune is expected to maintain a *caisse de*

*l'école*. The right is granted to the commune of subventioning the various *œuvres post-scolaires*, the *cantine scolaire* (the school kitchen or restaurant), and the school libraries. The commune also votes money for prizes, and supports the cost of extra classes, such as singing and domestic economy. The extent of these voluntary grants from 1889-1897 exceeded 176 million francs, about £7,040,000,\* or roughly, £880,000 a year.

Comparison  
between  
States of  
the, de-  
partment,  
Commune.

In 1889 the amount spent by the three parties (excluding the outlay on building and re-furnishing) was:—*Commune*: 71,956,078 francs (roughly, £2,878,243\*); *Department*: 17,907,315 francs (£716,292); *State*: 86,061,506 francs (£3,442,460). The next year the cost of the teachers in the primary and normal schools was transferred to the State by the transfer of the four *centimes additionnels* from the communes and the departments to the State coffers. The *State's* contribution bounded up to 120,561,862 francs (£4,822,474); the commune's share sank to 56,580,247 francs (£2,263,209), and the department's quota was reduced to a very small figure.

In 1897 (last year available for statistics) the State spent 143,768,968 francs (£5,750,758), and the communes 70,246,285 francs (£2,809,851), or a grand total of 214,015,253 francs (£8,560,610).

Outlay on  
building.

The outlay on building amounts in the last thirty years to 688,713,954 francs (£27,548,558). The normal schools alone are accountable for 51,901,819 (over two millions sterling!) under this head. On the other hand, the expenditure of Paris and the larger towns is not counted in. Were it added, the grand total would be over 850,000,000 francs, or 34 millions sterling.

Percentage  
contribu-  
tions.

The percentage of contributions of the three parties towards the building and furnishing of the normal schools has been as follows:—*State*, 38 per cent.; *departments*, 59 per cent.; *communes*, 3 per cent. Ditto for the primary schools:—*State*, 40 per cent.; *departments*, 4 per cent.; *communes*, 56 per cent.

The approximate value of the primary schools was set down in 1897 at 1,170,000,000 francs (£46,800,000). During the period 1894-97 the average cost of a school was 26,335 francs (£1,053 8s.); of a "department," 14,870 francs (£594 16s.); of a school place, 299 francs (or very nearly £12 against £14 12s. 8½d. for the same object in the English Board Schools during the period from 1870-1900).

Cost per  
pupil and  
total cost.

There are no accurate statistics about the religious schools. Les *Écoles Chrétiennes libres* spent about †39·70 francs (£1 11s. 2½d.) per pupil in 1881-82, as against 46 francs (£1 16s. 9½d.) per head to-day for the public schools, or 56 francs if the sinking fund on building loans be reckoned in. In 1896 M. Delpeuch stated that the

\* Taking the franc at the rate of 25 = £1 and omitting shillings. Centimes are also omitted.

† Includes rent.

religious teachers received at least 228 francs (£9 2s. 5d.) per head less than the lay teachers. Nevertheless, the official statisticians assume that the private schools spend about the same per head as the State schools, which makes them calculate the cost of primary education in these establishments at about 87,000,000 francs a year. The total cost of primary education in France a year is therefore about 293 millions of francs (£11,720,000), without counting the outlay on buildings, or 350 millions with (£14,000,000).

## CHAPTER II.—THE STATE\* TEACHER.

### (i.) HOW ALL-ROUND EFFICIENCY IS SECURED (INCLUDING RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS).

The first point that strikes an English observer who visits even Efficiency the most out-of-the-way French schools is the high standard of average efficiency on the part of the teachers. This is largely due to the operations of the law of the 30th October, 1886, which, among other things, enacted that no one can be a teacher in a public or private school who is not French, is not at least in possession of the *brevet élémentaire*, has not attained 18 years of age in the case of a male teacher, or 17 in the case of a female. It further divided the State teachers into probationers † (*stagiaires*) and *instituteurs titulaires*, who are either *directeurs* (or *directrices*) *d'école* or assistants (*adjoints chargés de classe* or *adjointes*). The word *classe* used here is technical, and implies a separate division or department of a school under a regular master. The English word "class" is best translated by "*cours*." A director (or directress) is a teacher at the head of a school with more than two "classes." A *stagiaire* becomes a certified teacher (*titulaire*) by passing an examination in the theory and practice of teaching, and being appointed as *adjoint* to a school. These regulations do not concern the religious schools except in so far as the need for teachers to possess at least the *brevet élémentaire*.

Although, of course, at the passing of the law, which in its first form dates from 1881, several categories of existing teachers were exempted from its action, it has been so thoroughly carried out since that the compilers of the official statistics for 1897 are able to make the proud boast that all teachers, male and female, in the public and private schools are in accordance with the law, while the number of teachers without a diploma has shrunk to a very low figure. Thus in 1897, excluding the maternal schools, Calvados had in its State and private schools, out of 1,659 teachers, only 3 male and 66 female teachers who were without the *brevet*.

\* The terms teacher, school, etc., always apply to State education unless the religious schools are expressly mentioned.

† The "*stagiaires*" must not be confounded with the English probationers (see Art. 33 of Code), who are at the bottom of the ladder, they correspond rather to the provisionally certificated teachers.



Out of 1,257, Orne had but 4 and 77 respectively; Sarthe, out of 1,471, had 6 and 92; Indre-et-Loire, out of 1,156, had 6 and 75; Loir-et-Cher, out of 1,035, had 4 and 43. The greater number of female teachers is to be accounted for by the fact that there are still over 8,000 religious teachers in the State schools, and, again, that in the religious schools themselves the female teachers outnumber the male in the proportion of 4 to 1. The figures for all France and Algeria are equally striking. Only 818 male teachers out of 74,993 teachers are without the *brevet*, or a little over 1 per cent.; of these only 101 belong to the State teachers, who number 56,030, which gives the remarkable figure of less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. for all France among the male teachers. 7,547 out of 84,342 female teachers, or about  $8\frac{3}{4}$  per cent., have no diploma; of these only 2,272 belong to the State female teachers, who number 49,802. Thus only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the State female teachers have no diploma. In the maternal schools, where the rule has been in force for a shorter period, out of 5,392 State teachers only 293 are without the *brevet*, while among the 4,022 private teachers 759 have no diploma, which once more shows the superiority of efficiency among the State *personnel*, as in one case the percentage of those without any certificate of knowledge is over 5 per cent., and in the other over 18 per cent.

Although the *brevet supérieur* is required only in the case of masters in higher primary schools, it is nevertheless frequently held by teachers in the elementary schools. In fact, there are in the State schools (including higher primary) no less than 17,059 male and 14,429 female teachers possessed of this certificate, while in the private schools the corresponding numbers are 674 and 3,988 respectively.

In addition to this, between six and seven-tenths of the present staff in Government schools have passed through a course of three years' studies at a training college.

The *certificat d'aptitude pédagogique*, which, with certain exceptions for existing teachers, is compulsory in State schools for all who aspire to become fully certificated, is now held by 45 per cent. of the *personnel*, the number of holders having risen from 31,073 in 1877 to 44,523 in 1897.

The teachers in the private lay schools are, of course, subjected to exactly the same *régime* as the others. These schools, however, are fast dying out, caught, as someone said to me, between the anvil and hammer of State and religious rivalry. In 1892-93 they numbered 3,356, and only 2,850 in 1896-97. I never came across one in the course of my travels, though I found two State schools which had been previously private lay schools. Many of the lay teachers, who number 6,778 (or 7,049 including maternal schools), are employed in religious schools.

," bogus"  
schools.

It is worth noting that no private school in France can call itself higher primary unless the director or directress hold the *brevet supérieur*. The abuse of such high-flown terms as Academy, College,

High School, etc., by schools whose teaching is purely elementary is impossible in France, where there is a State guarantee attached to every type of school, which implies that the teaching provided is in accordance with the title. The caricature of the bad English private school which is known under the name of the Dotheboys Hall has no counterpart in France. It is probable that the worst of our private schoolmasters would be able to give Mr. Squeers points in a spelling-bee competition, though some of them, even with the present relaxation in spelling, might break down at the examination for the *brevet élémentaire*.

Perhaps a word may be said here for one or two minor agencies which contribute towards the efficiency of the State teacher. Minor factors.

*Educational papers.*—The Educational Press is important enough in France to have an entire international congress of its own. It numbers no less than fifty publications. In helping to force on the questions of the day, in keeping the otherwise isolated teachers fully alive to their importance, in encouraging them to take a real and sustained interest in current pedagogics, and thereby fostering the true educational spirit, they render, no doubt, most valuable services. At their head may be placed the semi-official *Revue Pédagogique*; other well-known papers are *Le Journal des Instituteurs*, *Le Manuel Général*, *L'École Nouvelle*, *La revue de L'Enseignement Primaire*, *Le Volume*, *L'École laïque*, *L'Avant-garde Pédagogique*, *L'Instruction Pratique*, *Le Petit Provincial*, *La Réunion Pédagogique*, *Les Bulletins des toutes les Amicales*, etc. etc.\* Education Press.

*Pedagogical Libraries.*—The idea of these educational reference libraries established in each department is an excellent one. They do not however render the services they might. The academy inspector of Indre-et-Loire writes: "The pedagogical libraries hardly render any service." And yet, as he points out, their use is the best specific against the dangers of routine. The report of the academy inspector of Sarthe is scarcely more encouraging. The number of volumes borrowed in 1898 was only 600. The reports of the inspectors of Loir-et-Cher and of Orne indicate some of the causes of this neglect. Though there are no less than 22 of these libraries in the former, with 7,351 volumes, the greater number are merely school books presented by publishers. In Orne there are 37, or one for each canton, but as the academy inspector states, the works are old and out of date. What is wanted are funds to make new purchases. Pedagogical Libraries.

*The Musée Pédagogique* has also a circulating library of 494 works which are principally composed of books necessary for the various examinations for which teachers enter. In 1899 there were 251 borrowers for 2,175 books.

## (ii.) POSITION OF THE TEACHER.

Teachers generally commence with the position of assistant in the country. They next move into the town schools as assistant; after that they return to the country as head of a school, from whence the best go back to preside over the large town schools. In this way the majority of town teachers have had some experience in country districts. At the same time I was assured, by at least one authority, the teachers were generally comfortable in State teachers.

\*For a convenient review of the French pedagogical press see in the (American) "Educational Review," February, 1900, article by M. G. Compayré.

the country districts, and have not the same hankering to get into the towns as with us, owing largely, no doubt, to economic reasons. This method of passing from country to town and back is by no means absolute. The training college brings the teacher from the very start into close connection with the authorities. The head of the normal school communicates his opinion of his old pupil to the academy inspector when any appointment has to be made, with the result that a candidate whose aptitudes, manners, and idiosyncrasies seem to render him suitable for a town post is not sent to rusticate in the country. These appointments nearly always follow within twelve months of the pupil leaving the normal school, though sometimes the supply of posts does not come up to the estimate. In one department I found there had been some difficulty in placing all the pupils of the year, but the difficulty had been solved by sending the surplus into the neighbouring departments.

The *stagiaires* thus placed are carefully studied by their inspectors, so that every man is more or less marked, and when any vacancy occurs the *inspecteur d'académie* in departments in which the supply of pupil teachers is adequate is not obliged to propose to the prefect to lay violent hands on the *premier venu*, but has always in his mind's eye a teacher whose previous antecedents seem to suggest his suitability for the vacant post. This almost paternal oversight may, of course, be overdone; but it must prove a rare stimulus for a teacher whose heart is really in his work to know that he can always look for approbation, encouragement, and even reward, to the powers that be, and that there is at least one quarter in which his efforts will not be lost sight of. One feels inclined to attribute to the close association between governor and governed the *esprit de corps*, the devotion to his duties, and the acceptance of his school functions in their largest and widest sense, with which no impartial observer of French primary teachers can fail to be struck, more especially if he be acquainted with traditions which prevail in French secondary education. The humblest teacher in the most out-of-the-way hamlet, acting as it were as the pioneer of new ideas and new traditions, often in the midst of open indifference or covert hostility, feels that he has got a whole Ministry behind his back, just as the lonely sentinel feels that he has in his rear an army of his own friends. And this undoubtedly in many difficult and trying occasions gives him a courage and a constancy which it would be impossible to expect in an isolated teacher living in an unfriendly or even hostile district not only geographically cut off from the main centres of enlightenment, but with no sure means of communication with or expectation of support from the headquarters to which he belongs.

How bitter and trying these experiences may sometimes be is best seen from a few examples culled at random from the numerous monographs by teachers exhibited at the Exhibition. Many of

these persons were practically sent to open up to education districts that hitherto have been without a school. Others had been appointed to lay schools which had just been established in the place of the religious ones which still existed alongside. The adversaries of the school in one village put about statements that the lay teachers strangled their pupils. In other communes the parents, under threat of extreme ecclesiastical penalties, withdrew their children *en masse*. In others the new teacher (sometimes a woman) was received with a shower of stones.\* Other teachers, again, found themselves boycotted. The local grocer and provision merchant refused to supply them. They could get neither flour nor milk on the spot. *Si vous envoyez mon neveu ou ma nièce à l'école sans Dieu, n'attendez rien de moi ; ma congrégation sera mon héritière*, said a rich aunt to her relations, and the parish council of the place passed a resolution deploring *être obligé par une loi scélérate à entretenir une école de perdition*.

These are, of course, extreme cases, and it is pleasant to find that in the departments under observation the religious feeling has greatly abated. Thus at one place, a Catholic stronghold, which I visited, the opening of the school was greeted by violent attacks from the pulpit, but these have now ceased. In some villages, however, the war goes on in a modified form, the *curé* using his influence to withdraw the children from the school during the period of preparation for the first communion. But this is by no means universal. Many teachers expressly told me they had no trouble. Each party has decided to go his own way, and each has found in the end that he has enough to do. In some cases I even found the teachers and *curés* on friendly terms. One teacher mentioned to me with evident pleasure that last year, for the first time in the fifteen years he had been at the school, the *curé* came to the prize-giving. An academy inspector also assured me the religious difficulty was not very great. In fact, if there was any trouble, the religious party came to see him, and he generally managed to find a way out, despite one or two Hotspurs on either side. This opinion was further confirmed by a primary inspector, well spoken of by both parties, who said to me that perhaps Jules Ferry went too far ; that had he allowed the *curé* to enter the school in order to teach the catechism to those whose parents wished for it, the result would probably have been peace in the long run. For if the *curés* could have given up their schools with honour they would have done so long ago, as they constitute a very heavy drain on the clergy, despite the *commission diocésaine*.† And again, as another inspector, in one of the most Catholic departments I visited, said, any attack on the primary school would be *mal vu* by the population in general. All of which seems to indicate that the teachers' position as regards the religious question has greatly improved.

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\* My authority in this particular instance was a high official.

† See also note on page 149.

sition in  
the village

In former times the teacher was more or less under the thumb of the *curé*. He was obliged to sing in the choir, and also to put his children into it as well. The whole tendency of the Ferry legislation was not only to render him independent of the Church, but also to establish him as a sort of lay rector of the parish, round whom not only scholastic but social enterprise should centre. But if the fact of being paid by the State renders him to a certain extent independent of the locality, he none the less finds himself in actual practice generally closely associated with it, through having to act as secretary to the *mairie* of the commune.\*

secrétaire de  
mairie.

Every commune in France is obliged to possess a *maire* and a *mairie*, even if its population be composed of only fourteen persons, which is the actual size of the smallest commune in France. Each commune is further obliged to have a secretary to carry on its clerical work, and as in many instances the teacher is the only "scholar" in the place, he is appointed by the mayor to the post, of course only in those cases in which the post is a stipendiary one. In the *arrondissement* of Vire, in Calvados, there are many communes in which there is no salary attached to the secretaryship. In these cases the mayor is obliged to act as secretary himself or pay someone out of his own pocket to do the work. In the small towns where the work of the secretary is too great to be carried on by the schoolmaster, a regular official is appointed, and in some of the smaller communes a reactionary majority will sometimes appoint a religious teacher, if there is one available, but even when a reactionary mayor is elected he rarely dispossesses a teacher already in office. How widespread the practice is may be seen from the fact that in the *circonscription* of Bayeux, 92 out of the 95 male teachers are secretaries to the mayor. In many communes where there are no male teachers, the female teacher is appointed to the post; and I came across more than one of these lady secretaries who seemed to give quite as much satisfaction as their male colleagues.

The pay and duties vary a good deal. Some of the teachers I came across only received 100 francs a year. The ordinary figure seemed to be 150, but in some cases the salary was 350 and even 380 francs. The work in some instances came to only two hours a week; in others it was as high as two and even three hours a day. It is obvious that in some cases the teacher's time is considerably taken up with his secretarial duties. The academy inspector of Loir-et-Cher, in his report of 1899, goes so far as to say that the teachers are crushed by this work at the *mairie* (*accablés par la besogne*). More than one teacher complained of the work, and looked on the money as well earned, as the salary has remained stationary, but the work has increased. There are so many more papers to fill up nowadays. Another objection against the system was that

\* The system is not due to the Republic. When Matthew Arnold visited France, in 1859, he found it in full swing. (M. A., page 82.)

it brings the teacher into too close contact with politics. The wife of a teacher in a commune where party feeling runs high said to me the position was extremely difficult, but her husband so far had steered clear of being classed with either party.\* One or two similar complaints were also made to me. Against this I could set the records of the teachers themselves. In the very *circumscription* of one of these grumblers I was told by the inspector he had scarcely ten complaints a year against the 240 teachers under him, and these were nearly always unfounded. If, then, the teachers have to exercise some diplomacy, they are evidently equal to the task. It might also possibly be a mistake to free the teachers from *all* local control. Nor was the testimony entirely one way. One teacher who was not favourable to the system was forced to admit that it helped him to get all he wanted for the school out of the commune, and another stated that it certainly enabled the teachers to obtain much more out of the local funds than they otherwise could get. In fact in the hands of a skilful teacher it probably serves more as a help than a hindrance. Its most serious defect is the claims it makes on the teacher's spare time.

The above remarks apply *pari passu* to the female teachers. That the position is a fairly satisfactory one is proved by the fact that not a few teachers told me they intended to put their daughters in the profession. As one mistress said to me, it is by no means a bad career for women, if they had not to wait so long before earning anything. Despite the girls being boarded free at the *école normale*, many parents cannot afford to allow their children to remain so long without work. Another teacher said it was the only calling a girl can follow with the exception of the *postes et télégraphes*, if she does not wish to be an *ouvrière*. Those who are sent into the villages as the head of a girls' or mixed school are doubtless subjected to a minute study on the part of the inhabitants. *Les mauvaises langues* (for there are gossips everywhere) do not spare them. But once the period of probation is over, the new-comer settles down and finds herself accepted as a "full member" of the village community. Another advantage is that they can marry without losing their place. Many marry teachers, but others I came across were married to persons unconnected with the profession. According to the directress of the normal school at Caen about half marry; the directress of the normal school at Le Mans estimated the number at a third. In any case, there are no joint salaries as with us, so that the married woman always obtains the full market value of her services.

The position of the assistant in some of the large schools seems to be a cause of discontent. The director in some cases appears to possess a certain

\* I myself was able to judge, in a way, of the extent of this political feeling, as I commenced my inquiry in the middle of the general election for town and parish councils, in April. In some places, as was natural, there had been some feeling, but this was not the case, at least, in one commune where 156 votes were cast for 64 candidates.

Position of  
the women  
teachers.

Position of  
the assistants.

amount of the military spirit, and treat the older assistants as if they were still *in statu pupillari*. Such an autocratic régime breaks all spirit of initiative in the teacher, and makes him a sort of scholastic automaton. These facts are taken from a report on overwork addressed by M. Achille Deum to the teachers of the Seine. The report also recommends that the head teacher should regard himself not as a chief among his soldiers, but as a collaborator among collaborators. No doubt the most practical system for realising this ideal is that of friendly weekly or fortnightly reunions of the staff, such as are common in Germany, a notable example of which I came across at Alençon, where the director of the Ecole d'Application told me he found the system of great use. The report in question goes even further, and suggests a pedagogical referendum, which, however, seems rather unsatisfactory, as the votes would be counted and not weighed.

### (iii.) RECRUITMENT.

recruit-  
ment.

It has already been stated that about seven-tenths of the teachers have had a normal education, but the training colleges are quite large enough to accommodate sufficient pupils to supply all the primary schools, and it only rests with the Minister of Public Instruction, or rather with the Ministry of Finance, to see this number is attained. As it is, the deficiency is made up by taking on the holders of the *brevet élémentaire*, such as students who have failed to enter the normal schools, or even religious teachers who have left their orders. Such persons, however, cannot attain the maximum salary of the profession. This shortage in the supply of trained teachers has caused some alarm in some quarters; and certainly it seems somewhat of a piece of false economy not to utilise to the full the splendid normal schools that have been constructed at such regardless expense.\* In some of the departments—as, for instance, Calvados—there was a balance of normal pupils waiting to be placed; but in Sarthe I was told that between one-third and a quarter of the female teachers have to be taken from outside the school. On the other hand, the male supply of teachers in Sarthe is sufficient. It is only fair to those who frame the estimates of the numbers required in the men's training colleges to state that a certain number of their pupils do not after all enter the teaching profession, more especially those who remain in the Army after completing their year of compulsory service. These ex-students are required to pay up the cost of their keep during the three years at the normal school; but after attaining the rank of sergeant they present themselves for the examination of sous-lieutenant, and, if they gain their epaulettes, on their retirement probably receive a post of receiver of taxes, which is better pay

\* According to the Rapport E.P., this shortage in supply is due to the cutting down of the vote for normal colleges, which, in ten years from 1890-1899, has been gradually diminished by something like £60,000, though the votes for all other branches have shown an almost uninterrupted increase from year to year. The result is that "almost everywhere" the Academy Inspectors have been obliged to complete their lists of *stagiaires* by taking persons who have not been at a training college. In some departments the number of these "outsiders" reaches and sometimes exceeds 50 per cent.

than that of a schoolmaster. One person with whom I conversed on this point put down the leakage through this channel as high as 10 per cent.

During the last few years the number of aspirants has fallen off in a marked fashion in some departments. I questioned a good many people in the matter, which is a very serious one, and the majority seemed to think that the real reason was not anything to do with a distaste for the work, or owing to the profession becoming less attractive, but rather for economic reasons, brought about mainly by the ranks of the teachers being so encumbered as to render promotion slower than it was, many teachers being obliged to remain in the "probationer" class even after passing their *certificat d'aptitude pédagogique*. This lack was most noticeable in Orne, where in 1898-9 the authorities had to ask the Ministry to allow the age of candidates for the *école normale* to be extended—*i.e.*, to permit them to admit pupils under sixteen or over eighteen. The dearth of male candidates is shown by the fact that in 1873 and 1885 they numbered 59 and 53 respectively; while in 1896 and 1899 they had dropped to 21 and 23. In Loir-et-Cher the bottom seems to have been reached: in 1899 there were 23 male candidates against 20 the year before, and 32 women candidates against 29. In Indre-et-Loire (1897) the number of aspirants was sufficient (20 for 11 places), thanks to the higher primary schools of Amboise and Tours, which prepare for the normal school. At Le Mans normal school for women there was formerly a deficiency of candidates, and recruits had to be beaten up out of other departments; now the department alone sends up about 33 aspirantes (1898). The male normal college also had sufficient candidates (27 for 13 places); in fact, two of its candidates were drafted off into other departments.

This apparent decrease in the number of candidates is confirmed by the official figures given in the official Rapport sur l'Enseignement Primaire. The maximum number of candidates was 5,969 in 1882; it fell to 4,564 in 1887, and next year there was a further drop to 2,790, descending to as low as 2,096 in 1891. In 1897 it had again risen to 3,151; but the rise has not been maintained, and it now stands at 2,778. *Per contra*, the number of women candidates has constantly increased since 1888, when it stood at 2,680, and is now at 4,438 (1899). It is interesting to note that the Rapport elsewhere ascribes the falling off to the block in promotion and the superior attractions of a commercial career.

Another reason often given was the establishment of the one year's service for teachers, who were until recently exempt. Formerly the sons of rich peasants entered the normal school in order to avoid entering the Army. But as they have now to serve in any case, they would just as lief serve three years as one. As a rule, these worthy persons only stayed in the profession till they had inherited their father's estates, when, having served for the legal



period, they at once retired. The loss of this contingent cannot, therefore, be a very serious one.

A third reason for the falling off of the candidates is the raising of the standard of admittance. Up to 1885 normal pupils went in for the *brevet élémentaire* after entering the normal school. It is now required as a necessary qualification for entrance. (See Appendix I.)

from which  
schools.

The great majority of teachers are educated in the elementary or higher primary schools, which now often make an object of preparing pupils for the examination.\* Few candidates come from the secondary schools, and they are not, I am told, very welcome. One is afraid of them: they have not the same spirit of devotion, and are too ambitious.

from which  
class.

As regards the class from which the teachers are taken, it seems to be largely the same as that from which the *curés* are drawn. The majority are the sons of peasant proprietors, or of the teachers themselves. M. Trabuc, the Primary Inspector at Caen, estimated the first category at 70 per cent.; and at Loches, M. Marischal, the Director of the Normal School, kindly provided me with the following statistics of the parentage of his pupils for the three years 1898-9, 1899-1900, 1900-1 :-

Cultivators - - - - -	7	10	7
Teachers - - - - -	6	8	10
Railway and State employés - -	5	5	2
Tradesmen - - - - -	-	3	6
† Artisans (wheelwrights, carpenters, tailors, masons, etc.) - - - -	12	9	12
	<u>30</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>37</u>

The great majority seem to belong to fairly well-to-do families. M. Quénardel, the Director of the Normal School at Caen, told me, despite his seventy-two pupils, he had some difficulty in distributing the money (160 francs) placed at his disposal for aiding necessitous students through the lack of suitable candidates. The director of the men's college at Le Mans also informed me that nearly all his pupils come from the country, and very few from the towns.

from which  
region.

It is very curious to note the region from which the candidates of any normal school are drawn. Although the competition is open to all France, the candidates, with a very few exceptions, belong exclusively to the department in which the college is situate. Thus in Calvados practically the only outsiders who ever present themselves come from the neighbouring department of Manche; and in the other departments under observation the same result was confirmed by the directors of the various training schools.

\* This does not, however, please everybody. M. Doliveux, Academy Inspector at Beauvais, writing in the *Revue Pédagogique*, says: "We oppose, and rightly, the view that our higher primary schools should serve as the nursery of our normal schools."

† A part of the latter category are also proprietors of a plot of land.

On leaving the *école normale*, the teachers are equally anxious to settle down in their own department, and, if possible, near their native place; in fact, they look on being sent into a neighbouring department, or still further afield, unless it be part of their *pays*, as something more or less like exile, and are always hankering to come back. The principle seems to be pretty widespread in France, for, according to the Director of the Normal College at Alençon, who had been primary inspector in Haute-Savoie in his time, the teachers in the mountain district did not wish to come down into plains, nor were those in the plain willing to go up into the mountains.

Homing instinct of teacher.

It had been represented to me by more than one person that the departments were still little more than geographical expressions, and that the real divisions of the country were the old *pays* that existed before the reformers of the French Revolution carved France up into departments. The statement, I think, is scarcely accurate to-day, and is likely to be less true in the future.

The growth of a departmental spirit.

Allusion has already been made to the different educational physiognomy presented by each department, and the credit of it attributed to the academy inspector and those under his orders. But this growing differentiation is evidently largely aided and abetted through the normal school being made the unit of primary education, from which the teachers, as they go out into the four corners of the department, formed as they are on a common norm, must, since they deal with the rising generation, not only profoundly modify its manners, customs, and ways of looking at things, but likewise impress it with a certain unity of life and thought which may be described as departmental. Thus, strangely enough, it seems reserved for the primary teachers, whom an impartial philosopher might call the real children of the Revolution, to give life and personality to the administrative entities into which their spiritual forefathers re-divided France one hundred years ago.

And as a corollary to this homing instinct of the teacher, it is further interesting to note that whereas in England the inspectors remain as a rule in the same place, and the teachers migrate with the greatest ease from Cornwall to Cumberland, in France the case is exactly the reverse. The inspectors move about, and the teachers, locally speaking, remain on the spot. There is something to be said for the view that both parties are probably gainers: the inspector widens his experience, and the teacher gets to know his own folk in a way that no stranger can hope to. On the other hand, this constant transplantation is somewhat a hardship on the inspector's family; and if the inspectors change "circuits" too frequently, the schools and teachers alike suffer.

Contrast with England.

#### (iv.) THE CERTIFICAT D'APTITUDE PÉDAGOGIQUE.

The *stagiaire* is always appointed by the academy inspector. After two years' experience of teaching, he or she can present

Conditions: examinati

themselves for the examination for the *certificat d'aptitude pédagogique*. Some present themselves many times. I came across one successful candidate who had taken eight years to pass, and I even heard of instances of some who had taken ten years. The examination is divided into three parts. First there is a written composition on some pedagogical subject. If the candidate passes this, he or she is *admissible*, and at a later date gives a specimen lesson before an examining commission composed of an inspector and two teachers, a female teacher being always a member of the commission if the candidate is a woman. Should the commission consider the lesson satisfactory, the candidate is recalled and subjected to a *viva voce* on her lesson, with a special interrogation on the uses of the school register and the regulations. The candidate on passing the final ordeal, is admitted, but not placed on the list of regular teachers till a vacancy occurs; in this way candidates are sometimes obliged to wait some time owing to the block in the promotion list. The following is a rough *résumé* taken from notes of the two examinations at which I had the privilege to be present. Although very incomplete, it is to be hoped it may give some slight idea of the seriousness and scope of the examination.

"The commission board consisted of three inspectors and a head female teacher. Fine class-room, airy and lighted on three sides. The candidate young, pleasant-looking and intelligent. Twenty-seven children, average age about eight. Examination began at 8. with reading and explanation of the harder words, followed by the correction of a composition. At the interval children file out singing, the teacher starting them. After the interval lesson in *la morale*. Children well taught, but lesson tending to become too much like a catechism lesson, answers too stereotyped and the 'front-bench' children too much questioned. The first part of the lesson a revision, the second part new. Examine *cahiers*,\* writing neat and good. Lesson on duties to animals: killing them wrong. Weak explanation. A little slang (*ordrée*). 'The history of a toad and a donkey.' Impossible story. The modern fable, like the modern fairy story, always a 'little wooden.' Too much 'make-up' about it. Children are dismissed, and after a short confabulation, teacher is summoned for the oral examination, which is on the lesson she has given. The first question very much to the point. 'What, mademoiselle, would be the criticism you would pass on your own teaching?' The questioning inspector then points out the lesson was too full. The teacher enunciated too many truisms. Bad trick of correcting the pupils' expressions by repeating their answers in a revised form instead of making them polish them themselves. Language requires a little cultivating. Down on *ordrée*, which examiner took to be a provincialism, formed from *ordre* (tidy). [It is certainly a provincialism, but, as a learned friend pointed out to me, it is probably the Norman pronunciation of

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\* Signifies a combination of copybook and notebook.

*au droit*. In Normandy the 'oi' is still pronounced as in the time of Corneille, who constantly rhymes the syllables 'oi' and 'ai.' It is curious to note in this connection that the French word *voie* is pronounced in Normandy almost exactly like its English derivative 'way.']. Candidate was asked to produce her *carnet de morale*; her method of teaching drawing on slates criticised adversely; lack of sufficient concreteness in teaching multiplication; must make the children speak louder. The examination then passed to the administrative side. The probationer was asked how to arrange an elementary school with one teacher, so as to set all the school working at once. She would take the upper class in reading, set the lower down to a composition on what they had read, and hand over the little ones to the monitor. (The interesting question of monitors who have no official sanction will be treated later.) The lessons common to all would be the object lesson, *la morale*, and the singing lesson. The *rôle* of questioning was defined as a means of ascertaining what the pupil knows, and the use of the *cahier de roulement* (copy-book in which each pupil in the class copies a lesson in turn) was to excite emulation among the pupils. The teacher then retired, and after a short deliberation was 'received with very good marks, having had 14 out of 20 for the *écrit*, 9 out of 10 for discipline, 8 out of 10 for teaching, 6-7 for the *cahier de roulement*. The notes of the directress of the school, which are always taken into account, were equally favourable. The inspector's verdict: 'A good teacher, who knows how to profit by what is said to her.'"

The other examination was in Sarthe. The following are my notes and impressions:—

"Teacher at the head of a class of infants from 6 to 7 (*classe enfantine*). Class-room too small for children. Commission composed of inspector and a male and female teacher. Probationer has 16 at the *écrit* (a good mark). Arrive only in time for oral. Candidate very confident. Inspector does not appear to share her feelings. Reading lesson badly chosen. Should not blindly follow the book straight through, but select passages most likely to interest the class. Questions on the *pros* and *cons* of simultaneous reading. Inspector shows how she should dovetail the reading in with the *morale* or other subjects. To render lesson really interesting, teacher should first read paragraph through and explain it, then let them all read it over together. Bad habit of interrupting a child in the middle of its reading to ask a question. Explanations only half given; errors of pronunciation: *rabour* for *labour* (common error in the country).

"*Geography*.—Candidate began by asking the four cardinal points, should have connected them with the sun. The need of illustrating by concrete examples. Teacher should make use of pictures, should draw a simple plan of the school on the blackboard, and from thence go on to a simple plan of the town (do not say 'bourg,'

that will offend the people's susceptibilities). Language too high flown, such as 'the town council safeguards the interests of the town' (*veille aux intérêts*). In writing and reading choose words to put on the blackboard that have some connection with one another (all this suggested to the candidate in a very kindly fashion. Nothing Draconian about the inspector).

*Drawing.*—The zigzags drawn on the board too abstract. Convey nothing to a child's mind. Must try to give drawing a concrete meaning. The *travaux manuels* (cardboard work folding) quite mechanical; no attempt made to excite the children about what they are going to do. No questions as regards colours, and yet six children out of ten cannot distinguish between blue and green.

"Need of forming a school museum with the offerings of the class. Objects indispensable for object lessons. When treating of the cow, should ask for a morsel of leather from the cobbler's daughter. The leather would furnish a new point of departure for a lesson on leather. Inspector finally asks questions on the documents essential to the conduct of a school. Candidate preserves her serenity to the last.

"*Deliberation.*—Inspector unwilling to admit candidate; opposed by the two teachers, who urge extenuating circumstances. Probationer only four months in present position; the directress's notes good; the class rather difficult to manage, owing to the *locale* being inconveniently small. Inspector gives way with good grace, and candidate admitted with the bare minimum of marks necessary. It appears that candidates are rarely ploughed at the oral. The probationer, owing to the mediocrity of her performance, not called in to hear the results of the deliberations, but on going out the female commissioner puts her out of her misery by telling her she has passed."

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#### (v.) APPOINTMENT AND TENURE OF REGULAR TEACHERS.

The appointment of the teacher is, as we have seen, made by the prefect on the proposition of the academy inspector, and any other move, whether voluntary or not, on the part of the teacher is consummated by the same authorities. Not a few persons I spoke to seemed desirous of taking the appointment out of the prefect's hands and vesting it in those of some more purely educational authority.\* The proposition, however, to substitute the rector in his place met with little acceptance. The latter, owing to his multifarious duties, is not sufficiently in close touch with the teachers themselves. The person almost universally designated was the

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\* The idea, of course, is to get rid of all political influence. Such a move, on the face of it, has much to recommend it; yet if one looks ahead one cannot fail to have misgivings at what looks in the long run like the creation of an educational "caste," who are solely responsible to the nation through the minister, and might conceivably from the lack of local control get as much out of sympathy with the locality as ecclesiastical systems have in certain countries,

academy inspector, with or without a special council to assist him. The suggestion is interesting as showing the high opinion the teachers themselves entertain of the academy inspector, and of his impartiality, which induces them to desire to see the delicate operation of promotion committed to his charge, and confirms one in one's conviction that he is the real pivot round which primary education turns.

But even under the present conditions of appointment and tenure the French teacher may well be the envy of his English colleagues. The *déplacements d'office*, or forced moves, are rare, and except where the teacher himself is to blame, a subvention towards "moving expenses" is granted. Even when the French teacher was paid by the local authorities his position was more secure, for he was not appointed either by the *municipalité* or the *curé*, whereas the English teacher is absolutely in the hands of the school managers or the local board. It will be probably long in England before the teacher becomes so entirely a functionary of State as in France. In fact, in spite of certain centralising tendencies, we are still more likely to throw more and more control into the hands of really big local authorities; but this should prove no bar to the creation of a closer connection between the teacher and the central authority, in the shape of some central tribunal for defending his rights against unjust dismissal, to which he may always have recourse. Were there such a central tribunal of appeal, the majority of cases of unjust dismissal which occur in England would certainly not occur at all, as the mere fact of such an appeal existing would prevent the flimsiest of them from coming to a head.

(vi.) SALARIES, PROMOTION, AND PENSIONS.

In the matter of salaries, teachers are divided into five classes, *Salaries*. the *stagiaires* being in a class by themselves. The latter start on 900 francs, the other classes being paid as follows:—

	Male Teachers.	Female Teachers.
5th Class	1,000 francs	1,000 francs
4th Class	1,200 "	1,200 "
3rd Class	1,500 "	1,400 "
2nd Class	1,800 "	1,500 "
1st Class	2,000 "	1,600 "

Each class is supposed to contain a percentage of the whole body, *stagiaires* and *titulaires*, hence the term "*la pourcentage*." Last Recent reform. year a considerable reform was effected in the percentage under which the number of teachers in each class had been proportioned, as follows:—

*Stagiaires* 15 per cent. ; 5th class 25 per cent. ; 4th class 25 per cent. ;  
3rd class 20 per cent. ; 2nd class 10 per cent. ; 1st class 5 per cent.

Under the new regulations the *stagiaires* have been reduced to 10 per cent., and the 5th class to 20 per cent., while the 3rd has been augmented to 25 per cent., and the 2nd to 15 per cent.

The reason for the new reform was the block in the promotion of the lower classes, which was affecting the supply of candidates for the normal schools. This congestion in the lower grades was really caused by the block in the upper classes, in which a number of teachers were unable to be retired owing to the insufficiency of funds voted for that purpose. The matter was complicated by the very intelligible reluctance on the part of the authorities to enforce the retirement of teachers who, after bearing the burden and heat of the day, had just arrived at the first class. As an instance of the *encombrement* that prevailed, the case was cited by the *Journal des Instituteurs* of a teacher of seventy-two who was still in active service, under the amusing title, "*Mathusalem maître d'école!*" Already in March, 1899, the Government had attempted to reduce the block in the higher classes by voting 1,200,000 francs, which sum was calculated to allow for 1,100 new pensions. This raised the number of promotions for the year to 10,470. The reform of the present year (1900) has gone far to satisfy the claims of the teachers. In order to effect the revision of the *pourcentage*, the Chamber voted 3,811,200 francs for the increase in salaries, and 1,200,000 for pensions. It is calculated that the former will allow of 16,000 promotions, or with the vacancies caused by the new pensions, 21,500.

Perhaps grumbling is rather an Englishman's privilege, but what struck me frequently about the teachers was their lack of discontent with their position. Certainly, some of them found it difficult to make ends meet, but it did not seem to embitter their whole existence. I took the trouble to inquire into the years of service and class of most of the teachers I met. To take only two instances among many. At Mauvaisvilliers I came across a teacher who was only in the 5th class with 14 years' service. At Chauffour I came across another who was no further advanced, and had 15 years' service to his credit. Yet neither of these men could be said to have lost interest in his work.

ethods of  
omotion.

Great care is exercised in drawing up the list of candidates for promotion. First, the primary inspector prepares two lists, one for promotion by merit and the other by seniority. The academy inspector revises these, and presents them to the *conseil départemental*, which, with the assistance of its president, the prefect, draws up the final lists. These are transmitted to the Minister, who fixes the number of promotions to be accorded to each department according to the *pourcentage*.

percent  
anges.

The present system is due to a decision of the Conseil d'État, on a law which, on the face of it, seemed to assign the right of promotion to the department. In fact, as one inspector jokingly said to me, the point to be decided seemed rather a grammatical than

a legal one, and in such a case the Académie Française would have been the more competent tribunal. The decision was probably dictated by the desire to make a sort of army list out of the teachers, and, above all, to preserve a sort of symmetry in the number of promotions from each department. But, judging by the amount of dissatisfaction it has provoked, the new departure has not altogether been a success. It is probable that a return to the departmental method of promotion would be hailed with delight, especially if it were accompanied by a method of promotion in which there was a seniority limit for advancement.

One of the main subsidiary sources of income for the heads of schools in rural districts is the emolument attached to the duties of secretary to the *mairie*, which has already been discussed. In Sarthe, which is one of the richest departments in France, the teacher has not infrequently the chance of adding to his income by becoming cashier to the local branch of the Caisse d'Épargne. I came across one or two of these fortunate individuals. In one case the salary was 300 francs a year. The duties consisted in sitting for two hours "at the receipt of custom" on Sunday afternoons, with two hours for making up the books in the evening, as well as the ordinary balancing at the end of the year. Another small source of income is the subvention occasionally voted by the commune to carry on the evening continuation school. This, however, is not always the rule, even where schools have been started. In many cases teachers give their services for nothing, and even pay for the lighting and heating out of their own pocket. There is little doubt, if the present enthusiasm is to be utilised, the evening continuation work must be put on a sound financial basis, and this is what some of the authorities are trying to do. M. Meslet, one of the primary inspectors in Sarthe, told me he had secured subventions from the communes in his circonscription to the amount of 6,000 francs. The biggest sum was 100 francs, the ordinary amount being 50. It is worth noting that the total amount voted for this purpose in Sarthe was 12,706 francs in 1898-99. Still, this source of revenue cannot be looked on as very serious. The total amount raised in 1898-99 in Sarthe from all sources was 15,986 francs for 311 *cours*, which works out at about 50 francs per teacher, assuming in this case that each *cour* represents a single teacher, which is under the mark, as I came across one in which no fewer than four teachers took part. Again, in 1897-98 in Indre et Loire 143 teachers earned 12,966 francs in the night schools between them, which works out at about 90 francs a head. This does not leave a very formidable balance when heating and lighting have been paid for, especially as the cost of organising the recreative evenings also falls on the teacher.

All teachers have a right to lodging allowances, where no house is provided. There is further an *indemnité de résidence* for those who live in places over a certain population, which begins with



100 francs and rises to 2,000 francs in Paris (for directors and directresses of schools). Ordinary teachers receive half the *indemnité* and *stagiaires* a quarter. The heads of schools with more than two "classes" get an extra 200 francs a year. In one or two places I came across instances where the teacher was receiving an extra indemnity from the commune. This is, however, a pure act of grace on the part of the local authorities. A further receipt in kind is the privilege that teachers possess to have their sons educated free in the secondary schools.\* They also have the right to travel by rail at half the usual fares.

Attempted  
comparison  
of French  
and English  
salaries.

It is somewhat difficult to compare the salaries of French and English teachers, as only rather more than a quarter of the English male teachers and about one-eighth of the female are provided with residences free of rent. But whereas the average salary in England of a certificated master is now £127 2s. 7d., the English master is evidently higher paid than his French *confrère*, for the latter in the top class only receives £80, which, even with allowances for rent and the various other small sources of revenue, can never amount, except in the large towns, to anything like this figure. The same is true of the English female teacher. She receives on an average £85 9s. 1d., whereas the French mistress in the top class has only £64 from the State, and in a country district, with rent accounted for, and adding in the various extras, she can only hope to reach what is the average salary of the English teacher. Or, to put it roughly, the highest paid teachers in France are only earning (Paris apart) the same salary as the average paid teachers in England. Yet owing to the great variation in salaries in England, there are some rural schools in which the teachers are no better paid than in France. There is a pamphlet called "The Neglect of Village Education," kindly given me by Dr. Macnamara, M.P., compiled from statistics sent in by 1,421 schools. Out of this number there were 7 schools in which the teachers' salaries were under £50; in 24 the teachers only received £50; in 213 the salary was under £75; and in 380 it was under £100. These are probably more or less exceptional cases, but they none the less illustrate the inequalities which prevail. Any comparison, again, between French and English salaries must take into account, not the cheapness of living, which is probably much the same in the two countries, but the standard of comfort and style of living, which are certainly higher in England. This difference is faithfully reflected by the low average of remuneration received by State functionaries in France in comparison with the salaries of our own Civil Service.

A few figures on the cost of living may not be out of place here. The price of beef at Paris is 2 francs 60 the livre for the prime parts without bone (*le rôti*), or about 1s. 10½d. a pound (English). The *morceaux accessoires* without bone (French meat is cut up differently to English) cost about 2 francs the livre, or about 1s. 5½d. a pound (English). In the country, the average price

\* *Loi de finances*, Article 29 (1900): "The benefit of free education in

in Normandy is, bone included, 1 franc 40, or 1s. a pound (English), or about 10½d. a pound (English), bone included, for habitual customers. Bread in France is the same price everywhere. The Minister fixes the price every month. The mean price at Paris is 35 centimes the kilo, or 1½d. a pound (English). The price is regulated by means of a sliding scale on the wheat imported. Protection, therefore, has one use in keeping the price of bread steady. As a friend of mine said, cheap bread has saved the Republic, since there has never been a scarcity since its establishment. The price of bread is for many peasants the capital question at market, for the French eat far more bread than we, some peasants regularly getting through their two livres, or two pounds and a quarter a day.

Mention has already been made of the tendency of the teachers to remain in one department, and even in the same neighbourhood, and the tendency, though due in the first place to the teacher's attachment to his own locality, is largely favoured by the system of salaries, which makes the amount depend on himself and not on the locality; and thus there is less of that hunting for the prizes of the profession which often provides the towns with their best teachers at the expense of the country. In France there is nothing to prevent the little struggling community of 200 souls from having a teacher who is fully capable of taking a town school if needs must be. In fact, I was assured by at least two inspectors of the apparent paradox that the best teachers are not to be found at Paris; but whether the statement is true or not, it is a remarkable indication of the high standard of the country schools.

Salary not a matter of locality.

Teachers, being classified as functionaries, acquire the right to demand their retirement at 55, if they have 25 years' service to their credit. The years passed in the normal college over 20 years of age count in with the duration of service. The rate of pension is based on the average of the last 6 years of the teacher's salary. For 25 years' service the pension is reckoned at 50 per cent. of the average, with one-fiftieth for every year's extra service. The pension cannot be lower than 600 francs for a male teacher and 500 for a female teacher or directress of a maternal school. One of the teachers' associations that I came across in Sarthe has expressed the desire for the absolute right of retiring after 25 years' service, at 45 years of age, with compulsory retirement of all members at 55. The first figure of 45 will, I am afraid, long remain an impossible ideal, not only in France, but also in all the civilised countries of the world. In the same number of the Society's bulletin which contains these propositions (February, 1900) there appears a study by M. Bénard which enumerates the desires formulated by the Solidarité of the teachers of the Seine. They likewise desire a pension after 25 years, with proportional pension in the case of retirement for ill-health after 10 years of active service, continuation of pension to widow with allowance for children; and compulsory retirement at 60. The most interesting feature of these claims is the plea for the widow and orphan of the teacher.

Pensions.

## (vii.) HOUSING, LODGINGS, WATER, DRAINS, GARDENS.

## Housing.

The housing question has been made so much of in England (see "Education in Country Districts," reprinted from the *Manchester Guardian*), that I made it my duty to inquire very carefully into the housing of the teachers and learn from their own lips their sentiments on the subject.

The teacher's house, generally speaking, forms part of a block along with the school class-rooms and the *mairie* of the commune, the latter often consisting merely of a single room. One of the most common forms is that of the *mairie* in the middle, with the school on one flank and the teacher's house on the other, or, if there are two schools in the place, they are often to be found at either end of the building. Sometimes, however, they are at some distance apart. The best type of school, according to one inspector, although I saw but very few specimens of it, was one in which the teacher's house was separated from the school-building by a playground. The inspector explained that this arrangement saved the female teacher from the temptation of trying to spend her time between the schoolroom and her kitchen.

Three  
building  
epochs

There are, roughly, three principal epochs in the history of the building of the French schools. The first, which dates from 1833, was mainly concerned with the erection of boys' schools. The second, which begins with 1850, was taken up with the construction of girls' schools; and 1880 marks a period at which many schools were built or re-constructed. It thus happens that those communes which have longest enjoyed the advantages of education have the oldest and least convenient premises. This was specially noticeable in the canton of Alençon, in Orne, where several of the schools are only one storey high. I was enabled to get a complete idea of all the schools in the canton through the kindness of M. G  rier, the *Econome* at the Normal college, who showed me a collection of fifty photographs he had taken in view of the Exhibition. Of these schools about a third were "appropriations," or houses adapted to school use. In some cases a second story had been added. Most were built of stone, but in the neighbouring *arrondissement* of Domfront brick houses are more frequent.

Houses  
as seen

According to the law of 1893 and the decree of 1894, teachers' houses in communes under 12,000 should contain four rooms.

The following are my notes on some of the teachers' houses I saw. (Of course, on many occasions I did not record my impressions, especially after I found the question anything but a burning one.)

"B.—Four rooms, of which two are bedrooms. New building.

"N.—Four rooms in new house: fine parlour, big kitchen, two good bedrooms with attic for adjoint. Teacher showed me over house,

" Inspector stated teachers in his *circonscription* were well housed. Only in about one-tenth of the houses the teacher was a little pressed for room.

" Houses always water-tight. Whitewashing generally done every two years.

" The painting the matter in which the commune is most niggardly.

" Teacher has good kitchen, sitting-room, dining-room, with three bedrooms.

" M.—House big, but not well arranged; teacher, however, content.

" Secretary to Academy Inspector said teachers well housed.

" St.—An old château as school house! Teacher does not live there for personal reasons; but plenty of accommodation.

" Teacher at Y.—School residence generally good. No water or drainage troubles. Eight rooms in his house, but not well arranged. Size of rooms, 12 ft. by 13 ft.

" Houses in the *arrondissement* of Montaigne the least satisfactory, because they are the oldest.

" House large, but only three rooms and an attic.

" Teacher's house, four rooms, including dining-room, and kitchen.

" House with only two rooms and a dressing-room. One room his thus to serve for living and sleeping in. All right now, but difficult when teacher had a family."

In spite of the non-palatial accommodation of some of the houses, I found little discontent on the part of their occupants. Still, against this I am constrained to place on record the picturesque complaint of one teacher, who, speaking of the magnificent efforts made after the war to render national education a reality, said, " Many fine schools have been built which have plunged some communes in debt for years, but *on a été trop occupé de faire la cage belle, on n'a pas assez pensé à l'oiseau*" (the teacher). Certainly if the accommodation is not everything to be desired, the upkeep is generally satisfactorily maintained. The only point on which the communes occasionally show obstinacy is in painting and whitewashing. It is difficult for persons who only whitewash their own premises once in ten years to understand the necessity every other year of such a proceeding for the school buildings.

The housing of the *adjoint* and *stagiaire* seems in a less satisfactory state, especially if they are married. The matter is made a subject of comment in the report of the Academy Inspector of Orne for 1899. The law prescribes that they should have three rooms at their disposal if married and two if single, but in many cases they are only provided with a single room, and that sometimes without a fireplace. The married assistants are thus obliged to live out at their own expense. The teachers themselves, if married, rather object to this living at close quarters in the same building.

Housing of  
assistants.

The authorities desire to combat alcoholism. The teacher is called in. They desire to establish evening schools on a large scale. The teacher is called in. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to say that the teacher is the handy man of the French nation. It is really splendid to see how he has so far responded, without finching, to the successive appeals that have been made to his patriotism and public spirit. *Ce sont toujours les mêmes qui se font tuer !*

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erious  
stion.

None the less, the question of overwork is becoming a serious one, and the authorities are already occupying themselves about it. The remarkable conference of the academy inspector of Loiret-Cher has already been alluded to. The English teacher who complains of extraneous tasks will derive but scanty consolation from a comparison between his tale of bricks and that his French *confrère* has to compile. The only point where the comparison is likely to be in favour of the French teacher is that, perhaps, in some cases, he finds the work more congenial, because it is to a certain extent a "free-will offering."

#### (ix.) REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

wards.

There is a regular list of rewards for meritorious teachers, beginning with the *mention honorable*. The other grades are the bronze and silver medals. The latter allows the wearing of a regular decoration, and carries with it a pension of 100 francs. One silver medal is given for every group of 300 teachers, a bronze for every 120 teachers, and a *mention honorable* for every 80. So these honours are by no means too easy to obtain. As a further distinction a limited number of silver medallists can receive the *palmes d'officier d'Académie*, and five years later a select few can attain to the position of *officier de l'Instruction Publique*. Similar rewards and decorations are also given to the teachers who have distinguished themselves in their evening continuation or recreative work. There are further medals for obtaining vaccinations, and rewards for agricultural teaching.

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The law of October 30th, 1886, established a regular scale of penalties:—(1) the reprimand, which is administered in private by the academy inspector; (2) the censure, which is inflicted in public; (3) revocation; (4) suspension of the liberty to teach; (5) absolute suspension. For all save the first the intervention of the Conseil Départemental is required, and in the case of the last three penalties an appeal to the central authorities is provided for. The heavier penalties are however rarely applied, and only for the gravest offences. I only heard of two cases in the course of my tour. Any teacher who is really unsatisfactory is given the option of sending in his resignation.

#### (x.) PROVIDENT AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

vident.

Mention has already been made of the Teachers' Orphanage, whose membership is open to all State teachers in France. There are also numerous provident societies to be found everywhere; in fact, all the departments I visited possessed

at least one association of the kind. Thus, in Calvados I came across a Société du Secours Immédiat, which contains 288 ordinary members, paying one franc entrance, and made up of 152 male teachers and 106 female (which represents about a quarter of the State teachers), with twenty teachers' wives and ten teachers' husbands. On the death of any associate a small levy is made of, apparently, 50 centimes, on every member, and the proceeds are handed over to the representatives of the deceased. The society is only a year old, and has already made two levies (1900). The Société du Secours Mutuel in Orne is thirty-four years old. In 1898 it consisted of 729 members, of whom 516 were participants, or more than half the teachers in the department. It gives allowances to teachers on the sick list, and to female teachers on their accouchement, and pays pensions. The number of sick persons relieved in 1897 were 120, and the number of pensions 94. The reserve fund is over £2,000. In Sarthe, in 1898, the Société du Secours Mutuel had 322 members, of whom 308 were participants, or about one-third of the State teachers. In Indre-et-Loire the Société du Secours Mutuel had 366 participating members on December 3rd, 1897. The Academy Inspector in his report for the year expressed his astonishment at less than half the *personnel* belonging to the society. From it one learns incidentally that the annual subscription is 12 francs. In Loir-et-Cher the number of members of the provident society was 200, of whom 172 were teachers, or only a little over a quarter of the State teachers. The reserve fund was nearly £800.

The majority of teachers I encountered were also members of a society against accidents and defamation. The English reader may well wonder why teaching should be such a dangerous trade in France as to necessitate a society against accidents. The accidents in question are not those which happen to the teachers, but to the pupils during the time they are under their charge. Until about two years ago the law rendered every head teacher in a primary or secondary school pecuniarily responsible for any injury a pupil might sustain during his presence in class or on the school premises, even if it were the result of the purest accident. Thus, if a boy in walking across the playground stumbled and broke his leg, or sprained his wrist in falling, the head of the school was pecuniarily responsible to the parents for the injury to their son. The effect of this law on outdoor sports in boarding schools is better imagined than described.\* Happily it was modified by the Act of July 20th, 1899, and the State now accepts responsibility for accidents occurring during the legal hours of school, while reserving itself to fix the blame, if necessary, on an imprudent or negligent teacher. The most important of these societies—that of Toulouse—has more

\* Les accidents, hors de France, affectent les familles, ils ne les arrêtent pas; en France, ils les paralysent; à leur tour les familles par leur effroi, par leurs plaintes, par leurs menaces, par leurs poursuites, paralysent, surtout dans les internats, les éducateurs.—M. G. rard-Varet (L'école et l'éducation morale). "Revue Pédagogique," June, 1901.

than 25,000 adherents. In the case of accidents it assumes any responsibility the teacher may have incurred, and raises the necessary funds by occasional levies. In the last two years it has only demanded 2 francs 50 cents. per head from its adherents. Another "risk" society is the "Enseignement" of Paris. Teachers become members by the payment of 3 francs, and subscribe according to the scale of risks, the directors of boarding schools paying as high as 6 francs. In two years the society has attained a membership of nearly 700. Since its foundation no less than fifteen accidents have occurred affecting the society. Of these, two have been fought in the law courts and won.

ogical  
essional.

The primary teacher in France, being a public servant in the pay of the State, finds himself on a different footing to that of the English elementary school teacher. The right of association is very rigidly controlled under the French constitution. For these reasons anything savouring of an association of teachers on trade unionist lines has hitherto been quite impossible in France, though isolated societies have been tolerated, like the *Cercle des Instituteurs* in Sarthe, which exists mainly for the discussion of pedagogical questions, and is sixteen years old. Of these associations the Union of the teachers of the Seine is the most important. But until recently the authorities have rather discouraged even these modest attempts at federation. A decisive step was taken last year at Laon, where a congress for all the associations of teachers was permitted to be held. It was decided at that meeting that an "*Amicale*" should be founded in each department. The most interesting article of association was that which stated that "the '*Amicale*' has for its object to facilitate between teachers exchanges of views and free discussion, the study of questions which interest the profession without excluding from it those which refer to their personal situation." The articles further provided for schemes of co-operation among the teachers in the way of trading with such shops as agreed to give teachers preferential prices. Efforts were to be made to help the widow and orphan; a provident society was started; a system of assurance was to be founded; every "*Amicale*" was to have its bulletin to chronicle its doings. It was decided to hold an annual congress, and Paris was appointed for the rendezvous; and, lastly, a very interesting movement was started which may have far-reaching consequences, called the *Coopération universitaire pédagogique*, which aims at bringing into line all professors and teachers in the three grades of education.

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The Paris congress was held during the Exhibition. One of the most interesting debates was on the *certificat d'études*. The teachers being, so to say, at home, were able to speak with far more freedom and precision than in a debate open to all comers, in which a certain official reserve would be naturally requisite. But perhaps the most pleasant, and at the same time the most significant, feature of the proceedings was the presence and participation in the debates of several of the leading officials, including no less a personage

than the Director of Primary Education himself. What was still more piquant was that the latter not only took part in the debates, but was actually worsted on at least one occasion. It is almost superfluous to add that he took his defeat with the utmost good humour, and for once, to paraphrase the well-known French expression, it was possible to see a man who was "*battu et content*." It seems difficult to estimate the effect of such departure in France, where the Administration possesses a prestige akin to that attached to a military or religious hierarchy. But the participation of the Chief Director was an act of rare courage, carried out with perfect tact, and no doubt will have all the reward it merits. The meeting was closed by a speech from the Minister, who indicated pretty plainly his appreciation of the teachers as the real backbone of the *Défense républicaine* and the best exponents of all the modern ideas bound up with that régime. The French State teachers are starting their association under the happiest auspices. Without neglecting their material interests, they have put into the forefront of their programme the cause of national education. Its prosp  
Considering there are over 105,000 State teachers and probationers in France and Algeria, the enlistment of these in a single association will convert them into a veritable standing army capable of enormous and almost irresistible influence, provided they are willing to devote the major part of their efforts to patriotic endeavours to make the school the greatest moral influence in the country, not merely within the four walls of the classroom, but outside, through the other work it has already undertaken. If, however, they are beguiled into employing too freely their newly acquired forces to further their own class ends, they will speedily fall from their high estate, and in grasping after too much, lose the very power through which they hoped to attain their selfish ends, and instead of being looked up to by the majority of their countrymen will become an object of profound suspicion and mistrust. I ventured to say as much as this at the banquet after the congress, and if the kind way in which my somewhat venturesome remarks were received and the numerous thanks I received afterwards from individual teachers are any criterion, there is little doubt the teachers are fully aware of the high privileges the new association throws open to them and the danger that a misuse of them will entail. It may be very presumptuous to prophesy, but somehow one cannot help feeling that the recent congress has a real chance of being regarded hereafter as one of the principal points in a movement whose main object is to render France more truly democratic in the best and highest sense of the word.

#### (xi.) RELATIONS WITH INSPECTORS AND MEMBERS OF OTHER GRADES.

The relations between inspectors and teachers have already been touched on in the description of the special conferences which are summoned to discuss pedagogical questions. Another occasion  
Relation:  
with  
Inspector



for their meeting is the examining board of the *certificat d'études*. All inspectors are not perfect, and there are some—but they seem to be very few in number—who belong to what may be called the martinet type. A director of an *école normale*, in discussing the question, cited to me a terrible phrase of one of these “wrong-headed” inspectors who used to say, *Il ne faut pas avoir du cœur ; il faut sabrer*. But this military spirit, so contrary to the best ideas of modern education, is certainly not gaining ground in France. On the contrary, time after time I came across evidence, both oral and material, of the mutual esteem which inspectors and teachers entertain for one another, and certainly a large number of the inspectors whose provinces I visited not only think highly of the teachers, but lose no opportunity of consulting them on any knotty question. Thus one of the ablest teachers I met vouchsafed the remark that the inspectors were regarded as the best friends of the teachers, and the only misfortune was that they were not always listened to in higher quarters. In another department I was assured by a teacher that the inspectors never do anything without taking the teacher's advice. In fact the two grades seem to be on excellent terms.

relations  
with other  
grades.

Primary and secondary education in France are organised on different lines from the outset, although, it is true, a very limited number of primary teachers are attached to some of the *lycées* and *collèges*. This, together with the fact that the primary inspectorate is almost exclusively recruited from the ranks of primary teachers and of professors at primary training colleges, tends to separate the teachers in the two grades into two distinct classes. It is not until we come to the academy inspector, who is usually taken from the ranks of the secondary professors, that we find any connecting link with secondary education. The consequences of this system of education in water-tight compartments have been numerous and far-reaching, and, what is somewhat surprising at first sight, the advantages as regards primary education appear to have outbalanced the disadvantages. At any rate in the extensive differentiation that has taken place between the aims, methods, and traditions in the two branches of education, primary instruction has not altogether been the loser. Its comparative isolation has led to a growth among primary teachers of a fine spirit of *esprit de corps* and a wide interpretation of the teacher's sphere of duties which the secondary schoolmaster might well copy. It might be expected that the absence of the influence of the exquisite culture which distinguishes the French secondary schools, and renders them in that regard quite without a rival in the world, would make itself painfully felt in the primary and normal schools. This, however, has not been the case. The general atmosphere of culture which pervades French society—especially French literature—has been sufficient to ensure that the primary teachers have run little risk of imperfect equipment in this respect. On the other hand, the absence of any close connection with the traditions of the higher schools has facilitated the free examination

comparative  
relation  
of its  
effects.

of time-honoured methods and the rejection of those which have been found antiquated. It has also allowed of subjects being examined on their merits, and their actual value assessed in the light of their relation to the other subjects in the curriculum and the aim of the school as a whole, instead of being regarded as indispensable *per se*, and forming, as it were, an irreducible part of the school work, owing to the prestige they have received from the consecration of immemorial time. This especially applies to the programme of the higher primary schools, which has been distinctly framed to meet modern requirements.\*

In England, on the other hand, the procedure seems to have been different. Although from time to time primary teachers have been promoted to the inspectorate, the latter has been mainly recruited by men taken from the universities and imbued with all the traditions of secondary education. As regards pedagogical knowledge, they have mostly had to pick up their information as they go along, and piece it together into some sort of system, whereas the actual appointment of the French primary inspector depends on his success in passing a stiff examination in scientific pedagogics, largely fortified by several years' experience in teaching in one of the schools connected with primary education. On the other hand, the English inspectors' intimate acquaintance with the traditions of public spirit which prevail in our higher secondary schools has rendered them valuable intermediaries in handing down to the primary schools those notions of *esprit de corps* and the duty of serving the State which are perhaps the most precious feature of our national education.

The Teachers' Guild in England is an attempt to recognise the cardinal fact that all teachers are members of one body, although their functions are often necessarily different. This need is also being felt in France, and has led to the formation of a league, already alluded to, called the *Coopération Universitaire Pédagogique*.

A French  
Teachers'  
Guild.

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\* In the more delicate questions of manners and social education it is probable the French teacher has suffered less from the evil effects of class distinctions than his English colleague. It is further an undoubted fact, as Mr. Bodley shows, that what may be called social education has penetrated far further down into the French nation than with us. "The great need of the (English) training colleges makes itself felt less on the intellectual than on the social side. The greatest hope for their improvement lies in a more general class leavening. Of course, even under present conditions, pupil-teachers are drawn from many grades, but there are not always candidates enough affected by the social traditions which create in colleges and schools, as elsewhere, a strong public opinion in favour of small but important amenities of bearing, and even of speech, which are at once the sign and safeguards of good breeding. . . . The chief agency for good must be looked for in the healthy interaction of students of all classes." Passages from training college reports by Her Majesty's Inspectors for the year 1896 (C.-8493; 1897, p. 13), quoted in an article on the teacher problem in the "Fortnightly" for May, 1899, by Mr. Harold Hodge, editor of the "Saturday Review," which contains a singularly fearless, if somewhat drastic, criticism of this particular aspect of primary education.

*gogique*, for all grades of professors and teachers. The formal ties already exist. Primary teachers are classed as *universitaires*; for although, as a rule, they have not taken a university degree, they are under the rector of the local academy (or university), and are regarded as part and parcel of the State education of the country, at the head of which is the rector, a post which is always held by the Minister of Public Instruction. The object of the league is thus defined:—

To affirm this community of tendencies (towards co-operation), to realise a closer collaboration everywhere, where the necessity is recognised, to create ties of good fellowship between men, who, while engaged in a common task, and animated by the spirit and the same passion for science, truth, and the public weal, neither *associate nor are acquainted with one another*. (The italics are mine.)

The whole programme is highly interesting. The following represent the gist of some of its articles:—(1) The help that primary teachers can give towards sending to the secondary schools any pupils who appear likely to profit by a secondary education. (2) Concordance to be established between the curricula of the primary, higher primary, technical, and secondary schools. (3) Discussion on whether the distinction between primary and secondary is specific or one of degree, necessitated by the difference in age and aptitudes of the pupils. (4) To decide the value of the distinction between higher primary, secondary—modern and secondary—classical. (5) Should the methods in these schools differ, allowance being made for pupils' ages? (6) Recruiting of teachers for the primary schools, and for the lower elementary forms in the *lycées* and colleges. (7) Need of experimental science in secondary schools? (8) Is the purely literary part overdone in the secondary schools? (9) Is the entrance examination for the normal schools stiff enough? (10) Does the teaching given in the normal schools sufficiently take into account the growing need of the *post-scolaire* work of the schoolmaster? (11) Could not normal pupils be admitted to certain university classes? (12) The connection between technical, primary, and secondary schools. (13) Is there enough general education in the technical schools? (14) Utility of training for secondary teachers; should such be given in primary as well as secondary schools? (15) Need for such persons of a study of pedagogics. (16) Free education for teachers' children in secondary schools. (17) Extension of university action (*universités populaires*). (18) Need of assuring and generalising the *post-scolaire* education of young people, seeing that the results of primary education are insufficient from the civic point of view. Need of child study to assist the simplification of the primary curriculum. (19) The holding of university congresses open to all grades.

Outlook. The mere founding of such a league must appear as a great step forward to anyone who is acquainted with the considerable social differences that exist between the two grades. The average secondary teacher in France has a far higher status than the ordinary

assistant in a medium-sized grammar school. He ranks at least with a barrister, while the latter would probably divide honours with the curate. The French primary teacher, being a State official, has thereby the advantage of his English colleague. But this very fact of being on the Government staff only marks more clearly his social inferiority to the secondary teacher as a subordinate member of the educational hierarchy. It will be interesting to watch which grade of education will gain most from the others, for they are all in the happy position of having everything to gain and nothing to lose by this federation.\*

(xii.) THE NEW GENERATION.

A somewhat delicate question which I ventured to put on several occasions was whether there was any difference between the older teachers and those who were just entering the profession. I had found so much *esprit de corps* among the first-named, who, bred under the influence of the reforms of Jules Ferry, possess a kind of "education militant" spirit about them which has had, no doubt, a great effect on the country, and differentiates them from the *vieille garde*, who date from before the period of reform, and though no shirkers, have—because the more recent changes are but of yesterday—through the approach of age rather than any natural unwillingness, thrown themselves less fervently into the new developments. It seemed to me that if this steady stream of democratic effort, under some of its best aspects, could only maintain the strong impetus that has hitherto characterised it, it must, if it does not actually invade other provinces of education, set up in those which are, in comparison, somewhat stagnant, a health-giving current, and renew, like some naissant Gulf Stream, the whole arterial system of national education; and raising oneself for a moment to a still higher plane, and regarding all this outward and visible organisation, so strongly knit and bound together, as a manifestation of the Time-spirit in its effort to give fuller and more complete realisation to new ideas and aspirations, one could not help beholding such a mighty engine for good or ill without profound emotion, and wondering if it would deviate from its original course or, worse still, lose some of its pristine momentum. And so, through no desire to pry into a neighbour's possible weaknesses, but rather in a spirit of hopeful sympathy, I asked not a few persons whether the new race of conscripts that the normal schools are now turning out were equal to those who are at the head of schools to-day. As a rule I received satisfactory answers. One or two stated that

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\* The movement seems to be growing. In the *Rappel* of 7th October, 1900, M. Valette, writing on the "Union des trois ordres; professeurs et instituteurs," says: "Les professeurs des universités et nombre de professeurs des lycées et collèges sont descendus dans la lice: ils ont vu de près l'école primaire et ses maîtres; la glace est brisée! Le premier pas est fait! Laissons tous de côté ou nos prétentions ou nos idées personnelles; appuyons-nous les uns sur les autres!"

the younger generation seemed less devoted, and showed signs of shirking any extraneous work. A high official spoke of the great influence for good or evil of the educational press, which occasionally flatters the teachers too much, and preaches at times a sort of trades union doctrine of earning as much and doing as little as possible. The older members were not affected, but some of the younger members of the *associations du secours mutuel*. In his own province he took the bull by the horns, and at a teachers' meeting directly posed the question of confidence. "Did the Administration, or did it not, do all it could for the teacher? Of course it could not do everything." The assembly, with the exception of the president of the association, voted "aye," and they would have done the same, said the speaker, if the vote had been by ballot. On the other hand, I received many assurances that the younger generation were quite as ready to put their hand to the plough as the older members of the staff. No two generations are ever alike; but if, as it seems, the younger generation turn out as energetic as its predecessors, there is little fear for the future of primary education in France.

### CHAPTER III.—THE STATE SCHOOLS AND THE PUPILS.

#### THE STATE SCHOOLS.

##### A.—THE MATERNAL SCHOOLS AND INFANT CLASSES.

Maternal  
schools.

The maternal schools not being obligatory for communes under 2,000 or for *agglomérations* of the population under 1,200, I only came across a limited number, although, thanks to the work carried on by the religious orders, they are by no means uncommon in country districts.\*

After several attempts at finding the right methods—attempts which will always be associated with the name of Madame Pape-Carpentier—the existing system, which prescribed the study of colours and exercise in geometrical constructions, as well as the elements of reading, writing, and oral calculation, was happily modified by M. Gréard, who introduced into the schools the methods of Froebel, with his system of Spielgaben (Rapport E.P.).† "Les jeux des enfants ne sont pas jeux, et les faut juger en eux comme leurs plus sérieuses actions," said Montaigne. Judging the children in these schools by their games, the education seems serious enough. The only danger seems lest it should be too serious. As Miss Tolman Smith, American juror for primary education at the Paris Exhibition, writing in the *Educational Review*, September, 1901, says: "The infant school is friendly in spirit, but in too great haste to suit the child for practical life." Another besetting sin is an

\* For further details on the subject see article on the *Écoles Maternelles* in Paris, by Miss Beard. Special Reports, Vol. 8.

† According to the monograph cited above the use of the "gifts" is by no means universal.

inordinate desire on the part of some of the mistresses to render their teaching too ambitious. It was in connection with this defect that an inspector related to me a characteristic story, told, I believe, by Madame Kergomard, who was informed, to her great surprise, one day by a kindergarten teacher that they taught history in her school. The lady demanded a sample of her art, and the teacher narrated to her class the history of Jeanne d'Arc. When the story came to an end, the majority of the children seemed discontented, and at last one of them said, "And the sheep, what happened to them?" The children, being of the country, knew what a sheep was, but had utterly failed to take in the rest of the "history" lesson.\*

The schools are open from 7 to 7 in summer, and from 8 to 6 Regulation: in winter. A charwoman is obligatory. Children are divided by age and not by sex. If the mistress has over fifty infants she has a right to an assistant. Since 1889 teachers in these schools are placed on the same footing as those in the elementary schools. There seems to be no special compulsory training for those who intend taking up the work, as far as I could make out. At Caen, however, there is an *école maternelle* as well as an ordinary girls' school attached to the school. The directress of the school kindly showed me over the building, including the bath-room, where each child is treated to the luxury (as some people seemed to think) of a separate towel. A local committee of lady patrons had also furnished them with hold-alls and pocket-handkerchiefs. The *école maternelle* at Beaumont (Sarthe) consisted of a large covered court, an excellent harbour of refuge on a rainy day. The refectory was furnished with two beds, and there were two class-rooms. The school is managed by two religious sisters, and any children are taken who are over twenty-five months old. A pleasing feature in the school is its museum, which is almost entirely composed of offerings by the children, and contains specimens of weights and measures, minerals, cocoons, stuffed birds, etc. Although we arrived at the end of the afternoon school, the children looked supremely happy. This, however, may be partially accounted for by the fact that it was the hour of "*fourses*" or the afternoon *gouter*. The school is in a somewhat anomalous state, as the building had been left to the town on condition that it was staffed with nuns. The acceptance of this legacy involves, apparently, a very nice legal point.

There are two kinds of *classes enfantines*—one which is Classé common in the big towns and serves as a stepping stone enfantine. between the *école maternelle* and the regular school; and the other which is found in the country, and receives children at four and even three years of age and prepares them for the elementary school. The teachers in both cases are on the same footing as the

\* The administration are alive to this defect. In the Introduction to the Rapport E. P., M. Bayet says of the teachers:—"We must defend them against the temptation of teaching the children too much or too soon, and this last observation especially applies to the maternal school."

ordinary female teacher. The programme is a judicious mixture of kindergarten practices and the methods of elementary education. A few statistics for 1897 on the maternal schools and infant classes will probably not be without interest. Number of maternal schools, 5,683; of mistresses, 9,414; pupils, 729,648. Of these teachers 5,292 (including 1,010 *religieuses*) were in the State schools, and 4,022 in the private schools, in which there were only 271 lay teachers. It is therefore easy to see that the religious teachers outnumber the lay [4,827 against 4,382]. This also holds good for the departments I visited. If to this number of infants be added the number of the children in the *classes enfantines* and those in the schools under six (the legal age), we find that the total number of children under six in all the schools was 1,348,443 in 1897.

#### B. THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

##### (i.) *The Supply.*

It has already been explained that every commune is obliged to maintain a State school, unless united for scholastic purposes to another commune, and that, further, communes over 500 souls are compelled to have a separate school for girls. A careful inquiry into the application of the law shows that the first provision has been very thoroughly carried out; in fact, some persons think too thoroughly. I myself heard of one small commune of only 80 inhabitants which had built and furnished a school which is attended by only four pupils. I was told of another, with a school population of five, which spent 20,000 francs on putting up a school. This extravagance is not always to be laid at the door of the Government, but is often due to the obstinacy of the communes, who would rather have to bear the cost of building a school than send their children to the school of a neighbouring parish. In another case I heard of, a commune with a school population of ten decided to have a school of its own, though the authorities did everything in their power to prevent this piece of reckless expenditure. The united district, in which several parishes combine—so much in favour in rural parts of England—is comparatively rare in France. The number of communes affiliated to another only amount to a little over 2 per cent. I only came across one or two instances in the sixty schools I visited.

This adequacy in the school supply is borne out by the official statistics. Out of the 36,174 communes, only 47 have no school at all, and 86 have no public school; and some of these send their children to the neighbouring schools without being legally united. (One had only 14 inhabitants.) But very few of these schoolless communes seemed to be in the departments visited. Orne had only two communes in 1898 who were unprovided with schools. In Calvados, apparently, there were none at all. The six communes without schools in Loir-et-Cher are attached to other communes for school purposes. In Indre-et-Loire there were apparently none, while in the only one of the four circoncriptions of Sarthe for which I could get figures all the communes were provided with schools. Of the

communes with a population of over 500 and with no school for girls, there were 15 in Indre-et-Loire, 15 in Loir-et-Cher, several in Orne, 3 in the Le Mans circonscription of Sarthe, and only 4 in Calvados, which contains 763 communes!\* Several of these are only just over the legal limit, and with the apparent rate of decrease in the population, will soon be within it. I did not come across any hamlet schools, but in one or two communes which were very big I found that the children on the outskirts went to the school of the adjacent commune. Thus the children of the quaintly-named hamlet, "Le petit bon Dieu," just outside Lisieux, go to the town schools, and not to that of their commune, which is five or six kilometres away.

French regulations are sometimes supposed to err on the side of inflexibility. In Sarthe, however, I came across an irregularity which admirably suited the needs of the case, and had been sanctioned by the Administration. The inhabited portions of a commune in the Forest of Perseigne are completely separated from each other by an intervening band of forest,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles wide. Instead of building two separate schools, one for the boys and the other for the girls, which would have been out of the way for half the population, the authorities hit on the happy expedient of erecting two mixed schools, one at each end of the parish. The two schools are run by a married couple, and the only sufferer is the teacher, who has to walk every day to the second school,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles away.

A happy  
modification

#### (ii.) *Buildings and Furniture.*

It has been previously stated that the construction of the schools and their upkeep are at the charge of the commune, the State only intervening to make, in the case of the poorer communes, grants to the building fund for a new school, or to aid the appropriation of a building hitherto rented by the commune. Reference has also been made in speaking of the teachers' houses to the three stages of building activity in the history of French education, the schools of the third or most recent epoch being naturally the most satisfactory. It has also been stated that in the case of a large number of rural schools, the *école type* is a block of buildings formed of the teacher's house, the school, and the *mairie*. Not infrequently the latter is only a single room, to which, at times, the sole access is through the teacher's house. The girls' school is sometimes to be found attached to the opposite end of the block to the boys' school; sometimes it forms a distinct building along with the female teacher's dwelling.

Buildings.

Of the numerous variety of school buildings, those which were originally private houses adapted to school purposes are naturally the least commodious, but even these, in general, are well lighted. The majority of the modern constructions are lighted on one side, usually the left, and some have windows on three sides. I came across none of the large, barn-like edifices, which were the favourite

State of  
buildings.

\* The figures for all France and Algeria were 646 communes over 500 inhabitants with no girls' school at all; 708 had only a private school for girls, out of a total of 18,539 communes affected by the law.



type in England in the early days. As a rule, the class-rooms are designed to hold a maximum of 50 pupils, with a surface allowance of 4 ft. 2 in. square per pupil, and with a minimum height of ceiling of 13 ft. 4 in. They seem to be sufficiently warmed by stoves in winter. The floors are generally of wood. The ventilation\* is good, and I was particularly struck by the absence of what may be called the *odor scholasticus*, due to the free way in which windows were kept open. In only one or two class-rooms, where the teachers belonged to the old school, was any stuffiness apparent. The cleaning of the schools, as far as dusting and brushing is concerned, is performed by the scholars themselves, a certain number being deputed *à tour de rôle* by the teacher to sweep out the class-room after school hours.

Apart from any structural defects due to their antiquity, the "outside" state of the schools seemed satisfactory enough. All the teachers I questioned declared that their class-rooms were wind and water tight. The official statistics show that the great majority of the schools are either in a sound state of repair or, at least, that everywhere progress is being made to render them so. Thus in Calvados, in 1897, out of 924 public schools, only 19 schools owned by the communes, and 10 rented by them,† with 2 lent by private individuals, were classed as unsatisfactory. As the rented premises are rapidly being appropriated—there were only 22 in 1897, against 153 in the preceding year—we may probably neglect this category, as it is quite possible that these remaining buildings have already been acquired, while the houses "lent" are naturally to be put in a different category. This reduces the number of schools in bad repair in 1897 to something like two per cent. for the whole department. The Academy Inspector for Orne remarks in his report that the state of the schools improves every year, and gives a long list of repairs effected in various schools. In Sarthe, the academy inspector (1899) speaks of the improvement of school buildings being continued in 1898. The same note of satisfaction characterises the report of the Academy Inspector of Indre-et-Loire for the same year. The only difficulty with the communes was their reluctance to whitewash, which has already been mentioned in the remarks on teachers' houses. One inspector told me he had about 50 schools out of 230 in which the regulation had not been observed. The Academy Inspector for Orne also makes the matter a subject for official criticism in his report. The same authority complains of the bad installation of the privies. In the great majority of schools I saw, the arrangements, though at times primitive, seemed generally in-offensive. A desideratum in some schools is a *préau couvert*, or covered playground. Here is just an instance where the personal

\* Matthew Arnold in 1859 was struck by the excellent ventilation.

† In 1897 the number of school buildings belonging to communes were 62,879 (those containing two or more schools under one roof count as one); number of buildings lent or hired 8,649.—(Official Statistics.)

influence of the teacher may induce the commune to sanction the necessary expense. I came across two teachers who had persuaded their communes to put up a *préau couvert*. One had cost no less than 375 francs, which seemed a good deal for a small place where the total income was only 6,972 francs, and the annual amount spent on the school was only 75 francs.

The state of the school furniture seemed less uniformly satisfactory. Furniture. It was often decidedly antiquated, and the sitting accommodation in two schools was insufficient, and ill adapted to the smaller children. This opinion is confirmed by the various reports of the academy inspectors on the subject, although it is clear that in some departments much has been done of late years. Thus in Calvados, in 1897, no less than 99 out of 924 schools had the furniture replaced or done up. In Sarthe, the academy inspector, writes:—

The transformation of the old fashioned school furniture into regulation furniture takes place slowly. Almost everywhere people cannot make up their minds to replace desks and seats till they are absolutely worn out. In many schools blackboards are not repainted often enough, and are therefore often useless. . . . There are not enough maps, natural history charts are rare. School museums do not exist in all schools, and when they do, they are generally badly arranged.

Still, even here there is progress to be reported, for 20 schools were refurnished during the year. The inspector of Indre-et-Loire observes —(I have abridged his words)—that

The state of the school furniture improves daily. There are still too many old-fashioned desks about. Certain communes have still to furnish their schools with a *musée scolaire*, a metrical compendium, a counting machine, a terrestrial globe, and charts for teaching reading and natural history.

The inspector also recommends that mural decoration should be made an important feature. The example is cited of several teachers who have adorned their walls with pictures of animals, of harmful and useful insects, of birds, and of venomous plants. He likewise advises that they should also procure the coloured advertisements of the railways. Furthermore he suggests the acquisition, where possible, of maps of the department, the arrondissement, the canton, and the commune. The two latter, he remarks, the teacher might draw himself. Among the compulsory objects to be exhibited in every class-room is "the declaration of the rights of man," and an extract from the *loi Grammont* "on cruelty to animals." This movement in favour of mural decoration has lately received considerable impetus by the distribution by the Ministry of a large number of views of French scenery procured from the railway companies, with, of course, the railway part suppressed. These sheets are printed in bold bright colours, and add a certain amount of picturesqueness to the bare whitewashed walls; for pictures to the country lad are as fascinating as flowers to the town child. We might almost look on them as the flowers of the towns, fit sub-

jects of barter for our rustic primroses and daffodils. In the school at Douvres (Calvados) there were hung up large placards inscribed with such inscriptions as "le drapeau passe, chapeau bas," or "l'alcool, voila l'ennemi!" Some of the teachers exhibit series of illustrations which depict the evils of alcoholism. The capital defect of these pictures is that they treat the question from a sensational, rather than a medical point of view. Hence I am told that many teachers, after acquiring these pictures, are so disgusted with them that they relegate them to the school cupboard. An excellent idea of a class-room, thoroughly furnished and equipped, was given at the Exhibition, where there was a model class-room of a mixed school, with benches adapted to the size of the children.

he model  
ass-room  
; the  
hibition.

The following is a shortened *résumé* of its contents, taken from the *Revue Pédagogique* for July, 1900.

The library contains books for reading in class or at home. On the desks are lying the proper registers, the master's preparation note-book, a collection of exercise books, and the regulations at their side.

The blackboards contain summaries of the day's lessons. Here a moral maxim taken from Jules Ferry; at the side, the plan of a lesson on duties towards oneself, illustrated by a pretty sketch of the castle of Chillon. On the back of the same blackboard a school song; there a summary of a lesson on the Bastille, also illustrated. On a third blackboard the plan of a lesson which bears simultaneously on arithmetic, the metric system, drawing, and manual work.

The mural decoration is sober. There are the fine illustrations of Hugo d'Alési, that the Ministry present to the schools; the bust of the Republic, the portrait of the President, placed above the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and that of Pasteur.

The cupboard, placed under the clock, merits particular mention. It contains the materials necessary for object lessons, and even for lessons in civic instruction. Except for a few small pieces of apparatus and the small glass objects which must necessarily be bought, the rest of the materials for experiments have been put together by the master; notably an apparatus for distilling, a magnifying glass, made of a globe filled with water; an electroscope, made of paper; a compass, formed of a magnetised file, balanced on two forks; a pyrometer, etc.

The collection made by a teacher for his lessons in civics is interesting. It contains documents for all kinds of lessons on the subject: A soldier's pocket-book; a voting paper; a tax notice; a railway ticket; labels and forms for the parcel post; different notices posted up at the mairie; old deeds, assignats, etc. Attention should also be given to the metric compendium and the materials for teaching geography, and lastly, agricultural experiments are represented by a coloured photograph of three successive stages in the cultivation of a wall-flower. The practical experiments in cultivation of plants are represented by specimens placed in two flower boxes, which in the real school would be placed in the window."

usée  
olaira.

With reference to the objects mentioned above, the teaching of the various subjects they illustrate will be discussed in its proper place. A word may be said here on the *musée scolaire*. It is found nearly everywhere. In Loir-et-Cher, there is one attached to every school. In Orne the absence of one is an exception. Its function was admirably defined at a conference of teachers in Marne, in

1898, "as the indispensable auxiliary of the real object lesson." It must not, however, resemble a curiosity shop. "For collections formed at hazard, and with no definite plan, are of no utility. The museum must be appropriate to the teaching, not the teaching to the museum." The major part of the collection should come from the pupils themselves. The purchase of school museums *en bloc* should be discouraged, nor should the museum be a simple object of parade. Its chief purpose is that it should be of practical use, being not so much a receptacle for the safe storing of curiosities as for the display and explanation of the concrete side of the school teaching. Some of the school museums I saw were thickly coated with the dust of disuse. Others, again, were arranged on the *omnium gatherum* principle, everything being looked on as fish that came into the teacher's net. One teacher, for instance, showed me a museum of his own with over 4,000 objects. This private collection may stimulate the curiosity of the few, especially as it is the master's hobby, but its general educational value cannot be very great, and confirms the statement of one inspector who said the *musée scolaire* renders little service, as it is not practical enough. But a fairly large number of museums seemed to be in actual use, and subserve a very definite purpose, especially in notions applied to agriculture. A certain number of schools also possessed a few simple pieces of scientific apparatus, similar to those in the *classe modèle*, which the teachers had managed to get together or manufacture themselves. In many schools there still hangs a crucifix, relic of the days when the schools were under religious authority. In a few they have been taken down, and in one school the teacher apologised to me for its retention.

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## THE PUPILS.

### (I.) GENERAL APPEARANCE.—DISCIPLINE.

I was very favourably impressed with the general appearance General appearance. of the children. They were for the most part neat and tidy in their dress, and their hands especially were clean. The copy-books, which are usually a fair test in this matter, were singularly free from tell-tale finger marks. It was not till I had visited some twenty State schools that I came across signs of dirt and untidiness. The work of the children was also neat and well arranged. There is apparently more written work in the French schools than with us, and the majority of it is not merely an exercise in writing, but also in general accuracy and neatness. This seems due in no small measure to the *cahier de roulement* into which every pupil in the class copies in turn his work for the day.

As regards the behaviour of the pupils, the discipline seemed Behaviour discipline. generally good. I came across one or two probationers who appeared to have mistaken their vocation or else not yet received

it, but the average teacher certainly managed to get and maintain the "ear of the house," though some were less argus-eyed than others in detecting the bye-play that is liable to go on at the bottom of the form. The exits and entrances were also effected in good order, the children, especially the little ones, often forming up and marching out singing.

wards.

As regards rewards, I came across one school in which the teacher does not believe in prizes. He admitted the work was harder, but the absence of tangible means of encouragement obliged the master to study the character of the pupils—a very true remark; but *non omnia possumus omnes*, and the majority of schools have regular prize givings. The money for the books, amounting sometimes to 100 francs, is given by the commune or by private individuals such as the *délégués cantonaux*. To encourage the children between whiles, the first two who are at the head of the class for a week or a month are allowed to wear a badge of honour. In some schools there is a regular *table d'honneur*, on which the names of those who have passed any public examination, such as the *certificat d'étude*, are inscribed.

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As regards punishments, corporal chastisement is now abolished in French schools, and the only penalty seems to be keeping in for half an hour or the setting of lines. One teacher, I was told, solved the difficulty by offering pupils the alternative of working in his garden. The parent who told me the facts evidently considered this method of punishment as the more excellent way. The system, however, possesses the disadvantage of being liable to abuse; at all events, it is conceivable that a fine crop of impositions might appear just at the moment of the potato ingathering.

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As a believer in the virtues of the cane on rare occasions, I asked a good many teachers their views on the subject. One inspector I spoke to seemed quite shocked at the idea, and must have regarded me, I think, as an inhuman monster. He nevertheless admitted that parents often strike their children. One teacher told me of a case where a parent threatened to prosecute an assistant for accidentally pushing his boy over. The teacher noticing an open wound on the boy's head, inquired how he had got it, and found it was the result of a blow inflicted by his father, so he set the law in motion against the "humanitarian" instead. Still, it is quite right that the school should give an example to parents, if necessary.

One teacher I met was especially bitter against the present "killing by kindness" system of discipline. She declared the pupils were not so obedient or diligent as before. She had commenced teaching under the religious *régime*, and when the sanctions of the catechism to which she had hitherto appealed in correcting the children's faults were denied her, she naturally experienced some difficulty in hitting upon others. She further complained that parents sided with the children against the teachers, and related how she occasionally broke the law with excellent results.

This was all very instructive. The mistress was thoroughly sincere, and represented an opinion that prevails among some of the older teachers. It is obviously very difficult to find at a moment's notice a new basis for one's authority. To those brought up in the *sic volo, sic jubeo* school, with its implied or expressed assumption that children should order themselves lowly and reverently towards their betters, the transition must prove a difficult one to those more practical methods which command us to try and explain to the child the why and wherefore of everything, even of our authority. But with the younger teachers I was again and again assured they felt no urgent need of corporal punishment, "having learnt to walk without a stick." Yet most admitted there were moments when it would be advantageous to make the appeal to brute force—which is, after all, only a scientific adaptation of Herbert Spencer's principle of natural circumstances for bringing the child into contact with reality, introducing him to the logic of natural forces in as real a way as we explain to him the action of any chemical substances by making them the subject of a particular experiment. One teacher told me of a case in which one of the children when it is naughty, in order that the majesty of the law may not be publicly offended, is taken into the back kitchen and "shaken up." Another teacher was against violent punishments, such as kneeling in the corner, but not adverse to a gentle box on the ears. The situation was very fairly summed up by one who said, "There is not a good master alive who has not given a 'sound smack' to some child in his life."

There does not seem to be much real over-pressure among the pupils, although they are coached in out-of-school hours by certain masters for the *certificat d'études*. The work is, of course, voluntary on both sides, but I should imagine the strain falls rather on the masters than the boys. The danger of all this extra work is not so much over-pressure as "cram." In some schools the home work tends to become heavy, but over-pressure in any case does not exist in primary education to the same extent as it does in secondary. Overwork.

## (II.) THE ATTENDANCE PROBLEM.

### (a) *Methods of taking the Education Census.—Results.*

France is one of the few countries in the world which appreciates the necessity of collecting official statistics in a thorough-going fashion. And yet how many apparent difficulties and problems are reduced to their just proportion by the application to them of Sir Robert Giffen's favourite dictum of "put a figure on it"! The stout folio volume on primary school statistics issued by the Ministry of Public Instruction in 1897, and brought up to date in some cases to 1900, is altogether an admirable condensation

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of numerical facts concerning the schools. As regards the figures for attendance, their sources are naturally the register kept by the teachers. These are of two kinds—a *registre matricule* (obligatory only in State schools), on which are inscribed the names of the pupils as they enter, and a “call over” register, for noting down the “presence and absences.” The *registre matricule* also contains a column for the date and place of the pupil’s birth, for the name and profession of the parents, for the date of entry and leaving of the pupils, with comments on their progress and the profession they embrace. The classes are called over twice a day. The ordinary register contains at the end a *résumé* for the year. In the first column comes the number inscribed during the month followed by the total attendances possible, the total absences, and the total attendances. To arrive at the total number of children at school in any country, one may either take the total of the children whose names are inscribed during the year, or the number of the children during any particular month, or the number inscribed on the roll on any set day, or, lastly, the number present on a set day. The first method is probably the best, if certain precautions are exercised, such as entering in a second column the children already inscribed in another school during the year. This double registration affects about 4 per cent. of the children in France. Before it was taken into account no less than fifty-four departments were returned with more children in the schools than existed within their area according to the census! The latter, however, is sometimes at fault. Those who fill in the papers occasionally blunder as to whether a child is thirteen years old or in its thirteenth year. The official figures, which are very carefully worked out, estimate “that the number of children who are entirely deprived of primary instruction is very restricted indeed.” They none the less admit a decrease of 2·7 per cent. between 1891–2 and 1896–7 in the total number of enrolments. They further give a table of percentages of pupils present on two fixed days in comparison with the numbers on the books for the month and the total enrolment for the year. Taking, therefore, the total enrolments in France for 1896–7 as the norm, we find in the public schools 87·6 pupils inscribed for December, with 78·7 present on the 5th of that month, and in the private schools a percentage of 91·1 per cent. for the month, and 85·1 for the 5th day of the month; while the figures for June in the public schools were 84·6 per cent. and 73·2 per cent., and in the private schools 91·1 per cent. and 84·1 per cent. A point to note is the higher percentage in the private schools. There seems, however, a little doubt whether the registers are always so strictly kept in these establishments as in those belonging to the State. In seven departments the June average in the State schools falls below 60 per cent. The lowest average of all is found in Lozère—48·9. In three departments the average is over 84 per cent.

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The figures for the departments under review in 1896-7 were as follows (those for France are repeated for the sake of the comparison) :—

—	December, 1896.				June, 1897.			
	Public Schools		Private Sch'ls		Public Schools		Private Sch'ls	
	month.	day.	month.	day.	month.	day.	month.	day.
France - -	87·6	78·7	91·1	85·1	84·6	73·2	91·1	84·1
Calvados - -	*87·5	76·9	*90·3	85·4	90·9	82·5	95·1	90·5
Orne - - -	87·7	79·6	*90·8	86·7	90·6	82·7	96·9	92·7
Sarthe - - -	88·0	80·4	*90·6	*84·5	*80·5	*70·7	91·4	85·0
Indre-et-Loire -	89·6	82·0	93·0	87·6	90·0	79·6	94·7	90·4
Loir-et-Cher -	89·7	82·4	91·4	85·8	89·8	77·6	93·9	87·7

\* Below average.

It will be seen that the public schools in these departments are distinctly above the general average of the country, and the private schools also stand higher than the national mean for similar schools.

(b) *History and present position—remedies—punctuality.*

Compulsory education in France dates from 1882. The law of March 28th of that year declared primary education compulsory for children of both sexes between six and thirteen years of age. Education could be given in a State or private school, or in the family itself. A *commission scolaire* was to be set up in every commune, with the mayor at its head. The duties of the latter were to draw up every year a list of the children of school age, and notify to the persons in charge of these children the date of the opening of the school. Various disciplinary powers were given to the commission, while to encourage the school attendances *caisses des écoles* were to be started in every commune to assist necessitous children.

The law at first worked fairly well. For instance, in 1877 there were only 3,878,151 children on the registers out of 4,502,894, according to the census. But in 1882, the year of the passing of the law, the numbers enrolled rose to 4,425,690, which nearly corresponded with those of the census, 4,581,369. In 1887-8 the culminating point was reached, when there were 4,752,968 children on the books, against 4,729,511 given by the census.



This surplus of apparent over real school population is due to the fact already mentioned, that in populous centres children are often inscribed on the books of two or more schools; but even if allowance is made for this phenomenon, the year 1888 appears to be the high-water mark of enrolments. There were only 4,591,606 pupils on the register in 1892 out of a census population of 4,663,671 and in 1897 the numbers had fallen to 4,465,166, against a possible 4,636,331 who should be in school. These figures are taken from the report of M. Cazes, inspecteur général at the Congrès International de l'Enseignement Primaire, which was held in Paris in 1900. The number of children not on the roll at all are estimated by the same authority at 4 per cent. It is clear from this and other statements that M. Cazes takes a less rosy view of the situation than the compilers of the official statistics. He goes on further to state that many of the children on the register attend the classes with only a relative regularity, and that only during five or six months. He especially blames the facilities under which the *certificat d'études* can be taken at eleven. The latter has become in rural districts for pupils, whether they succeed or fail, a signal for departure *en masse*. The category of pupils from eleven to thirteen is thus reduced to an extremely weak contingent; or even to vanishing point. As a mean, a quarter and sometimes a third of the total effective disappears, either to be made use of at home or to be let out to look after the cattle.\* This "nightmare of the teachers" is evidently widespread. I came across it as far afield as in the *Bulletin des Indigènes* of Algiers, in which the writer consoles himself for the deficiencies in the "roll call" of the rural schools of that country by a comparison with the state of things existing in France, which he brings home to his readers by several quotations from inspectors and others on the subject. Thus one writes: "In a composition of the *certificat d'études* a candidate said quite innocently, 'In winter one has nothing to do, so one goes to school.' This child did not suspect he was translating the thoughts of all his comrades in the country, and even of their families. When we happen to meet at the side of the road under a hedge of eglantine three children in charge of a goat, we ask ourselves very seriously if there are not at least two too many. It is these two children we must get into the school by using all possible expedients." It is to these defects that no doubt the Ministerial circular of July 10th, 1895, alludes when it speaks of children losing one-fifth, one-quarter, and even a third of their school time.†

I did not come across these documents till some time after the

\* "After the very precise reports of the Academy Inspectors it is only during five, or at most six, months of the year that the pupils attend with relative regularity."—(Rapport E. P.).

† "Very often the rural schools are reduced during the summer to a fifth or a sixth of their winter effective. With the first fine days there only remain in class the few candidates for the *certificat d'études* and the very young children who are unable to be of service to their parents."—(Rapport E. P.)

termination of my tour. In fact, it was only gradually I obtained a clear view of the attendance problem in its various manifestations. Like many others, I had been misled by much which had been written in England about our own shortcomings, and particularly by the circumstantial account of the derelict million,\* which phrase, like the legend of the French minister and his watch, seems likely to make the tour of the world, so that I naturally fancied that we were the only nation whose country folk regarded their educational duties lightly. The first registers I examined threw little light on the actual position of affairs. But by dint of speaking to all I met on the subject, I gradually discovered a similar state of things existing to what M. Cazes has described. I finally learnt that in the country districts, in which the evils alluded to by M. Cazes are most patent, the teachers remove from the "roll call" the name of any pupil who leaves the school in May and take away his books, and only replace his name when he returns in November or December, if he returns at all. In this way the total of absences is reduced, as far as the register is concerned, and the only figures that give a clue to the real situation are the numbers of pupils enrolled *per mensem*, which, at the worst periods, drops a quarter and even a third below the record of the highest months. The teacher is probably within his rights in removing the child's name; in fact, there would otherwise be no reason for the column of monthly enrolments. Besides, the child often leaves the parish and goes right away for the time. The only thing is that any calculation of the average attendance on the monthly basis is quite misleading; and, indeed, the statisticians at headquarters adopt this view, as they take for their basis the total enrolment of the year. Wishing to find out which were the worst months for average attendance, I have made a statistical table of some eighteen registers I copied or made extracts of. As far as my very limited experiences go, September

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\* A good example of how such alarmist figures are arrived at is given in a letter signed "L.S.B.," which appeared in the "Westminster Gazette," June 5th, 1901, analysing the statement that 100,000 children are absent every day from the London schools, and that these are nearly always the same children. Relying on detailed information published by the School Board, the writer first deducts 38,000 infants. Occasional absence in the cases of such tender babes can scarcely be stigmatised as truancy. This leaves 62,000. A fresh deduction of 33,000 scholars over seven or eight years of age who are ill or excluded because of illness in the home brings the total down to 29,000. From this again must be deducted the absences of some 14,000 regular attendants at a wedding, funeral, or for some other good or fairly reasonable excuse. From the 15,000 thus left 3,000 may be taken off for those who are fairly regular, but were absent on this particular day without good excuse. This reduces the total to 12,000, and here again another thousand must be deducted for those whose names are wisely not removed from the books of one school until they are safely inscribed on the books of another. The famous 100,000 is thus reduced to 11,000. These are certainly not nearly always the same children, though many of them may be classed as "regular irregulars." They require, in fact, very careful sifting out, and "each case has to be dealt with on its merits, and neither sweeping generalisations nor rhetorical exaggerations meet the case."

Class or School.	Months.											Taking the attendance for the best months at 100, the worse months with the percentages in round numbers were—
	Sept. 18	Oct. 42	Nov. 40	Dec. 44	Jan. 36	Feb. 36	March. 40	April. 28	May. 42	June. 42	July. 32	
(1) - -												Sept., 42%.
(1A) - -	19	19	32	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Sept., 60%—Oct., 60%.
(2) - -	38	36	37	37	37	39	40	44	45	45	43	Sept., 73%.
(2A) - -	—	37	37	37	37	39	—	—	—	—	—	Excellent.
(3) - -	36	38	40	41	41	42	44	38	43	39	37	Sept., 82%.
(4) - -	38	40	42	40	38	38	42	45	45	44	43	Dec., 73%.
(5) - -	9	24	24	24	25	25	25	25	—	—	—	Sept., 86%, otherwise excellent—96%.
(5A) - -	—	—	—	—	14	15	14	14	—	—	—	Excellent.
(6) - -	30	30	30	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100%—religious school.
(7) - -	19	21	22	22	22	22	—	—	—	—	—	86% } good.
(8) - -	29	28	30	33	33	33	—	—	—	—	—	85% }
(9) - -	40	48	51	50	51	51	51	52	—	—	—	Sept., 77%, otherwise good ones—92%.
(10) - -	36	41	44	51	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Sept., 71%—Oct., 80%.
(11) - -	33	31	30	30	33	32	31	29	—	—	—	April, 88%—good.
(12) - -	58	57	58	67	70	70	—	—	—	—	—	Oct., 81%—Sept. and Nov., 83%.
(13) - -	28	32	39	40	43	43	43	40	—	—	—	Sept., 65%—Oct., 74%.
(13A) - -	32	33	32	31	31	31	32	32	—	—	—	Excellent.
(14) - -	28 in summer.			35 in winter.								80% in summer.

The reason for only some months being copied was that the main object at the time was to obtain the highest and lowest figure only.

and October seem to be the worst months, and this conclusion was substantiated by numerous conversations with the teachers. It should, however, be borne in mind that the school year does not begin till about the 20th of September, and it takes the schools a little time to get under way.

Assuming a difference of about 12 per cent., which is roughly the difference in the official figures between the monthly average and the average on one day in the month, the average attendance on one day in the worst months would be at 35 per cent., 38 per cent., 53 per cent., 57 per cent., 62 per cent., 64 per cent., etc., of the total enrolment.

The majority of teachers in these schools not only spoke to me about these regrettable absences, but also complained of the difficulties of teaching these "Ins and Outs." The child which left in May had forgotten everything by December. I was surprised to find this juvenile exodus extended even to the towns. The head of the excellent *école d'application* (practising school) at Alençon told me on my arrival that several children had just quitted the school to go into the country as *patours*, such being the picturesque local term derived directly from the Latin for these youthful keepers of sheep. In the country, of course, I came across a fair number of schools which suffer from the periodic exodus of these nomads, but the custom did not appear to be universal. It seemed, on the contrary, to be mainly confined to the forest and grazing districts; and this conclusion was borne out by what the secretary to the Academy Inspector of Loir-et-Cher told me. He said the school attendance was bad in the north, where in some cantons the school population fell to a third during the *patour* season, while it was good in the south, where the vine culture keeps the children at home in their own villages. The grazing season also affects the attendance in Indre-et-Loire to the extent of a tenth, according to one of the inspectors of Tours. A minor cause for dissatisfaction among the teachers in the Loire district was the absence of the children during the grape gathering. Many teachers likewise complained of the irregular attendance of the children during the week of the first communion, and sometimes even during the month that preceded it.\* I myself was witness in one school of the gap it makes. Out of a class of twenty-five girls only eighteen were present; the rest were attending the catechism classes at church. It is only fair to state that the children are allowed a three days' furlough during this important epoch. But the teachers' grievance was that not only the attendance but also the work suffered. One teacher, who marks the composition done by his class, said it affected the candidates' work for several weeks to the extent of a third. This may, however, be taken as

\* This point seems to have been important enough to form the subject of a separate resolution at the International Congress on Primary Education at Paris, in 1900. "Il est nécessaire que l'enseignement religieux soit, hors des sanctions effectives, maintenu strictement dans les conditions légales, de manière qu'il ne fasse pas échec à la fréquentation scolaire."—(Résolution IX.)

proof that their energies are really absorbed elsewhere. This question of the *première communion* is also sometimes, peradventure, a little personal matter between *curé* and teacher. Some teachers stated it gave them little trouble, and another expressly said that the *curé* in his parish never attempted to withdraw the children from school at all.

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In the grass country I heard complaints of the children being absent during the haysel, and in the cider country during apple picking. A few teachers attributed the irregularity in attendance to the distance the children had to come, the communes being apparently larger, as a rule, than our parishes, and there being no legal limit beyond which children are not obliged to attend.\* I came across children who have to trudge to school three miles there and back every day, except Thursday, which is a whole holiday. In one or two schools Monday is a bad day for attendance, as the parents make it a day off for the children as well as themselves. These are, however, but minor grievances in comparison with the infant *patours*, and their solid six months absence from school.

*Monthly Attendance of those on the Books.*

Appended are a few of the best and worst averages of attendance on the actual numbers enrolled for the month.

	Best Months.	Worst Months.
1. St. Aubin (boys) - - -	Nov., over 95%	April, over 80%
2. Douvres (boys) - - -	Nov., over 97%	March, 81%
2A. Douvres (girls) - - -	Jan., over 99%	March, over 84%
3. Oully (boys) - - -	Feb., over 95%	May, over 84%
4. Coquainvilliers (mixed) . . . . .	{Sept. July} over 95%	Jan., over 70% (measles)
5. Vimoutiers (boys) - - -	Nov., over 95%	Feb., over 81%
6. Vimoutiers (religious, boys) - - -	Sept.-Oct., 100%	Feb., over 76%
7. Vimoutiers (girls) - - -	Sept., over 97%	Oct., over 92%
8. Mauvaisvilliers (mixed) - - -	Sept., over 93%	Feb., over 69%
9. Beaumont (girls) - - -	Sept., over 99%	Dec., over 92% (on 51 pupils!)
10. St. Paterne (mixed) - - -	Sept., over 93%	Feb., over 71%
11. Neufchâtel (boys) - - -	Sept., over 97%	Feb., over 77%
12. Beaumont (boys) - - -	Sept., over 99%	Dec., over 92%
13. Loué (boys) - - -	Sept., over 99%	March, over 87%
14. Chaussée St. Victor - - -	Dec., over 97%	Jan., over 90%
15. St. Denis-la-Victoire - - -	May, over 96%	March, over 63% (sickness)

\* Except in the case of a hamlet three kilometres from the "town" part of the commune and containing at least twenty children of school age.—(Gobron, 2 523.)

These figures show that the attendance of those actually on the books is pretty regular. In many cases the register for the year was not copied, but only the months giving the highest and lowest figures.

The principal cause of the persistency of the present somewhat unsatisfactory situation is imputed to the fact that the "commissions scolaires" entrusted with the putting the law into motion have either always remained or else become a dead letter, except in Paris and a few places. The indirect reason which has led to this is the *loi Goblet* of 1884, which granted to the communes the right of electing their own *conseillers municipaux*, by whom the mayor is chosen. As a political measure of decentralisation it was probably wise, but it exposed the mayor as head of the *commission scolaire* to the enmity of those parents against whom he may have set the law in motion, and who vented their displeasure by casting their votes at the ensuing election for his political opponents. The consequence was that several mayors who had been zealous in the cause of education lost their seats. Their successors, more wary, showed a natural reluctance to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. The consequence was that the *commissions scolaires*, after a promising beginning, not only ceased to extend, but those which were in full activity came to an untimely end.\*

Various remedies have been proposed to improve the existing state of affairs. Some reformers would suppress the *commission scolaire*, and hand over the whole business to the *juge de paix*, or local magistrate, leaving the teachers to prosecute. This is certain to work badly, as it would bring the teachers into direct collision with the parents. The International Congress decided to recommend the suppression of the *délégués cantonaux*, who formed part of the commission, and substitute for the commission itself a *conseil d'école*, who will merely act as school patrons. If their recommendations are carried out, it will be the duty of the mayor to draw up a list of the children of school age and send it to the inspectors. The latter, if necessary, will hale the offending parents before the *juge de paix*. The surveillance over the religious schools, whose registers, it is said, are not kept so strictly as those of the State schools, is also to be rendered more real. The *caisses des écoles*, which, though compulsory, were in 1895 still wanting in more than half the schools of France, are to be maintained, and no candidate for the *certificat d'études* is to be accepted who is not twelve years of age on the 1st of October in the year he presents himself.

A judicious application of the law of 1882, with the power of instituting proceedings assigned to the inspector, would probably be a valuable help to improving school attendances. But anything

\*One hypothesis for the unsatisfactory state of affairs is mentioned by the Academy Inspector of Sarthe in his report for 1895. "Can it be true," he writes, "as I have heard former teachers say, that the attendance was more regular when the schools had fees? Parents wanted their money's worth then; but to-day, as the schooling is free, it seems to have lost its value."

like a wholesale setting in motion of legal machinery would seem a dangerous proceeding, and likely to do more harm than good in the rural districts, where the peasants are generally ultra-conservative and local usages and prejudices are strong. This opinion, such as it is, was borne in upon me by various conversations with some of the most experienced inspectors, some of whom even went so far as to think that an amendment of the law would do but little good, and favoured other specifics.

The personal  
factor—(a)  
Inspectors.

Thus one of the best inspectors I met informed me that under the old regulations he had set the law in motion against various parents. He had caused several to be fined and one actually to be put in prison. Complete failure attended his efforts. *Rien n'a abouti*. Feeling he was on the wrong tack, he thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that evidently there were times and seasons when the peasants had really need of their children. He accordingly instructed the teachers to inform the parents that the inspector would always favourably entertain a request for leave of absence if the work was specified for which the children were required, such as pea-picking, etc. After eighteen years' experience he had found the system answer extremely well. Another way of keeping children at school was to discourage the teachers from presenting their pupils before twelve years of age for the *certificat*. Let them tell the parents there was a distinct advantage for the child to remain at school, that the age between eleven and thirteen was the most important, and so in his circumscription the custom was to present children between twelve and thirteen. This suggestion is also strongly supported in the report of M. Cazes, who proposes to raise the legal age of the *certificat* to twelve.

) Teachers.

In the same report M. Cazes equally insists on the personal influence of the teacher being brought to bear on the recalcitrant parent. It is significant to note that this influence, according to the teacher at Carpiquet, who is a partisan of the idea, is much greater with the parents of those who have received some education than with those who are illiterate. M. Petit, the primary inspector at Argentan, was also strong on the personal influence of the teacher as one of the principal factors in the solution of the problem. The head teacher in the girls' school at Vimoutiers told me she always made a point of sending round an assistant to inquire about any child who was absent, or of asking the neighbours, and she found the system answer very well. At the same time, a regular system of official notification to parents of the children's absences, with fortnightly reports, would probably defeat the very aim for which it is proposed. The whole strength of the teacher's interference in the matter is that his action is a purely voluntary one. Another objection to the proposal is that it lays yet another burden on the already hard-worked teacher.\*

\* A preferable form of the proposal is that of the Academy Inspector of Corrèze, who proposes in future to take into consideration, in questions of promotions, the efforts made by the teachers to improve the attendance at their school.—(Revue Péd., July, 1900.) (See Appendix II.)

It is interesting to note that some of the higher officials are in favour of introducing some system of half-time. M. Le Chevallier, the Academy Inspector at Alençon, entertains the idea of reducing the obligatory age to twelve, with a system of half-time up to fifteen, just the period when education is most profitable. I trust I am betraying no secrets when I say he proposes shortly to lay a scheme to that effect before the Conseil Général of the Department. It will be worth while watching the fortunes of this unconscious imitation of the Robson Act in France, or rather improvement on it. The proposed extension to fifteen, if successful, will be a most interesting experiment. M. Périé, the Academy Inspector in Loir-et-Cher, in his annual charge to the department, urges that the school period should be prolonged, and suggests one method of doing this would be the adoption of the half-time school, whether for half the day or half the year—organised very differently to suit local needs and customs. This is actually, I am told, done in certain mountainous districts in France, where the half-day school is already a fact.

This adaptation of the school to local needs is also urged by M. Cazes in his report, which is really the digest and summary of five *mémoires* on the subject. He also adds it is already done in a large number of departments:—

Adaptation  
to local  
needs.

It conciliates thereby the exigencies of education with the real needs of the majority of rural families. These people at certain seasons, sometimes in autumn, more often in summer, can scarcely do without their children's assistance in agricultural work. There is urgent work which cannot be put off, and which imperiously requires the energies of the entire family. These are respectable exigencies, which one must always take into consideration. Besides, the majority of rural families, except in certain specially favoured districts, live in a state of tight means, which does not go as far as actual want, thanks to the unremitting toil and spirit of thrift which are characteristic of the French peasant but, which is not the less real for that. We have not to examine here economic and scientific causes; but it is a general fact that the majority of our rural population can only, by dint of toil and privation supply the principal needs of their existence. It is therefore a necessity, at the same time as it is a duty, to conciliate two interests—the interest of living and the interest of self-education—with a view to being able to live better.

M. Cazes further notes that in Germany, in order to conciliate the needs of the family with the school interests, the holidays are so disposed that the children can help their parents without interrupting their studies on that account. Thus, at the moment of the potato harvest in the Rhine provinces, the children receive eight days' holiday. These are called the potato holidays (*Kartoffel-ferien*). M. Cazes continues:—

The Academy inspectors have taken pains in their respective departments to render the school practical in summer as well as in winter, in modifying, after consulting the teacher, and with the approbation of the council of the department, the hours of beginning and ending school, and the length of the school hours. In the same way they have advanced or deferred, according as it was necessary, the date of the holidays, in order to make them coincide as far as possible with the occupations of the country.

Perhaps it would be better if the holidays were not given



simultaneously everywhere during the same season, whatever may be the agricultural character of the region, but divided into two, and spread over the weeks during which the work of the field requires child labour. Such a measure would have another advantage, that of attaching the child early to the soil, in giving him the opportunity of taking a part and interesting himself in country life, of having his share in these labours performed in common, and which in our country districts have an element of joyfulness about them. (Extract from *mémoire* by M. Devimeux.)

English observers, and especially members of the Agricultural Educational Association, will, no doubt, be interested to learn that there is a distinct movement in educational circles among the teachers as well as among those higher in the scale to do something for rural education in its widest sense. The whole passage is also in other ways full of significance which should not be lost on English readers.

The CaisSES  
des écoles

And lastly, there is little doubt if the *caisses des écoles* are more widely and liberally organised they may, at least as far as the indigent children go, largely aid in winning back these waifs and strays to the school. According to M. Meslet, the Primary Inspector of Le Mans, many of these little *patours* are miserably paid. They often receive no more than their keep, and 25 to 35 francs for their six months' service. Were the *caisses des écoles* properly organised one could give to the parents of those who were really indigent an indemnity sufficient to persuade them to leave their children at the school, though what the farmers would say who live in the districts where there are no hedgerows must be left to the imagination.

The English  
problem.

We in England have much the same difficulties, although, as I hope to show, the rural problem is more or less different. Our law on compulsory attendance is certainly at times faultily administered, because it comes into collision with the local customs and prejudices, which are not always necessarily based either on ignorance or greed, and because, at least in our big cities, the question is bound up with much deeper problems, not merely with the question of the feeding of hungry or starving school children but with the whole problem of the attitude of the State towards its poor in general, a problem which is rarely, if ever, directly mooted, but which is raised every time the head of some struggling family is summoned for not sending its little breadwinners to school.

Punctuality.

I asked in several schools about the punctuality of the children, and heard but few complaints. However, in Indre-et-Loire at least, the academy inspector makes the want of it in the schools the subject of a serious complaint in his report (1898):—

There is a lack of punctuality in a large number of pupils in a great number of schools. Teachers are specially ordered to take the call-over at the right time, and at once mark the absentees. Owing to the lack of punctuality and to non-attendance, a quarter of the pupils do not derive half the profit they ought from their sojourn at school. (Shortened account.)

CHAPTER IV.—ORGANISATION AND CURRICULUM

ORGANISATION OF THE STATE SCHOOLS.

Primary schools are officially divided into three grades or stan- The cours.  
dards—*cours élémentaire, cours moyen, cours supérieur*—which are  
supposed to correspond with the ages 6-9, 9-11, 11-13. These  
divisions appear to be rather *factice* in country schools. The *cours*  
*supérieur* is more or less a blank, as the great bulk of the children  
leave after passing the *certificat d'études*, which is regarded as the  
crown of the studies of the *cours moyen*. On the other hand, in  
many schools there is a *cours préparatoire*, which precedes the *cours*  
*élémentaire*, and these divisions seem to suit the work of the school  
to judge by a paper on the subject recently issued by the new society  
of "*Amicales*." The teachers are, of course, allowed to split these  
*cours* up into divisions, which are generally two in number, as a  
pupil stays, as a rule, two years in each *cours*. Promotion, how-  
ever, does not take place by years, as in Germany, but is at the  
teacher's discretion.

Although the legal age of leaving is thirteen, the *certificat* exami- The leaving  
nation is, as has been already stated, the signal for a general age.  
exodus of the mass of the pupils. M. Petit, the Primary Inspec-  
tor at Argentan, kindly gave me some interesting facts in support  
of his assertion that the majority of children in his circonscription  
go to work at twelve. When he enters an ordinary school of thirty  
scholars he asks who are over twelve, and only three or four children  
lift their hands. As for the children over thirteen, they are still  
more rare. In one canton of his circonscription, with 453 children,  
only nine boys out of 243 and two girls out of 210 are over thirteen,  
while for the whole circonscription, with 7,121 children, only 157  
boys out of 3,894 and 69 girls out of 3,227 are over the legal age.

In schools with a single teacher, my friend, M. Flamand, Primary The work of  
Inspector of Paris, informs me that those pupils who have gained those who  
the *certificat "double"* the last year except in arithmetic, in stop on.  
which they do separate problems—that is, they go over the  
ground again, probably in a more thorough fashion. In many  
schools, however, one or two of these children are coached either  
gratis or for a small fee by the teacher with a view to entering  
the normal schools. In the large centres of population there are,  
of course, either *cours complémentaires* (ex-standard classes) or  
higher primary schools (see pp. 181 and 182).

According to the law, classes over fifty have a right to an Size of  
additional teacher. The population in most of the communes I classes.  
visited being on the down grade, the number of schools with an  
*adjoint*, except in the small country towns, was comparatively  
rare. The classes themselves in Orne, for three of the arrondisse-  
ments, average from between twenty and thirty for the mixed  
schools, and in the fourth (Domfront) from thirty to forty.

It was in Orne that I heard of a master with eighty pupils without an assistant, while a neighbouring teacher with seventy was in a similar plight. The reason for this large population was the sudden influx of a large number of *enfants moralement abandonnés*, which the city of Paris plants out with such good results in the country, and which number in all something like 50,000! These large classes under a single teacher are not infrequently equalled and even surpassed in Brittany, where large families are the rule among the villagers.\* This information I received from the assistant secretary of the Academy Inspector at Alençon, who further assured me that the two schools I heard of were exceptions, and that not a tenth of the schools in the department, which were over fifty, were without an assistant teacher, and the greater number of these were only just over the legal limit. In the neighbourhood of Mosnes (Indre-et-Loire) I was informed that the average class was about forty. A teacher in the district told me he had been in charge of a school across the river of sixty boys. But the record school that I heard of was one of ninety-six boys, where the teacher had to struggle single-handed with only his wife to help him with the needle-work. The reason of this unwonted size was that the commune was poor, and therefore unwilling to build a separate girls' school. It was in the same department that the inspector of Vendôme, M. Fusy, told me the average of the classes under him was between forty and fifty. Taking these and other data into consideration, it is probable that the average class in the districts I visited is rather under forty than over.†

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\* In Côtes-du-Nord eighteen mixed schools have altogether thirty-seven "classes," and 2,143 pupils, or an average of 119 pupils per school.

† The number for all France was 8,422 teachers with classes of over 50. The percentage of classes in France is 91.9 for classes of 50 and under, 5.7 for classes from 51-60 (inclusive), 1.7 for classes between 61-70 (inclusive), 0.5 from 71-80 (inclusive), and 0.2 over 80.

## TIME TABLE.

School with a single Master.  
Commune of Mosnes (Indre-et-Loire).

M = Master.  
A = Assistant (Monitor), Boys' School.

Time of Lessons -	8.25—8.30	8.30—8.50	8.50—9.20	9.20—9.35	9.35—9.55	9.55—10.10	10.10—10.30	10.30—11.10	11.10—11.30	
Length of Lessons -	5 minutes.	20 minutes.	30 minutes.	15 minutes.	minutes.	15 minutes.	20 minutes.	40 minutes.	20 minutes.	
Higher Class -	Inspection of cleanliness; entry with singing; call over.	Moral Instruction. (Mon., Wed., Sat.)	Dictation common to the two first classes. (Mon., Wed., Sat.)	Pupils prepare their French exercise, given the day before.	Preparation of exercise and lesson.	Interval.—Exit and entry with singing; ventilation of the class-room.	Correction of exercise; saying of lesson; new exercise; French composition (Tu. and Fri.) M.	History (Mon., Wed., Sat.)	Drawing. (Tues. and Fri.)	
Middle Class -				French composition. (Tues. and Fri.) M.						Pupils prepare their French exercise, given the day before.
Elementary Class -			Lesson common to all the classes.	Reading. M. & A.	Correction of exercises; saying lessons; fresh exercise; fresh lessons. M.		Writing the exercise which has just been given.	Writing of exercise just given and study of the new lesson.	Lesson common to all the classes.	Lesson common to the first three classes.
Preparatory Class -				Master.	Reading. M. & A.		35 minutes. Exercise in language; dictation of the reading lesson on the blackboard. M. and A.	Reproduction of the reading lesson on slates or writing in copy-books.		

INTERVAL—DINNER.

Time of Lessons	12.55—1.0	1.0—1.15	1.15—1.35	1.35—2.0	2.0—2.25	2.25—2.40	2.40—2.55	2.55—3.25	3.25—4.0
Length of Lessons	5 minutes.	15 minutes.	20 minutes.	25 minutes.	25 minutes.	15 minutes.	15 minutes.	30 minutes.	35 minutes.
Higher Class	Inspection of cleanliness; entry with singing; call over.	Preparation of the exercise and lesson given the day before. Arithmetic (Mon., Wed., Sat.).	Preparation of the lesson and exercise. Metric system (Tues. and Fri.).	Correction of exercise; saying of lesson; new exercise; new lesson. M.	Preparation of the lesson on science and agriculture.	Interval.—Exit and entry with singing; ventilation of class-room.	Gymnastics every day,	Agriculture or Science applied to agriculture or hygiene. Lesson common to all the classes.	Reading. M (Mon., Tues., and Fri.)
Middle Class		Preparation of the exercise and lesson given the day before. Arithmetic (Mon., Wed., Sat.).	Correction of exercise, saying of lesson; new exercise; new lesson. M.	Working out of new exercise (in arithmetic).	Preparation of the lesson on science and agriculture		or		Recitation. M. (Wednesday.)
Elementary Class		Correction of the exercise; explanation of a new one (in arithmetic). M.	Working out a new exercise (in arithmetic). M.	Working out of new exercise.	Dictation. M.		Lessons in practical agriculture at the season of pruning the trees or vines, or gardening.		Reading. M. and A. (Mon., Wed., Sat.)
Preparatory Class		Readings. M. and A.	Mental arithmetic. M. and A.	Arithmetic on the blackboard and on slates.	Writing. M. The Master looks after the class during dictation.				Recitation. M. and A. (Wed.)
									Singing. M. (Sat.)
									Reading of notes and references M. (Sat.)

TIME TABLE.—SCHOOLS WITH A SINGLE DEPARTMENT (TEACHER).

M = Master or Mistress.

A = Assistant (Monitor).

MORNING SCHOOL.

Class.	Entry.	Moral and Civic Instruction.	French.	Language (1 hour 25 minutes).			Interval.	History and Geography.	Writing and Drawing.	Remarks.
	10 min.	20 minutes.	25 minutes.	30 minutes.	30 minutes.	15 min.	40 minutes.	20 minutes.		
Higher Class.	Inspection of cleanliness. Entry into class singing. Call over.	Moral Instruction. (Mon., Wed. and Sat.).	Dictation common to the two first classes.	The pupils prepare the French exercise given the day before and study their grammar lesson.	Correction of the lesson given the day before and saying of the lesson. Explanation of new exercise and lesson. On Wednesday the exercise is a French essay.		Compulsory Recreation. Entries and exits are accompanied with singing. Ventilation of the class room.	Recitation of lesson as explained the day before with questions on this lesson. Explanation and fresh lesson. Lesson common to two top classes.	Drawing (Tues. and Frid.).	
Middle Class.		Civic Instruction. (Tues. and Fri.).	M. and A.	25 minutes given. Correction of the exercise of the day before and saying of lesson. Explanation of new exercise and lesson. On Wednesday the exercise is a French essay.	35 minutes. Preparation of French exercise which will be corrected next day. Study of new grammar lesson.				Writing (Mon., Wed. and Sat.).	
Elementary Class.		Lessons in Common. M.	25 minutes. Reading. M. and A.	25 minutes. Writing. A.	15 minutes. History (Mon., Wed. and Sat.) and Fri.). M. and A.	20 minutes. Recitation (Mon., Wed. and Sat.). Reading (Tues. and Fri.). M. and A.			25 minutes. Exercise in language and short French exercise. M. and A.	

AFTERNOON SCHOOL.

Class.	Entry.	Metric System (Tues. and Fri.). Arithmetic (Mon., Wed. and Sat.).			Gymnastics and Singing.	Inter- val.	Reading and Recitation.	Object Lessons.	Observations.	
	10 min.	1 hour 5 minutes.			15 minutes.	15 min.	45 minutes.	40 minutes.		
Higher Class.	Inspection of cleanliness. Entry with singing. Call over.	30 minutes. Preparation of exercise and lesson given the day before.	35 minutes. Correction of exercise given the day before. Say- ing of lesson and questions. Explanation of new exercise and new lesson.		Gymnastics (Mon., Wed. and Sat.).	Entries and exits are accompanied by singing. Ventilation of class room.	Reading with ex- planations (Mon., Tues., Wed. and Sat.).	Boys' School. Object lessons (Mon., Wed. and Sat.).	Mixed schools un- der the direction of a male teacher will fol- low the time table of boys' schools with a single department; but the mistress of needlework will teach the manual work to the young girls in these schools from 3h. 20m. to 4h. during the object lessons in agri- cultural teaching. In the other mixed schools the boys will make a résumé of the reading lesson, or will take part in a reading lesson or conversation on agriculture fol- lowed, but only in the case of themselves, by another résumé.	
Middle Class.		25 minutes. Correction of exercise given the day before. Rec- itation of lesson and ques- tions. Explanation of new exercise and new lesson. M.	40 minutes. Preparation of exercise and lesson just given.				Singing (Tues. and Frid.).	Recitation (Fri.).		Lesson common to the two top classes. M. and A.
Lower Class.		25 minutes. Reading. M. and A.	20 minutes. Mental Arithmetic. M. and A.	20 minutes. Arithmetic (sums). A.	Lessons in common. M.		15 min. Reading on the black- board. M. and A.	25 min. Writing and Draw- ing Exer- cises after a model placed on the black- board. A.		Girls' School. Manual work. Talks in Domestic Economy (Mon. Tues., Wed. and Sat.). Object lessons and Horticulture (Sat.). Lesson in common. M.

**TIME TABLE—SCHOOL WITH TWO DEPARTMENTS.**  
**Department of the Bigger Children (Middle Class and Higher Class).**

**MORNING SCHOOL.**

Class.	Entry.	Moral and Civic Instruction.	French Language, 1 hour 20 minutes.			Interval.	History and Geography.	Writing and Drawing.
			20 minutes.	30 minutes.	30 minutes.			
Higher Class.	10 minutes.  Inspection of cleanliness : entry into class singing ; call over.	Moral Instruction. (Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.)	Dictation in common.	The pupils prepare the exercise and lesson given the day before. (On Wednesday the exercise is a French essay.)	Correction of exercise. Saying of lesson and questions. Explanation of fresh lesson and exercise.	15 minutes.  Play. The exits and entrances are accompanied by singing. Ventilation of the class-room.	History. (Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.)	Writing. (Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.)
Middle Class.		Civic Instruction. (Tuesday and Friday.)  Lesson in common.		Correction of the exer- cise of the day before. Saying of the lesson and questions. Explanation of a fresh lesson and exercise.	The pupils prepare the exercise which will be corrected the next day, and study the new lesson of grammar. On Wedne-day the exercise is a French essay.		Geography. (Tuesday and Friday.)  Lesson in common.	Drawing. (Tuesday and Friday.)  Lesson in common.

**AFTERNOON SCHOOL.**

Class.	Entry.	Metric System (Tues. and Fri.) Arithmetic, Geometry (Mon., Wed., Sat.) } 1h.		Gymnastics and Singing.	Interval.	Reading and Recitation.	Object Lessons : Agricultural and Manual Work.
		35 minutes.	35 minutes.				
Higher Class.	10 minutes.  Inspection of cleanliness : entry singing ; call over.	The pupils prepare the exercise and study the lesson given the day before.	Correction of exercise. Questions on the lesson given the day before. Explanation of the new lesson and the new exercise.	15 minutes.  Gymnastics. (Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.)	15 minutes.  Compulsory recreation. The exits and entries take place singing. Ventilation of the class-room.	40 minutes.  Reading with explanations. (Monday, Tuesday, Wed- nesday, and Friday.)	Boys. Object Lessons. (Monday, Wednesday, Saturday.) Agriculture. (Tuesday and Friday.) Lesson in common.
Middle Class.		Correction of exercise. Questions on the lesson given the day before. Explanation of the new lesson and the new exercise.	The pupils prepare the exercise and study the lesson given the day before.				Singing. (Tuesday and Friday.)



TIME TABLE.—SCHOOL WITH TWO DEPARTMENTS.  
(Elementary Class and Infant Section.)

M = Master (o. Mistress)  
A = Assistant (Monitor).

MORNING.

Class.	Entry.	Moral and Civic Instruction.	French.		Interval.	History and Geography.	Reading and Mental Arithmetic.	Writing and Singing.	Remarks.
	10 minutes.	25 minutes.	30 minutes.	30 minutes.	15 minutes.	30 minutes.	25 minutes.	25 minutes.	
Elementary Class.	Inspection of cleanliness. Entry into class singing. Call over.	Moral Instruction. (Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat.)	French Lesson (in common, Mon., Wed., and Sat.) M.	French Essay.	Compulsory interval. Exits and entrances performed with singing. Ventilation of school-room.	History. (Mon., Wed., and Sat.)	Reading. M. and A.	Writing. (Mon., Wed., and Sat.)	In girls' schools the reading and arithmetic lesson will be replaced by a lesson of gymnastics.
Infant Section.		Civic Instruction. (Tuesday.) Lesson in common.	Writing for Infant section Tues. & Fri. A.	Reading. M.		Geography. (Tuesday and Friday.) Lesson in common. M.	Mental and Written Arithmetic. M. and A.	Singing. (Tuesday and Friday.) Lesson in common. M.	

AFTERNOON.

Class.	Entry.	Arithmetic and Metric System. 1 hour.		Reading.	Interval.	Object Lessons.	Drawing and Writing, Gymnastics, Recitation, and Manual Work.		Remarks.
	10 minutes.	30 minutes.	30 minutes.	30 minutes.	15 minutes.	30 minutes.	25 minutes.	20 minutes.	
Elementary Class.	Inspection of cleanliness. Entry into class singing. Call over.	Arithmetic. M. and A.	Sums to work out.	Reading. M. and A.	Compulsory interval. Exit and entrance of the class singing. Ventilation of school-room.	BOYS' SCHOOLS. Object Lessons. Lesson in common. M.	BOYS' SCHOOLS. Drawing. (Mon., Wed., and Sat.) Writing. (Tuesday and Friday.) Lesson in common. M.	BOYS' SCHOOLS. Gymnastics. (Mon., Wed., and Sat.) Recitation. (Tuesday and Friday.) Lesson in common. M.	In girls' schools the reading lesson on Tuesday will be replaced by a recitation lesson.
Infant Section.		Arithmetic, Written & Mental. At blackboard. On slates. M. and A.	Reading. M.	Writing. (Mon. Wed. Sat.) Writing and Drawing. (Tues. and Fri.) M. and A.		GIRLS' SCHOOLS. Object Lessons. (Mon., Wed., and Sat.) Writing. (Tuesday and Friday.) Lesson in common. M.	GIRLS' SCHOOLS. Manual Work, 45 minutes, Mon., Wed. & Sat., with conversation on Domestic Economy. - 25 minutes. Drawing. (Tuesday.) Gymnastics. (Friday.) Lesson in common. M.	GIRLS' SCHOOLS. Gymnastics. (Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.) Recitation. (Friday.) Gymnastics. (Tuesday.) Lesson in common. M.	

Messrs. Bonaparte Wyse and Hughes-Dowling, in their excellent report on Manual and Practical Instruction in France, state that "monitors are not employed in French schools." I found them, however, in use in certainly three-quarters of the schools I visited, and more especially in the mixed schools, where it would almost surpass the wit of man to do without them. Many children arrive, as one teacher said to me, who do not know how to read and write, and were it not for enlisting some of the older children to teach them, the whole work of the school would come to a standstill. In fact, their existence is not only tolerated but even officially recognised. In the *vivâ voce* of one of the candidates for the *certificat d'aptitude*, the latter, in answer to a question as to how she would put out the work in a school where she was the only teacher, definitely assumed that she would have to employ monitors. These monitors are not, indeed, officially appointed. The top members of the highest class are generally but not invariably, told off in turn to take the juniors. They are, as a rule, only put on for the day, or at most for the week, and the greater number regard it as somewhat of an honour. In the specimen time-tables\* (pp. 89-94) these monitors figure as *aide* (assistant). In one school (Mosnes), however, I found a regular monitor employed, as well as the emergency ones. I, unfortunately, forgot to ask whether he was remunerated, and at what rate. The school itself was a remarkable one in more ways than one. It was a boys' school with no less than 58 pupils, and the master was evidently an exceptional teacher. Still it seemed a very heavy task to handle this crowd of scholars of all ages, ranging from pupils of thirteen to children who had only been a day or two in the school, and were as yet but half acclimatised. There is no doubt the work of the single-handed teacher in the mixed school is no light one, as in addition to the class divisions there are also divisions of subjects according to sex. A female teacher at St. Paterne told me that owing to this reason she has sometimes as many as four or five divisions going at a time. This did not prevent her from appearing thoroughly contented with her work.

I subjoin a short excerpt from my notes, which describes a visit to an excellent mixed school at Coquainvilliers, in the circonscription of Pont l'Evêque. I have purposely left in many apparently irrelevant details in the hope they may give background and setting to the whole attitude of the average teacher towards the school and the neighbourhood.

*Coquainvilliers.*—School building is situated on the high road from Lisieux to Pont l'Evêque, facing the rich meadows of the Touque. Behind rises a ridge whose verdant slopes are dotted with apple trees in full bloom. School originally intended for boys, but with the decrease of the population the girls' school has been closed and the remaining pupils transferred to the boys' school. The teacher has thus seen his work doubled at a single

\* I have to thank M. Javary, Primary Inspector of Tours, for these specimen time-tables in use in Indre-et-Loire.

stroke, but judging by the masterly way he has rearranged his teaching, it is not the children who have suffered. Present school population 42, out of a total population of 423, that is 10 per cent., against 20 per cent., the average in England, a terrible comment on the feeble natality. Cause of decrease in population not due to a decline among those engaged in agriculture, but to the closing of a bleaching factory, whereby eighty-four workmen were obliged to leave the commune. The works have never been reopened, which augurs ill for the fortune of the small manufacturers of the country. Under the old régime there were thirty-seven boys and thirty girls, the families of the artisans being larger than those of the peasants.

No congregational school in the neighbourhood. Children generally come at five years old. Many live a long way off, some at a distance of four kilometres. These are usually the first to arrive. Teacher held evening classes during February and April, but had only three pupils. The distances are too great. Most of those who attend are children who have gained the *certificat*. The commune is rich. Since the exodus of the artisans there are only the peasants left and they are all well off. Day labourers earn 3 francs 50 centimes a day during harvest, and 1 franc 50 centimes at other times, but they receive their food, and in many houses the cellar is left open. Carpenters earn 2.25 francs, and gardeners 2 francs a day, food always included. Little real want; only two poor families. The district essentially pastoral.

Most of the children lunch at the school. A good many parents pay a sou a day for the cooking of the children's food. The rest get it for nothing. There is no proper *casse de l'école*, but the *bureau de bienfaisance*, or village charity, gives the teacher 50 francs at Christmas to buy *chaussettes* and *sabots* for the children. Being a grass country most wear clogs, as the wet meadows soon wear out the ordinary boots.

The teacher has no difficulty with the school attendance, except as regards the distance some children have to come. If a child is absent he makes inquires, either through the postman or directly of the parents. His wife teaches sewing. She receives 50 francs from the commune, who also abandon to her the 15 francs the State gives as a grant in aid of these matters.

School well lighted on both sides. There is a school library in full swing, and pupils subscribe a trifle a month to buy a new book or two and take in a school paper.

Secretarial duties at the *mairie* rather heavy. They run to about one to one and a-half hours a day on an average. Pay, 200 francs. Work out of school amounts to about three hours. There are four divisions, teacher uses monitors *à tour de rôle*.

The children who have been in the playground form up and march in marking time. Children quiet, orderly, and well behaved without being cowed or timorous. The top class starts with a sum on the board; a girl and a boy severally explain its operations very clearly. It is hardly necessary to say that it deals with a concrete problem. Meanwhile the second group form up of their own accord into a reading circle round a monitor and read, but not too loud to disturb the others. Under the watchful eye of another monitor, whose solemn duties evidently impress him, the little mites at the far end of the room copy on to the blackboard each in turn  $7 + 4 = 11$ ,  $7 + 5 = 12$ , etc., or write 510, 511, 512, etc. A cursory examination of the *cahier de roulement* shows that the writing is excellent and the books beautifully clean. An inspection of the children's *cahiers* leads to similar results. Scarcely a bad exercise book among the lot. Evidently a good all-round class. Children set to work without being told—a good sign. Master takes children of five and six and questions them on such totals as 6 and 8, 4 and 7. Intelligent answers, and children show a keen zest in the work. They also take places during the lesson. No very strong local accent. An orphan, *recueilli par l'état*, reads words of four syllables without hesitation and shows his *cahier*, which is very good. The

girls, according to the teacher, shine in French composition and the boys in arithmetic and science. The monitors for the day arrive before the class begins, put up the date, and get everything in readiness. Considering the visit was in every sense a surprise one, it was a real pleasure to see the children perform so well without any rehearsal whatever.

At one time men were eligible as directors of all types of educational institutions, not excluding the *écoles maternelles*! \* Men or women teachers for mixed schools. But women are beginning to take their revenge to-day. This is noticeable in the case of the mixed schools, which, according to the law of October 30th, 1886, should be managed by female teachers. One of the reasons is probably the slight shortage in the supply of masters, due to economic reasons. Owing to the male teachers being obliged to put in a year at military training, female teachers can be procured at an earlier age. They are also paid less in the higher classes. Their employment likewise results in the saving of a hundred francs a year to the communes, which has to be found for the sewing mistress when the teacher is a man. I gathered a small sheaf of opinions on the subject, and I am sorry to say they were generally unfavourable to the employment of women. One critic declared that the children resented being under a woman; another asserted that it was bad for the manliness of the boys. A male teacher was bad for girls, but a female teacher was worse still for boys, as the boys' education was far more made or marred by the school and its influence than the girls', which rather depended on the home life. Another adversary of the change enlarged on the difficulties that beset the solitary female teacher in the small out-of-the-way communes; it was scarcely the place to send a lone woman. † On the other hand, there seems little doubt that for small children of both sexes a woman is certainly a better, more patient, and sympathetic teacher than the average man. But the French primary school teacher is really charged with a civic mission. Can a woman, as a rule, discharge this as effectively as a man?

## THE CURRICULUM.

### (I.) CONSTITUTION AND METHODS.

The law of the 28th March, 1882, sketched the curriculum for all grades of primary schools. The organic decree of January 18th, 1887, fixed the details of the programme for the elementary schools. It was to include "moral and civic instruction, reading and writing, the French language, arithmetic and the metric system, history and geography, especially that of France, object lessons, and elementary scientific notions, the elements of drawing, of singing and manual training, principally in their (!) application to agriculture, military and gymnastic exercises." The curriculum, as we have seen, is divided into three stages—the *cours élémentaire*, *cours moyen*, and *cours supérieur*. In addition, the programmes of the different

\* In Germany the heads of the primary schools for girls are men.

† Another argument in favour of the male teacher is his greater aptitude for giving agricultural teaching, or starting evening classes or lectures.

subjects, with the exception of history and geography, are not successive, but concentric—that is, the pupils make their acquaintance at the start with all the subjects in the programme, and simply widen the circle of their knowledge of each in the succeeding *cours*. The lower *cours* is that of initiation. The elementary notions of each order of study are presented to the pupils under their most familiar aspect, as much as possible by concrete examples. Special attention is paid at this period to the two indispensable tools of learning—reading and writing. The *cours moyen* has as objective the formation of a scientific basis of knowledge, and in the higher course the logical instincts of the child are to be especially developed. During this intellectual development of the pupil, neither his physical nor moral education is to be neglected, and alongside of the general education, and in many cases as a sort of logical deduction or outcome of it, appears the practical side, represented by the drawing, manual training, and notions of agriculture and horticulture inserted in the programme for boys, and by exercises in sewing and the notions of domestic economy for girls. The programmes annexed to the regulations of 1887 do not contain a mere cut and dried list of subjects to be taught. They sketch out for each *cours* and each subject the order in which the ideas will be presented, the steps the instruction should follow, and the limits it should not exceed. The three chapters into which the *cours* are divided under the heading of physical, intellectual, and moral education are preceded by a preface of general instructions, in which the object of the instruction given, the spirit by which it should be inspired, and the methods for rendering it fruitful are determined with great precision (see Rapport, E. P.). These instructions were mainly due to the inspiration of M. Jules Ferry, who further recommended to the profession the excellent teaching directions of M. Gréard. As the *Rapport sur l'Enseignement Primaire* says, they have had a great share in forming the mind and character of those who have since been trained to the profession.

Finally a model for school regulations was annexed to the decree of January 18th, to serve as a specimen for the composition of departmental regulations. This regulation has been adopted almost everywhere in its original form, except with a few exceptions made to suit local requirements. It lays down the conditions for the admission of the children, for the protection of the school and the class, for the order and length of the school studies, the hours of admission and dismissal, and of recreation, the question of the school furniture, discipline, leave of absence, etc.

ie time-  
ble  
(*morale*).

Certain regulations are laid down for drawing up a satisfactory time-table, such as a proper allowance of intervals for recreation, the placing of the harder subjects in the morning, a daily lesson in *la morale*, and the division of the lessons on the French language in such a way that every day two hours are devoted to it. Scientific teaching is allotted 1 to 1½ hours a day; geography and history, with which is coupled civic instruction, about one hour; the teaching

of writing at least one hour in the elementary classes, with gradual reductions in the higher classes; the teaching of drawing two or three lessons a week; that of singing one to two hours a week; that of gymnastics at least one performance every other day in the afternoon; that of manual work, two to three hours a week. (For specimens of actual time-tables, see section on the organisation of the curriculum, pages 89-94.)

I had some difficulty in getting at a clear idea of the extent to which variety is permissible in the composition of the school time-tables. Of course, the fable of the minister and his watch, which still does duty on so many English platforms, has long been exploded in France, but it is none the less difficult to ascertain the precise extent to which a teacher has a free hand in drawing up the time-table. Thus at the outset of my voyage of discovery I was assured by one inspector that the teacher enjoyed considerable latitude in drawing up his time-table, subject, of course, to the control of the inspectors; and the impression I certainly received was that the teacher could not only exercise his ingenuity in arranging the time of his lessons, but had also a limited choice in the number of hours he allotted to it. Later on I was assured that all the teacher could do was merely to arrange the order of the hours given to each subject, which were themselves rigidly fixed. The truth, according to another inspector, was that variety in the main (the Paris schools apart) does not exist; only quasi-optional subjects were more or less dropped, such as physical exercises, manual work, and singing; and this was borne out by another speaker, who said the number of regulation hours per week was thirty, and if everything were taught, it would take up thirty-three to thirty-four hours. Evidently, therefore, some subjects had to be sacrificed. From later investigations, I am led to believe that this view is probably the correct one. But the whole investigation is interesting, as showing how easy it is to get an incorrect idea from even intelligent persons, if one has not the opportunity of "taking a second opinion."

According to the *Rapport sur l'Enseignement Primaire*, the work of the school is divided up into ten months, with the quantum for each month duly "plotted out," the eleventh month, July, being reserved for revision. In some of the departments under observation a modified edition of the State programme has been published with notes and comments, as in Calvados. In Orne a similar publication existed, but it was unfortunately out of print. The Academy Inspector assured me it differed but little from that of Calvados. I also secured in Indre-et-Loire, through the kindness of M. Peytraud, the Academy Inspector, a most interesting programme that had been put together by the inspectors and teachers in Indre-et-Loire for all subjects, including agricultural teaching, about which I was told, with a spice of malice, the departmental professor was not even consulted. The notion of this "time schedule" is not so much to tie

Extent of  
elasticity  
in the  
time-table

The Plan  
d'Études.  
Préparati  
of lessons.

down the master to accomplish so much within each month, as to indicate the rate of speed, and at the same time emphasise the more important points on which stress must be laid. The rate of speed thus prescribed allows for revision throughout, as every French lesson begins with a recapitulation of the preceding one, before new ground is broken, while weekly, or at least fortnightly "stocktakings" of the pupils' acquisitions in knowledge during the period are supposed to be provided for in the time-table. In addition teachers are advised to keep, and many of them do so, a note-book in which they record rough notes for their daily lessons, some of them giving a fairly complete *précis* of them, as well as having by them another for jotting down "happy thoughts" and "apt illustrations." The consequence is that the reading lesson, which formerly, it was generally supposed, could be "taken at sight," is now as much a subject of careful preparation as the others.

100s.

The methods in vogue have a double object in view: to give the child the requisite quantity of intellectual baggage necessary for the social, political, and economic situation in which he has to live, and at the same time develop all his faculties. The motto, therefore, of the administration is not to teach much, but to teach well. *Non multa sed multum docere.* The memory is not to be overloaded; the intelligence, as far as possible, is to be brought into play. In subjects like French language and history, the mnemonic part is to be reduced to a minimum. The reading-book is made the centre of the teaching of French; the dictations are chosen rather for their literary or moral qualities than for their orthographical intricacies. Recitations and readings, in which the structure of the language is studied as it comes under the reader's eye, have largely superseded formal grammar and analysis. By the Ministerial circular of 1891, the examiners for the *certificat d'études* were asked to lay less stress on minor mistakes in spelling, and this year (1900) a Ministerial circular has been issued\* which brushes aside a number of minute difficulties that the unscientific eighteenth century grammarians had discovered or invented, to the infinite relief of the French schoolboy, and also, be it said, of the luckless candidates in French examinations on this side of the Channel, who have hitherto been examined, as a rule, on the extraordinary theory that the proper way to master a language is to begin by learning all the exceptions. In fact, an immense effort has been made to render the schools really modern, and rid them of what may be called the mediæval and scholastic element, with its dogmatic manner of teaching, its committing to memory of abstract *formulae*, its catechismal method of set question and answer. The keyword of French State education to-day is to develop the intelligence rather than the memory, though some of

\* At the time that this was written I was assured by the Minister of Public Instruction, M. G. Leygues, that a practical agreement with the French Academy on the moot points in the circular was in sight; since then it appears that the Academy has only yielded on a few points, which are embodied in a new circular that appeared in March, 1901. (See Appendix III.)

the teaching seems still formed with a view of turning out intelligence of a general pattern, rather than to develop the individual intellect, or let it grow as it will, according to the pedagogy at present in vogue in America. This "careful of the type" spirit seems to come out in what appears at times to be a rather excessive polishing of the answers of the children, especially in the lack of encouragement given by the teachers to answers which are only half right, though their general orientation is correct. Such a straining after "letter perfection" is very noticeable in the revisions, when a child will often put things in its own way, which is perfectly intelligible, but not so "finished" as the teacher's. This hankering of the master after his own *ipsissima verba* comes perilously near, at times, the old mnemonic defects of learning by heart, and goes far to deprive the child of the pleasure and experience of getting at his subject which is one of the best ways of whetting his curiosity, as he feels he is getting "warmer," and also of the stimulus that arises from a sense that he is acquiring something of his own by his own efforts. Another point that struck me was that the brunt of the debate between the teacher and the class fell too much on the "front bench" children, and especially on the top boy, who seemed at times to champion the learning of the whole form in a splendid isolation that recalled the Homeric use of *ἕρκος*. This tendency to take scant notice of the bottom of the form is due, I was told, to the fact that the promotions are yearly, but as the average stay in a *cours* is two years, only half the form go up at a time, so that the back bench of one year becomes the front bench the next. The practice, however, is not general. At Ecommoy, in a very large class, the teacher "took on" practically the whole form, and allowed no *κωφὰ πρόσωπα* at all; while at Alençon, in the excellent practising school attached to the *école normale* for male teachers, the director told me he made a point of putting the worst children in the "forefront of the battle," with the *principes* and *triaris* of the most steady children to support them.\*

*Books.*—Except in the case of necessitous children pupils are obliged to buy their own books. The choice of any particular textbook rests with the teacher, as it is essential that all the members of the class should have the same book. (See Appendix IV.)

## (ii.) THE SUBJECTS.

### (a) *La morale.*

A passing visitor cannot pretend to have an exhaustive first hand knowledge of the teaching of every subject in the curriculum in the country schools, for this is a point in which books and reports are perhaps of less assistance in the way of supplementing one's stock of knowledge, or of giving an exact idea of what is being done, than in other parts of school organisation. Yet, believing it was essential, in order to understand the working of the whole,

\*This practice seems very common in the primary schools of Berlin, where the short-sighted or hard of hearing children are generally placed in the front row, with the "duffers" directly behind them.



to get as much first hand knowledge as possible on the function of every part, I made it my business, when not listening to lessons on agriculture, to be present at as many other lessons as possible during my all too brief stay in the schools. Such experiences are necessarily fragmentary, but, given in their proper place, may help towards a reconstruction of the whole in the reader's mind.

*a morale.*

No subject has perhaps raised so much bitter discussion as the *morale*, which may be regarded as the corner-stone of the *enseignement laïque* or the *école sans Dieu*, as its opponents are pleased to call it, though they apparently overlook that the *devoirs envers Dieu*, or *l'idée de la Divinité*, figure at least in some, if not in all, programmes. The subject is such a burning one, it naturally formed one of the five topics chosen to be discussed at the International Congress this year. The report of M. Payot on the subject is, to use a homely expression, as full of facts as an egg is full of meat, and one would like to quote it *in extenso*.

During my visit in the provinces I was present at a certain number of *morale* lessons, and was agreeably surprised by the interest the children generally took in them. Whenever the teaching was practical, and bore on the daily life and ways of the school, or treated of some subject well within the ken of the children, it was easy to see the teacher possessed the ear of his audience. But if an abstruse *cas de conscience* was posed which required some subtlety to disentangle, or the teacher was too anxious to give a philosophic or dogmatic air to his teaching by entrenching himself behind a barbed wire fencing of maxims and formulæ, it was evident that even those children who attempted to follow him were painfully repeating by rote what he laid down, but their hearts were far from him. Judging by what I saw and heard, it seems clear that the clever teacher does not seek to ply his pupils with any cut and dry system of lay theology, but rather treats all these particular lessons as the informal *résumé* and logical exposition of what he is trying to teach at all hours of the day, in creating a moral atmosphere in his class, and making it a school for the will. To effect this he imparts to his teaching as a whole a certain cast and colouring by a judicious choice of subjects for reading or dictation, avoiding, however, the "goodie goodie" and the "namby pamby," and exercising great care not to overdo it, for morality is a sauce which requires careful dosing; or he utilises in a similar fashion his history lesson, not to distort actual facts, but to put in their proper light and setting men and deeds, that the jingo writers of school histories are too often prone to ignore. But his supreme desire is always to render his moral teaching homely and practical, without being trite, and instead of attempting the vain task of turning out diminutive philosophers at the age of 12, crammed with a few sterile formulæ, he leads his pupils from the narrow centre of duties towards self, to the wider circle of altruistic virtues, which round off the good man into a good citizen, showing them ever by concrete examples that if thrift is good, mutual assurance is better, or after explaining to

them the merits of temperance, he enlists them in the civic campaign against alcoholism ; or, going still further afield, unfolds to them the *raison d'être* of the *Loi Grammont* against cruelty to animals, and reveals to them that even the lower creatures have certain rights *vis-à-vis* to man ; or, taking again his morality into his agricultural teaching, he points out the claim to protection possessed by those birds whose services are useful to man. That the teaching in this respect is not always an idle thing, I myself met with a striking example. I was talking to a small boy at Trun, whom the master of the school kindly told off to show me to an hotel. In the course of our conversation, I discovered that, although only 14, he was a keen sportsman. So, when he spoke of the numerous birds in his father's garden, I remarked to him : " I suppose you are always potting at them ? " " Oh, no," he said, " I never shoot the useful birds. They do no end of good." And when I asked if his ideas were shared by the other boys, he said that most of the boys in his school thought as he did.

One criticism one feels inclined to address is that, in some teachers' hands, too much emphasis appears to be laid on the individualistic virtues, to the detriment of the social duties, which figure largely in the actual programme under the head of *solidarité*. If the teaching is to bear the full fruits of which it is capable, it must tend more to become a higher socialism, not in any narrow or doctrinaire sense, but a socialism in which the sense of devotion to the State and to the community occupies a larger place. Such, at least, was my impression, and it was apparently well founded, for this very point is brought out in the first of the propositions that the late Congress placed on its list, " that the new programmes direct all instruction towards a social education." I make no excuse for giving the rest of the propositions and recommendations, which are so interesting as affording a remarkably clear conspectus of the real aims and methods of this so often ill-understood subject.

Criticism.

Conclusion  
of the  
Internati  
Congress.

1. Every question relative to religious teaching of a confessional nature is eliminated from the discussion of the Congress. 2. The aim of a " moral education " is to prepare in the child the honest man and the good citizen. 3. The teaching of " morals " rests on reason, that is on an enlightened conscience. It seeks to develop in the child the sense of sincerity, justice, goodness, and solidarity. It should be identical for boys and girls. It is independent of any religious confession without being hostile to any. 4. Moral instruction occupies the first place in the school. It is the object of a lesson or a conversation every day. It enters deeply into the teaching of all the other subjects. 5. The Congress considers that the one thing necessary in the child is to develop an energetic will, to give him the courage of right-doing, that courage which is rendered easy by the force of solid habits. To effect this, it is necessary to love him, to know him well, and render the teaching of morals attractive to him. In addition, it is necessary to seek to render children honest, courageous, and full of initiative, for an honest

man who does nothing is the accomplice of the evil he does not prevent. 6. The Congress, considering that we should bring up the child in such a way that he may later on be his own law-giver, considering that the child cannot be made better unless he cooperates voluntarily in his own education, is of opinion that a liberal discipline, which respects and loves the personality of the child, is the only one which can produce free men. 7. The Congress, considering that, the younger the child is, the less enlightened is his conscience, and that there are cases in which the master cannot justify in the eyes of the child the order he has given, is of opinion that a liberal discipline does not exclude the principle of obedience, but that the authority of the master ought gradually to efface itself as the conscience of the child grows—that it is only legitimate on condition of leading up the child to live one day under the sole authority of his conscience.

The Congress makes the following propositions :—

- (a) That the new programmes direct all instruction towards social education.
- (b) That laws be passed against the pornographic press, and against the exposure of indecent prints.
- (c) That all possible measures be taken to stamp out alcoholism.
- (d) That the publication and the diffusion of works, simple, attractive, and of a high moral inspiration should be encouraged (such works to include tales, biographies, and romances), such works to be placed in libraries for schools and for adults.

ary. It will be seen, from the above that the State does not dogmatically lay down that its teaching is all sufficient and all sufficing. It leaves the whole question of the extra religious sanctions afforded by the different cults open ; there is nothing to prevent those parents who find the school morality insufficient from providing their children with the extra religious teaching two days a week if they think necessary. Some philosophers may cavil at some of the propositions, and others regard the portion reserved to the principle of authority as somewhat scanty, considering the amount the majority of us are obliged to take on trust, whether in municipal or government matters, involving often expert knowledge to which we can in no wise pretend, owing to the alarming complexity of modern life, so that if the school is to be the counterpart to real life, it seems necessary that a child should learn not only to understand but to trust its master. Once again, to touch on a still deeper matter; the teaching of *la morale* intentionally omits any reference to a future life, and to its bearing on daily conduct. There are some who will regard this and similar omissions as fatal to the real efficacy of the instruction given ; others, on the contrary, will sympathise with the point of view of the French authorities, who

regard it as their duty to establish in the schools a form of moral instruction which is neutral in regard to questions of religious belief.\*†

Closely allied to the *morale* is the *instruction civique*, which aims at giving the pupil a few essential notions on "the political, administrative, and judicial organisation of France." This side of the teaching is well illustrated by the collection of every-day documents and papers, to which allusion has already been made in describing the *classe modèle* at the Exhibition. It further aims at providing the elements of a civic education in inspiring in the pupils a love of their country and of the Republic. Being a somewhat abstract subject, it is often omitted from the *cours élémentaire*. It might probably be advantageous to suppress it as a separate subject, and attach it to the *morale*, which already shows tendencies of assimilating it. *Instruction civique.*

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\* The morale for girls has already been treated of in the *résumé* given of the eloquent lecture of the academy inspector for Loir-et-Cher at a Teachers' Conference. There is certainly nothing to take away from it, as it stands, nor would there have been much to add, if space had allowed of its being given full (see page 28).

† The following quotation, from a remarkable paper on the "Educational Lessons of the Paris Exposition," in the *Educational Review* (New York), September, 1901, by Miss A. Tolman Smith, my fellow juror on the Primary Jury, will help to illustrate and confirm my impressions of the teaching of "*la morale*":—"An immense impetus has recently been given to moral and civic instruction. These subjects were indeed placed at the head of the programme in 1882, but for a long time they found only formal recognition. Suddenly they have become the central subjects. Everything else is subordinated to them or permeated by them. They are not to be taught in a cold didactic spirit, but in a manner to excite the imagination and the heart. In the official instruction the teacher is urged to inspire in the child the same regard for the notion of God as is excited when it is brought to his mind under the different form of religion. 'Teach the child,' says the ministerial circular, 'that the sincerest form of homage to the Divine is obedience to the laws of God as they are revealed to his conscience and to his reason.' Thus the ideal self is exalted above the material self. Insensibly, also, the teacher is drawn to a fuller appreciation of the child's nature; for to children the ethical, the idea in all its aspects, is much nearer than the material and the industrial. The child's mind is not scientific in its action, but philosophic in the naïve sense of the word; and the school is most effective when it approaches him through his innate sympathies."

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## APPENDIX.

l'école  
ue from  
Catholic  
point.

In September, 1900, an Irish Catholic paper attacked the *enseignement laïque* in France, and declared that "the present generation of children are little better than pagan. They sneer at religion, delight in insulting priests and nuns, and are steeped in every kind of immorality." This statement was challenged by the editor of the "Tablet" (who has kindly permitted me to make use of the article, appearing December 8th, 1900, from which this *résumé* is taken). Thereupon the editor of the Irish Catholic paper explained, in the most straightforward manner, that he would be reluctant to confirm some of the charges made, especially that of insulting priests and nuns, which he believed to be utterly groundless. He added that during the six or seven years he had spent in France, almost exclusively among French people and French students, he had visited many parts of the country, always wearing his clerical dress, yet he had scarcely a recollection of any insult ever offered to himself or to any priest or student of his acquaintance, though he had at times come in for a certain amount of rough chaff in the way of being greeted with onomatopoeic cries of *Quoi, quoi!*—a mode of salutation to which those in clerical dress are at times subjected. Wishing to learn the effect of the secularised schools on the morality of young people in France, he wrote to sundry friends among the French clergy living in different parts of the country, and asked the following questions:—

ee ques-  
is.

1. Are the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses appointed by the Government of the French Republic hostile to the clergy and to the Christian faith of the children of France?
2. Do they encourage the children to show disrespect to priests and nuns, and is such disrespect common?
3. What is the effect on the morality of youth of the education given in the primary schools?

replies.

The replies, coming as they did from Catholic sources, are, as might be expected, naturally somewhat severe on the *école laïque*, though their condemnation of it is by no means universal. Yet when one considers they were written by members of a community which has seen itself deprived of its ancient suzerainty over the schools, one will willingly admit that, whatever may be the truth of their allegations, the tone, or even the undertone, of these letters is studiously moderate. To English readers, who are apt to ascribe to all French Catholics the unseemly violence of *La Croix*, these documents should come as a very pleasant surprise.

Unfortunately, lack of space forbids of printing them in full. An attempt will therefore be made to give brief summaries and extracts from the letters, as far as they bear on the question. The first is from a *vicaire* of St. Augustine, in Paris. After asserting that the laicisation was made with an object hostile to religion, in the sense of excluding all forms of religious instruction from the school, the writer makes the remarkable statement that, as things are, "I do not believe that it must be said generally that all the masters and mistresses of the *écoles laïques* are hostile to the clergy or the Christian beliefs of the French people, nor that they encourage the children to be wanting in respect towards the priests. It would be equally unjust to maintain as a general thesis that the teaching given in these schools injures the children from the moral point of view." A second letter from a *curé* in the Pas de Calais states: "Our academy inspectors, as well as all our teachers, male and female, are, above all, opportunists; that is to say, they regulate their behaviour according to the exigencies of the people among whom they find themselves. If the population is Christian and church-going (*pratiquante*), they show

themselves Christian, and even go to church. If not, not." The writer complains that even those of the teachers "who remain sincerely Christian have one and all the *esprit universitaire*, which is always hostile to the 'free schools' (*enseignement libre*), and which they necessarily communicate to their pupils. . . . A very small number of male teachers, and only a handful of female teachers, up to the present at least, are, and show themselves, hostile to the Christian beliefs. The bulk of the others preserve their faith, and more or less their religious habits. In respect to the clergy, in the eyes of *all* the male teachers, and of nine-tenths of the female teachers, they are really the adversary, the enemy. The teacher is embarrassed at having to reckon with them, and at bottom dislikes them." The writer does not believe the practice of inciting the pupils to insult the priests is prevalent. There are cases in which teachers, in a momentary fit of anger or from accountable (*motive*) discontent, have stirred up (*lancé*) their pupils against the parish priests. As a rule the clergy are never insulted by the village children; when it happens at all, which it does rarely, it is by street urchins in populous centres. From the moral standpoint, the writer thinks there is no doubt about the harm done by the *manuels civiques*. They teach the children that it is lawful and advantageous to pursue worldly pleasures, such as balls, etc. The conduct of the teacher is not always a good model for the pupils. It produces at times "deplorable effects." The third letter, which comes from Savoy, states that "the official schools cannot be considered as absolutely bad. Whatever may be the personal opinions of the masters and mistresses of these schools, we have no reproach at all to make of them for a lack of respect which politeness, as much as Christian charity, would reprove. Here and there some village teacher may carry on an underhand war against the *curé*, but in front of his pupils he avoids any outbreak (*écart*) liable to bring him into bad odour with our people, who have remained profoundly Catholic. . . . The hostility of the official teaching to Catholicism is much less in the schools for girls. . . . These observations apply principally to primary education. In the *lycées* the ministrations of the priest have free exercise. In the faculties (universities) there exists a *régime* of perfect liberalism." The fourth correspondent, who writes from the centre of France (Nièvre), speaks of the complexity of the question. No fixed rule can be drawn about the teachers' behaviour. There are some communes and departments where the lay teachers have morning and afternoon prayers, teach the Catechism, etc. There are others in which the lay teachers observe the strictest religious neutrality in their teaching and conduct towards the children. There are others, again, where the lay teachers are hostile to the clergy and to catholic beliefs. The writer attributes this diversity to what he calls *l'anarchie gouvernementale*, due to the varying influences of different parties with the Government of the day and the instability of the parliamentary majority. A fifth correspondent, from the west (La Rochelle), alleges that in his department the lay schools are generally bad, and the teachers, as a rule, are hostile to the clergy; yet even this writer adds, "I do not believe that there are many who would venture to encourage the children to ridicule the priests or insult them. In an underhand fashion, and by malicious insinuations, there are perhaps some who go almost as far as that. I believe such cases to be very rare." One correspondent alone, whose name the editor, for intelligible reasons, does not publish, gives a practically unfavourable verdict. The recruitment of the lay teachers is detestable from the Catholic point of view. A professing Catholic finds it hard to get on in the profession. The education at the normal school is no less regrettable; there is neither chapel, almoner (chaplain), nor prayers. The writer makes the somewhat incomplete remark that the teachers are appointed by the prefects, ignoring thereby the *rôle* of the academy inspector, and dilates on the political influences that are thus brought into

play. [The *morale* taught is without sanction; the tone in the communal schools is lower than in the "free schools," owing to the presence of foundlings, pauper children (*enfants moralement abandonnés*), etc. "It is difficult to give figures for morality; for criminality it is far easier, and even the official publications are obliged to admit that there is a formidable difference between the children from the communal schools and those from the religious schools."\* The writer adds: "The teaching of *la morale naturelle ou civique* is generally nil, according to the admission of university inspectors, while the books the teacher is obliged to put in the hands of the pupils . . . contain for the most part the most violent attacks on religion."

There is obviously much that the supporters of the *école laïque* would naturally challenge in these letters, especially in the last, which forms, in fact, a very convenient *résumé* of the case as it is generally put against the *école laïque*. It will, no doubt, be noticed that not a few of the charges made have already been touched on or hinted at in the section dealing with the teaching of *la morale*. One may also, perhaps, point out that the word "hostile" implies in these letters several degrees of meaning, ranging from the sentiment of "he that is not with us is against us" to downright enmity, just as the word "religion" in the above passages is sometimes used to denote merely the Roman Catholic religion, while in others it seems capable of a wider significance. Things are obviously in a transition state in France. The religious difficulty is admittedly the fundamental problem, and Hotspurs are always to be met with on either side of any great question. If reference is made to the section on the position of the teacher as regards the religious question (page 38), it will be seen that in respect of hostility the other side have also something to say. The most satisfactory point in the whole correspondence is that, however much the teachers may differ fundamentally from the priests, there is no evidence to show that any general attempt is made by the teachers to transform what is at bottom a conflict of principles into a conflict of persons.

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\* I have not been able to find statistical authority for this statement, but those who desire further information on this point will find the whole question treated at length in the Rapport E. P., pages 292-3: the various causes of the increase in crime are discussed; it is pointed out that the criminality among children is in inverse proportion to the attendance at school, and it is directly stated that "despite the accusations inspired by the sectarian spirit, the *école laïque* cannot be rendered responsible for the increase in crime and vice." Those who wish to look further into the matter may consult an article by the well-known philosopher, M. Tarde, in the *Revue Pédagogique* of March 15th, 1897. "Is it," he asks, "among the regular scholars or among the children enrolled but not present that the personnel of the houses of correction is recruited? The registers of the latter inform us. We ascertain that on their entrance into these establishments the youthful delinquents disclose an ignorance much higher in proportion to that of honest children of the same age. I find in the penal statistics (1893) that only 2% of the boys have received a good primary education, and that 36% are completely illiterate. Thus one could say that the criminality of minors is in inverse ratio to their attendance at school, and it is proved that the latter, whether public or private, when they attend regularly, restrains them, be it admitted in an insufficient manner, but to a certain extent, on the road to crime."

(b) *The three R's.—Drawing.*

To judge by the alarmist *réclames* of the professors of caligraphy Writing. at the Exhibition, writing in the French State schools is going to the dogs. This was not, however, my impression from the majority of schools I went into. In the first three of the departments under observation the writing was uniformly good; the weakest I saw was in the neighbourhood of Tours. The attitude of the children at work was generally good. They did not stoop and pore too much over their work. Of the various styles, the upright writing seems to be gaining ground, and it certainly has the advantage of being the most legible. There seems to be more paper work in the French schools than with us, and this impression was confirmed by the experience of an English student teacher I met at Caen who had got leave to pass a year in a French training school. He seemed thoroughly satisfied with French hospitality. The fact seems worth mentioning here, as with the growing need for teachers who possess more than a smattering of foreign languages, a stay in a French normal school seems an excellent training.

Several teachers laid considerable stress on mental arithmetic, Arithmetic. at which some of the children showed themselves very expert. The arithmetic itself is not taught on the cookery-book system of putting an example on the board by way of recipe and getting the children to do a certain number like it, till the particular process to be acquired has been drummed and drilled into the form, but an effort is made from the outset to give the child certain notions about numbers, and build up the idea of addition, subtraction, etc., from these. The abstractness of the subject has been further reduced by the practice of making the children always handle concrete quantities, the majority of the subjects I saw upon the blackboard being questions connected with agriculture or housekeeping. On seeing the children so at home in the metric weights and measures, one regrets to think that our Metric little ones have still to struggle with poles and roods and pecks and system. and bushels. The metric system has, further, the great advantage of introducing to the child the scientific notions of superficies and volume which are connected with the concrete measures of area and capacity— notions which are hopelessly obscured in our kaleidoscopic method of measurement, in which gills are metamorphosed into pints, pints into quarts, quarts into gallons, at which point a new bifurcation comes in for wet or dry measurements which is hopelessly unscientific. Amid these successive transformations any idea of there being such a thing as a scientific unit of dimensions must be entirely lost to the child, and he can never rise beyond the idea that measures are a mere affair of pots for wet things and pans for dry. The rendering the metric system compulsory in the Code has been a great step forward. Perhaps in ten years' time we may



entertain reasonable hopes of rendering it compulsory generally. It is interesting to note that arithmetic, in the opinion of most teachers, is the subject girls take least kindly to, while in essay writing they usually beat the boys.

tho-  
aphy.

“The dictation—the favourite exercise of many masters—is only slowly losing the first place it has so long occupied in the teaching of French.” This remark of the Academy Inspector of Indre-et-Loire is addressed to his own department. It has probably a considerably wider application. Still there has been a strong reaction against the standard formerly set by the *certificat d'études*, which might have led a stranger to suppose that the candidates, as far as spelling went, were going to take up literature as a career. The two orthographical reforms already alluded to have somewhat damaged this illusion. Spelling has at last been put in its place, and the bad custom of giving pupils words to spell that they have never seen is fast disappearing.

reading.

Owing to the terminations of French words, reading books in French in one syllable are fortunately impossible. On the other hand, if syllables are divided in the text, the number of syllables matters little, especially in French, where whole phrases are coupled together like a single word. French children learn to read in six or eight months, as the pronunciation, after one has mastered the syllables which are mute, is practically regular. The Academy Inspector of Indre-et-Loire makes a great point of teachers reading clearly. He is not against collective reading, provided that each word is clearly scanned. In one school I visited the children had a quaint fashion of taking up the reading one after another at the exact point their predecessor stopped at. They disregarded all such minor danger-signals as commas and semicolons, and even full stops failed to pull them up. Perhaps they fancied it was poetry, as they breathed for preference at the end of the line. But I venture to think this was a very isolated case. The chief fault of the children, as far as I could see, was the absence of *liaison*. The pronunciation was also rather *molle*, especially in Sarthe. Recitations are fairly numerous, and generally well done. As already stated, the reading lesson is made the *point de départ* for grammatical and other questions. Thus, in a fable that a child of twelve years of age recited from *La Fontaine*, the inspector questioned him on the gist of the story, made him paraphrase or give synonyms for one or two unusual expressions, asked him to parse a word or two, and explain a few grammatical difficulties. He wound up by demanding of the pupil the names of one or two rhetorical figures illustrated by the fable! In another school an inspector turned the reading lesson into a general information lesson.

composition.

In the lower classes there is a growing tendency to keep reading and writing together. The principle is undoubtedly a sound one. From a spelling point of view, the hand should copy as soon as possible what the eye has visualised. Nor is

the auditory memory neglected; the reading lesson is largely utilised for verbal recitation, for the acquisition of vocabulary, and for practice in oral narration, which are the first steps towards regular composition. Well directed, this practice of oral narration proves no inconsiderable aid in promoting and directing the flow of the pupil's ideas when he arrives at regular essay writing. This helps to solve the chief difficulties for young children in all countries—"to have ideas and to find expression for them." Further aid is, however, necessary on the part of the teacher, especially in instructing the children how to write something that has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Some teachers place a model essay on the board, which the pupils read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. The model is then effaced, and the children start writing, but it is often rather an exercise of memory than of intelligence. One of the best systems I came across was that of the head teacher of Beaumont-en-Sarthe, who adopted the collective method. Taking a subject like "Conscience," for instance, he asks every pupil his idea upon it, and probably elicits by "leading" questions anything not given directly by the class. All these ideas are written as they are received on the blackboard. This corresponds to the phase of invention. Then with the help of the children he classes them in their proper order (=disposition), and finally polishes the expressions (=locution). A truly excellent plan where all the children co-operate throughout, both in supplying materials and labour!

I saw but little drawing, which is probably neglected in most rural schools, as it is an alternative subject at the certificate with agricultural education. The report of the Academy Inspector of Indre-et-Loire confirms this impression. On the other hand, in the towns it appears to be well taught, according to the same document. It is worth noticing that the use of ruled paper for beginners in drawing is rapidly going out, even in the rural schools. Drawing.

(c) *Geography and History.*

The teaching of geography commences with elementary notions of the world and the globe, and the nature of a map. It then comes back to what forms the starting point in German and English schools—the school building and its environment; for we think that geography, like charity, should begin at home. Map-drawing does not commence till the *cours moyen*. It is made a fairly strong point of. The terrible ignorance of the French in 1870 of the physical features of the country has led to a strong insistence on this point. In the few lessons at which I was present sufficient stress did not seem to be laid on physical features and their intimate relation with social and economic results. I find this criticism repeated in the report of the Academy Inspector of Indre-et-Loire. I saw occasionally maps of the commune, canton, and department hanging in the schools; many of them were the work of the teachers themselves. But, as the same authority Geography

observes, every school ought to possess them. They make for local patriotism, and bring home to the child in the most concrete manner the notion of what "earth knowledge" means. In the same report the *promenade scolaire* is also insisted on. Its value for agricultural teaching is obvious. At the same time, teachers are encouraged to study the geography of the moment—i.e., of the Transvaal or China. It is impossible to teach the geography of the whole world, and the French programme frankly recognises the difficulty by thrusting the geography of all the countries except France and her colonies into a few lessons at the end of each school year. The ordinary school maps are usually boldly printed, but rather small in proportion to the size of many of the class-rooms. In one school-room I went into the map was so far from the bottom of the class that even the boldest lettering was indistinct. Some of the most interesting maps are those of the departments which represent the particular cultivation and industries of the various districts.

history.

Geography on the one side gives its hand to physical science; on the other it is regarded by French educationists as the complement of history. In some departments the concentric method (see above, p. 98) which prevails in other subjects is adopted in history, instead of the successive—that is, the same ground is ploughed over a second and even a third time, but with a deeper share. Here, again, the few lessons I was present at seem to some extent to fall under the following criticism of M. Javary, inspector at Tours :—

Facts accumulate in the memory of the child without order or perspective. All remains confused on the same plane, the essential facts as well as those of secondary importance, the nomenclature of which is a burden to the course.

French history, as it is generally written, with its glorious façade of military exploits—too often, alas! leading nowhere—seems to be a particularly difficult subject to teach. For inculcating patriotism there is enough and to spare. No country is richer in this respect, with its long bead-roll of heroes from Vercingetorix downwards, but to an English reader at least these wars and rumours of wars appear to take up a disproportionate place on the canvas, and the history of the social and economic greatness and grandeur of France, which to the student of human progress seems to be the most indestructible portion of her fame, does not always receive the attention it deserves, except in a few books like the "*Petite Histoire du Peuple Française*," of M. Lacombe. For if history touches geography on the one hand, it is intimately bound up with civic education on the other, being the archives of the divine tribunal, in which may be read not only the decision of the God of battles, but also the record of the issues of the social and economic efforts that a nation lives by, while its political lessons are too obvious to be insisted on. These purely personal impressions have lately been confirmed, and, indeed, surpassed, in a special report I have lately come across, prepared for the recent teachers' conference at Paris. The report begins by insisting that in a country

Reforms  
in the air.

where universal suffrage prevails, and where the destinies of the nation are confided to those elected by the choice of the citizens, the future elector needs to be thoroughly enlightened in his rights and duties. The rôle of history is not "the dry enumeration of brilliant feats of arms, of sanguinary defeats, permanent cult of war and hatred, it is not the history of wars or of the court, but the history of all and of every day, the history of daily life and its trials, the history of work, of social progress, of mankind." The teaching of purely national history is insufficient for the education of the citizen of the modern republic. "It ought to be completed by succinct and precise general notions on the events of the political, social, moral, religious, and material history of humanity." This seems rather a large order. But if it goes too far in demanding impossibilities of the primary school, it is a fault on the right side. And after all, it is only an amplification of the general instructions laid down by the *Conseil Supérieur* on the teaching of history, which recommend the imparting of some knowledge of antiquity and the progress of civilisation, and in addition to the national history, that of other peoples', in as far as it throws light on and completes the history of France. The report goes on to quote M. Seignobos on the incompleteness of a history dealing only with wars and political revolutions, and the need of some sort of continuous social history. M. Lavissee is also cited on the utility of showing the workings of the indestructible energy of a people which has recreated its forces and founded in a few years a colonial empire, and lastly, quotations are given from M. Aulard, who urges that the effects of the Revolution, not merely in Paris, but in the provinces, nay, in the commune itself, should be brought home to the children by various means, including the research of contemporary documents by the teachers themselves. This suggestion has been very largely adopted by the thousand or so writers of village monographs at the Paris Exhibition. To give history a more prominent place in the curriculum, the *rapport* suggests its inclusion among the compulsory subjects of the *certificat*. The object of history teaching is to be "civic education." With the aim in view, it is proposed to make jettison of the lists of dynasties and recitals of war, in order to set in their place essential facts and landmarks, to retain only such typical anecdotes as are true; to add to them a running commentary on civilisation, and to encourage the cult and worship of heroes so necessary to a democracy.

(d) *Manual Training, Gymnastics, Military Exercises, Singing.*

Manual training has been largely described by Messrs. Bonaparte Wyse and Hughes-Dowling in their report, but, as they assert, it is practically a dead letter in the provinces, or at least in the rural schools. The academy inspector of Indre-et-Loire categorically states that it only exists in that department in the higher primary schools for boys, and asks if some of the simple and practical exer-

cises of the official programme are not within the means of all schools to undertake. In one or two cases teachers told me they did a little paper-folding and cardboard work, as at St. Aubin's (Calvados). I encountered one teacher at St. Aventin (Indre-et-Loire) who had a small bench for practical work, at which he makes models of barrels and such things as are required by vine growers or agriculturists. The children watch him while at work and try to copy what he makes at home. Above all, he teaches them how to mend tools and implements, a very useful thing for the French peasant, who, being of an economical turn, always tries to do his repairs himself. I fancy it was from this teacher, though I am not quite sure, I heard the story of some *travaux manuels* in carpentry being given out to the children of a certain commune to finish at home. The school authorities were delighted with the progress of the children until they discovered the village carpenter was making a handsome thing out of doing the children's work for them. But, as a rule, I found the *travaux manuels* is one of those subjects that has not caught on in the country. To begin with, many communes are poor and decline to make the necessary outlay. Then the programme is already full enough, and what manual work there is, is rather done in the teacher's garden or in the *champs d'expérience*. Moreover, as one teacher told me, a little learning is a dangerous thing, and a little manual training, unless on the right lines only gets the pupils into bad habits, which, a wood-cutter friend of his told him, only makes them worse apprentices than children who know nothing.

gymnastics  
and military  
drill.

I came across gymnastics and military drill in one or two schools. But their necessity is not so apparent in the country as in the towns. As one teacher's wife remarked, her husband teaches these things, but they are really unnecessary, the children get sufficient exercise in tree climbing (it was a "forest" commune). Other teachers said they found the children had enough exercise in trudging to school and back without putting them through a lot of military drills. Most of the younger teachers hold gymnastic certificates. The term itself seems somewhat elastic. In some departmental programmes the *promenade sco aire* is ranked under the heading of gymnastics. The number of gymnasiums in France and Algeria actually decreased between 1892 and 1897 from 6,234 to 5,140, owing, no doubt, to the law which rendered teachers liable for all accidents on the spot. "La crainte des responsabilités en cas d'accident paralyse le zèle de certains instituteurs pour ce genre d'exercice." (Official Statistics, page xlv.)

singing.

Singing in nearly all the schools is learnt by ear. According to several witnesses, it is rather neglected (*lâché*) in the departments under observation. The musical parts of France are rather the east and the south.

## (III.) SUBJECT GROUPS.

(a) *The Enseignement Ménager.*

The most important subjects of all, from the rural point of view, are the teaching of domestic economy in all its branches to girls, and instruction in scientific notions, especially those relating to agriculture, for boys.

Domestic economy in its large sense implies the education of the young girl in the manifold duties of the household. As Mlle. Brès points out in her report to the International Congress on Primary Education which discussed this subject, it really embraces, over and above the looking after the home, the practical work of no less than five callings—the dressmaker, the sempstress, the washerwoman, the ironer, and the cook—not to mention the outdoor duties of the housewife in the garden and on the farm. Some even would add the hygiene and bringing up of children, no unimportant matter for a class in which every elder sister has more or less to play the nurse. Domestic economy.

As a matter of fact, sewing is still classed in French schools, as in English, as a separate subject, and as such may therefore be taken apart. One of the teachers I spoke to on the subject told me she devoted six hours a week to it, the ordinary programme allowing for about three. She managed to have this amount done by getting the girls to work out of hours, beginning directly after dinner. Her idea was to make the girls *bonnes ménagères*. At the girls' school at Mosnes I saw some interesting albums containing work done by each child and taken home by her to show her parents, with descriptions of the work on the opposite page. The use of these "huzzif" note-books, though not unknown in other schools, might be still more widely introduced into needlework classes. The time devoted to sewing in this school amounted to half an hour a week, but the pupils also worked at home. Sewing.

In writing on the subject of domestic economy proper, Messrs. Bonaparte Wyse and Hughes-Dowling state that "it cannot be said that the training of girls in household occupations is yet very widespread in France. In the provinces very little beyond a book lesson once a week in domestic economy is given; in the town schools practical work hardly exists." At one school I visited I found the children receiving a lesson on the needs of keeping furniture clean, which was followed by a quasi-moral one on the duties of an elder sister. Both seemed practical enough. The worst lesson I ever heard of was in a State school which was not yet laicised, the teacher gave a lecture on cooking a fowl, which it was painfully evident was taken from a book. This was followed by a set of questions, from which it was clear most of the children had only retained half the directions. It is to be hoped, for the Domestic economy proper.

peace of mind of the future households they may have to preside over, they will quickly forget the other half. It is only fair to add that the inspector who was present was furious at this exposition of learning recipes by heart. Another mistress told me she concentrated her teaching on personal and household cleanliness. But nowhere did I come across anything like practical work either in laundry or cooking.

It is true that the standard of cooking in France is relatively high, and, as far as my experience goes, it is certainly above the average among the peasants. I have taken "pot-luck" at the simplest of wayside inns and even eaten at the board of some of the small cultivators. This appears after all only in keeping with their well-known thrift and economy which causes them to make use of everything. In fact, it did seem to me that the actual need of teaching cookery in country districts, where there exists no artisan population, is as yet non proven. The whole question, none the less, was considered of sufficient importance to be selected as one of the main topics at the International Congress. Thirty-three memoirs were sent into the organising committee, which were boiled down into a report of some twenty pages. A described analysis of the latter would, unfortunately, take up too much room, but space may be found for the conclusions of the Congress which have in this case, as in the others, been kindly communicated to me by M. Doliveux, Academy Inspector at Beauvais.

esolutions  
the Inter-  
national  
ongress.

(1) The domestic education of girls is essentially the work of the mother of the family. It belongs none the less to the school in the same fashion as the needlework.

(2) Domestic teaching consists in the sum total of theoretical and practical knowledge indispensable to every mistress of a household. It comprises the purchase and preservation of food, the preparation of dishes, the art of setting a table, sewing, cutting out, laundry work, ironing, the keeping in good order of clothes and household furniture, the hygiene of the house and the art of making it beautiful, the hygiene of children, the nursing of the sick, and the education of early infancy.

The teaching of domestic economy and of the duties of a household ought to be obligatory for all grades of primary education, from the national school to the higher primary and professional schools, from the elementary primary school to the normal school for female teachers.

(3) At all the degrees of primary instruction, domestic instruction based on the general knowledge acquired will include essentially practical work.

(4) This education will be given by preference by female teachers prepared for that purpose. It is desirable that normal classes for domestic teaching be created in important centres.

(5) Questions in domestic economy should be set in the examination for the *certificat d'études*, the *brevet élémentaire*, the *brevet supérieur*, and the *professorat* for the *école normale*.

(6) The municipalities ought to be encouraged to establish complementary domestic classes, professional domestic schools, and cookery classes.

(7) It is desirable that post-scholastic classes and committees of patronage should find a place for classes, conferences, and the exercise of household duties and cooking in the continuation of the school work.

(8) Domestic education being necessary to the father of a family as it is to the mother, it ought to a limited extent figure in the programme of the primary schools for boys.

(9) The hygiene and education of early childhood ought to be one of the principal aims of an education in domestic economy in all grades, and the chief of the earliest objects of teaching at the school in its divers grades.

These resolutions seem to improve the town child's chance of getting practical instruction in the really important parts of the art of housekeeping, but it leaves the country child in the rural districts in very much a state of "as you were." Of course the word municipality is not limited to the sense of town council, and with us it means the ruling body in every commune. The present proposal makes no mention of asking for a definite subsidy from the state or the department. In this case it seems unlikely that the majority of parish councils will undertake the new charge of starting cookery or other classes. Perhaps the departments might see their way to create peripatetic teachers in domestic economy for each *arrondissement* as they have already done for agricultural teaching. These itinerant professors could start evening classes in various centres and help to organise classes in villages where outside help was forthcoming. They could also visit the schools and advise the teachers how to improve their existing methods for teaching this important subject, without, however, taking a direct part in the teaching. M. Strauss, one of the reporters of the Congress, expressed the French dislike for the peripatetic teachers in the schools by saying that the domestic economy should not come into the schools by the back staircase (*escalier de service*). Conclusion.

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CHAPTER V.—THE CURRICULUM (*continued*).

(III.) SUBJECT GROUPS (*continued*).

(b) *Science and Agriculture.*

The Englishman who comes to France to study agricultural education will probably discover after a week or two that not only the agricultural education he meets with is very different from what he expected to find, but that the rural problem itself is equally unlike that which exercises the minds of his countrymen. The three main points of difference are that France having more or

Radical difference in the problem between France and England.



less a rural population, while England has rather an urban, country interests have had far greater ease in making their claims not only heard but attended to. The French problem, therefore, has been tackled quite ten years earlier than the English. It is probably, on that account, less acute and less complicated. Secondly, England is rather the country of large farms; France is a land of small holdings. In the English village community the great bulk of the inhabitants are landless men, save the squire, parson, and farmer, whose children do not frequent the village school. In France, in some communes one person in every four is a proprietor, and therefore the pick of the village school are the sons of peasants who, from helping their fathers on their holdings from their earliest youth, are all more or less *au fait* with farm work. The sons of the landless men in England will most of them become in time labourers. The problem, then, in England is to give a hand and eye training; to raise the present low state of efficiency among the labourers, and render the present generation of children as skilful and handy as possible. Most of the sons of the French peasants will one day, owing to the law of divided inheritance, each have at least a strip of land of their own, if they do not purchase out of their savings a small plot on their own account. These peasant children, then, have no need to come to school to learn practical agriculture, and, as one authority says, would probably laugh at the master if he attempted to teach them, unless he sheltered himself behind some manual or other. This does not, however, imply ignorance of agriculture on the part of the majority of French teachers in rural districts. They are recruited (as we have seen) in great numbers from the peasant class, or from those who live in country districts, so that when they come into the rural schools they arrive already more or less equipped with a good working knowledge of the subject they are going to teach, and do not lose caste with a class of youngsters because "they cannot tell the difference between a swede and a turnip."

How the  
French  
have felt  
their way.

The first serious effort made in France to create popular agricultural education goes back to the times of the Minister Duruy. In 1866 a special commission was named to prepare the necessary measures "for developing agricultural and horticultural knowledge in the normal schools, the communal schools, and the adult classes." The work of the commission met with but a cool reception, and then came the war. The question was taken up once more by the law of the 16th June, 1879, called the "law relating to departmental and communal teaching of agriculture." The tenth article declared:—

Three years after the complete organisation of the teaching of agriculture in the primary normal schools, elementary notions of agriculture shall be comprised among the obligatory subjects in primary education. Notwithstanding, in the departments in which the teaching of agriculture shall have been organised at the normal school for more than three years, the departmental council of public instruction can decree that the same instruction shall be obligatory in all the primary schools of the department. The programmes of this instruction in each department shall be drawn up according to the opinion of the departmental council of public instruction. j

The effect of this local option in programmes, which had its good side in making allowance for accommodating the programme to local needs, had unfortunately also the result of producing programmes of every sort and kind. Some, as M. Rene Leblanc has pointed out, were all for developing the professional side; others laid undue stress on the educative value. To judge by some of the older manuals, the favourite method was that of the stereotyped question and answer, in which the obvious was carefully defined in such statements as "the horse is a quadruped," with other details equally otiose. Nothing gives one a better idea of how long it takes for any new subject to settle down and assume its proper place and form than an interesting account on the state of agricultural education, written some ten years after the reform by a Russian colleague of mine on the Primary Jury, M. Kovalesky, who was sent by his Government to France to investigate the question. He travelled everywhere, visited the normal schools, to which reference will be made later, and looked over a good many primary schools. His first complaint was the lack of uniformity among the inspectors, due to a want of general inspection. Thus in the various schools he visited he found no less than six different conceptions of agricultural education! Two were merely theoretical. The first consisted of general scientific notions applied to agriculture, while an appropriate agricultural tinge was given to the curriculum by selecting passages for dictation out of the agricultural journals. The second was more ambitious. A definite course of agriculture was established, in which the work of the pupils consisted in learning by heart little agricultural catechisms. According to the third type, children were taken into the teacher's garden, and plants and methods were pointed out to them. The fourth type consisted in children having gardens of their own at home, in which, if they chose, they copied the teacher's experiments. According to the fifth method, children took part in the garden work under the direction of the teacher. And lastly there was the "allotment" system, according to which each child received a plot of his own and cultivated another in common with the teacher.

How little progress had been made in the matter at that date is shown by the fact there were in 1891 only twenty *champs d'expérience* for 80,000 schools. Examinations to encourage agricultural studies had already been started, but the questions were far too technical, and the cultivation of the school garden was generally neglected till near the advent of the prize season.

This groping in the dark and searching after right methods still went on for some years after M. Kovalesky's visit. As recently as 1897, in describing the actual state of affairs in Manche, the department contiguous to Calvados and Orne, the academy inspector touched on some of the weak spots of the then existing organisation :

In giving others instruction in anything, the first condition is to be master of the subject oneself. It is not enough to possess it in appearance, under the form of a book, the chapters of which the children are made to recite without explanation or comment. It is necessary to possess it in the form of assimi-

lated knowledge. Now, in a number of schools teachers are still content to make the children read in common such or such small manual, which is only an agricultural catechism, as wearisome as it is useless, to resume its formulæ already enigmatic in themselves, and to learn them off by heart. The child has in his head the names of grasses he has never seen, of manures of whose composition and properties he is alike ignorant. He draws on the blackboard or in his copy-book all the parts of the plough, and he does not know why one ploughs or why one ploughs deep in one place and shallow in another. He distinguishes between the different sorts of grafts, and he is incapable of explaining to himself the mechanism of the operations. He who lives in the midst of animals and plants, who will have to breed animals and make plants to grow, does not catch hold of any connection between what he is made to learn at the school and what he sees and handles every day. There is a necessary link between the object and the lessons he learns by heart, but this link escapes him, because there is nothing given in the teaching of a nature to permit him to lay hold of it. He thereby arrives at the point of making fun of this agriculture by which one pretends to give him ideas.

The report concludes by advising the teacher to take up school walks, to encourage in the child his collecting hobbies, to form a school museum from the contributions of the pupils, and not to invest in a ready-made collection from Paris, and, above all, it reminds him he has not to teach the peasants cultivation—the peasants understand that far better than he—but the reason of the method of cultivation that the peasants follow instinctively, as “oxen that follow without thought the furrow.” The whole gist of the matter is that what is wanted is not agriculture, strictly speaking, but botany and zoology (and chemistry?) applied to agriculture with a view of explaining and improving its current practices.

The records of unsuccessful attempts, chemists are fond of telling us, are almost as valuable as those of successful experiments, as they save us from uselessly going over the same ground again and again. I therefore make no hesitation in giving copious extracts from instructions given by M. Pouillot, Academy Inspector of Cher, in 1896, to his teachers, as an admirable warning against wrong-headed methods, with clear hints of the proper manner of dealing with the question. He begins with discussing the necessity of rendering the teaching of science less abstract, less theoretical, and to direct its application towards agricultural teaching, which, as another inspector says, is a sort of logical outcome of the programme. He next discusses the failure of science teaching in the rural schools, and criticises the apparent and real causes. Among the causes of the first category he cites the complaint of some masters on the overgrown size of the programme and its lack of unity, the absence of teaching directions, the manysidedness of the subject, which embraces agriculture, horticulture, hygiene, and domestic economy, whence some educational papers call for the suppression of science and the teaching of agriculture pure and simple. The true reasons are that the teachers have not yet got a real grip of the programmes, they possess neither the letter nor the spirit, they do not sufficiently take into account the purpose of the teaching, and therefore its character, nor the age of the children, nor the abuse of manuals

often unsuitable. Yet science is one, and scientific teaching has its unity. If the programme of science is compared with that of hygiene, domestic economy, agriculture or horticulture, we can easily see that these forms of instruction, apparently isolated, gravitate, so to say, around the programme of science itself, which serves as their centre, and of which they are only developments or divers manifestations. In order to realise this unity, it is necessary to condense in a single series of regulated lessons the teaching of science, hygiene, domestic economy, agriculture, and horticulture, and specially adapt the official programmes to that effect. As guiding principles we shall (1) look on the programme of science as that which gives direction to the others. It is, in fact, the frame work. (2) We shall therefore only retain such scientific notions that apply directly to the usages of ordinary and country life. Application of each notion will go hand-in-hand with its teaching. (3) The reasons of methods of cultivation form another important principle. (4) The whole course will be directed mainly towards the teaching of elementary notions of agriculture or horticulture, but the agriculture will be such as the pupil will come across in his daily life, and therefore will not be high-flown, and, above all, it will be local, the lessons being given under the form of object lessons. The *rapport* winds up with specimen programmes illustrating these principles.

The programme in Cher was not the only programme that was drafted about this time. The Ministry had long had the matter under consideration, and in October and November, 1895, had already issued a couple of circulars foreshadowing the preparation of a scheme of school courses. This was followed on January 4th, 1897, by the celebrated scheme "on the teaching of elementary notions of agriculture in the rural schools," which is so widely and justly known. It is not reproduced here, as it has already been translated *in extenso* in the appendix to the Report of the Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools under the Board of National Education in Ireland (C.—8925), 1898. It laid down that the method to be followed should be that of notions of science applied to agriculture, and rendered above all things practical. Its further aim is "to inspire" children "with a love of country life, that they may prefer it to that of towns and factories, and to convince them that agriculture, besides being the most independent of all means of livelihood, is also more remunerative than many other occupations to those who practise it with industry, intelligence and enlightenment." Then follow directions as to the time to be given to the subject, and the teachers are advised to give an agricultural tinge to the whole curriculum, and to arrange that the subjects in the curriculum correspond as much as possible to the seasons. Many departmental programmes have been marred by exaggeration. Suggestions for a revised programme follow. Only simple object-lessons should be given in the elementary course.

Reform  
program  
—The C  
ircular of  
January  
4th, 189

For the middle course there should be more object-lessons, together with reading lessons and school walks. The pupils may be introduced to the three states of matter, with simple experiments, with talks on animals and man, during the first half year. During the second half, or summer season, the main subject is plants and their germination, with the division between useful and noxious plants. During the second year of the middle course will come the study of combustion and the composition of soils, the latter to be studied during the school walks, followed by lessons on plant life by means of horticulture, demonstrating the use of manures. In the higher course, which is rarely organised in rural schools, the teaching will treat of the hygiene of animals and man with a little vegetable physiology and the chemistry which deals with manures, to be succeeded by the famous fivefold experiment in which the actions of chemical and natural manures are studied and compared,\* not forgetting the well-known experiment with liquid manure, which is very much to the point, as it is computed that no less than £20,000,000 a year is lost in France through the peasants neglecting to utilise their *purin*. The *cours* concludes with directions for the *champs d'expérience* and the school walks, with hints to help the children to observe the principal agricultural operations. This is, of course, only the barest of *résumés* of a document which should be perused from end to end. A further amplification of the scheme is to be found in the handbook on Agricultural Education, by M. René Leblanc, Inspector General, who is really the parent of the new movement for rational agricultural teaching.

programme  
Indre-  
Loire.

Among the programmes readapted in the last three years, one of the most interesting is that of Indre-et-Loire. Allusion has already been made to the fact that it had been entirely put together by the united efforts of the academy inspector, the primary inspector, and the teachers. Nor is this the only instance of the value of teachers' conferences in the putting together of new programmes. In 1895 the school authorities in Loire made use of the same machinery to revise the programmes for that department. In connection with this it is worth noticing that the syllabus in any subject is supposed to be in keeping with the regulations that govern all France, so that it is apparently necessary in such a subject as agriculture to draw up a maximum programme, that is to say, one that includes all forms of cultivation, no matter whether the department be a wine or cider country, pastoral or arable, it being left to the individual teacher to pass lightly over or ignore those facts which do not apply to the husbandry of his district. *Apropos* of this, one teacher made to me the curious remark that a minimum programme would seem to cast a slur on the teacher, as implying a wish to limit his teaching. On looking

\*The five pots contain : (1) the standard without manure ; (2) a complete dose of manures ; the third received nitrate and potash ; the fourth superphosphate and potash ; and the fifth nitrate and superphosphate.

at the Indre-et-Loire programme, the first thing that catches the eye is that it is varied according to whether it is intended for town or country children; that for the town bears as heading "Physics and Natural Science as applied to Industry and Hygiene," while that for the country is entitled "Physics and Natural Science, applied to Agriculture, Horticulture, and Hygiene." The same subject for girls in the towns is described "as applied to industry, hygiene and domestic economy," while that for the country girls applies to agriculture, horticulture, hygiene, and domestic economy. Here then are two points that it is worth bearing in mind, to which later on reference will be made, differentiation between town and country schools as regards programme, and the recognition of the need for training girls in agriculture and horticulture.

For the present, confining ourselves to boys in the country we find that while the old programme began with the fall of bodies, the balance and all the aridities of mechanics, the new is practical throughout, and follows the seasons. It is also the same for the three *cours*. It began with such common things as the air, its composition, oxygen, nitrogen, carbonic acid, mist, miasma, dust, movements of the air, winds, weathercocks, effects of the wind, windmills, æolian harps. The headings of the lessons for the year are as follows, some of the agricultural applications being given in brackets:—

The Air. Oxygen (nitrogen, rôle of nitrogen in agriculture); fresh and foul air (ventilation of stables, cowsheds, etc.); action of air on plants (ventilation of the soil). Water (use of rain or snow). Drinking water. Rôle of water in agriculture (action of water on the roots, stalk, and seeds). Drainage (consequence of drainage). Rôle of water in agriculture (irrigation). Farm work (various forms of). Ploughing instruments: Harrows, rolls, carts, tumbrels, Coal: heating, lighting. Carbonic acid (carbon of chalk, its rôle in vegetable life). Fermented drinks (vintage, maladies of the vine, dangers of alcohol, etc.). Fermented drinks (continued) (apple harvest, cider, perry, beer, vinegar, alcohol). Alcohol (distillation). Sulphur. Chlorine. Potassium, soda, salt (application in agriculture). Metals. Rocks. (chalk, improvements of the soil). Gypsum (use in agriculture). Clay. The soil and subsoil. Improvement of arable land. Manures. The farm. Weight. Weight of air. Weight of liquids. Heat. Electricity. Atmospheric electricity—magnets. Sound, light (necessary to vegetation, influence of light on the crops). Man. Food. Man (continued). Animals. Mammals. The farm animals (six lessons). Birds (three lessons). Poultry. Reptiles. Fishes. Invertebrates. Insects (noxious, noxious to the vine). Useful Insects, Molluscs and zoophites. Plants (two lessons). Tree culture. Fruit trees, pruning. The vine (two lessons). Charcoal. Plants (five lessons) Plants (beetroot, carrots, turnips, etc.). Textile plants (hemp). Other textiles (cotton, wool). Paper. Oleaginous plants (colza, etc.). Dye plants. The flower, the fruit, and the

seed. The Fruits. Cereals (two lessons). The Harvest. Bread. Germination, sowing, rotation of crops. The Garden (six lessons). Medicinal Plants (two lessons). Noxious Plants. Poisonous Plants. Classification of Vegetables (two lessons). Plants without flower. Diseases of the Vine. The Agricultural Wealth of Indre-et-Loire. Three lessons on agricultural book-keeping.

Of Sarthe.

Through the kindness of M. Cassarini, the agricultural professor in Sarthe, I have been able to procure a copy of the new programme for the new primary schools of the department, which has been drawn up by M. Cassarini after the indications of a special committee formed of the inspectors and heads of the normal schools under the presidency of the inspector of the academy, assisted by the two agricultural professors of *arrondissements*, and the president and secretary of the Agricultural Society of Sarthe—an almost ideal combination, made up of seven educationists on the one hand and five persons skilled in agriculture on the other. This programme is not concentric like the last, but is arranged for two years. Each year allows for seventy-five lessons, and includes a revision lesson at the end of each month, and seven at the end of the school year. The programme is more frankly agricultural than the last. The following are the test lessons for the two years, which are divided up roughly into two parts, the first year being devoted to the farm and the crop, and the second to the live stock. The first year only is given (a translation for one year, with the analysis of each lesson would be about 15 to 20 times the length of the following *résumé*).

*Definition and Aim of Agriculture.*—Agriology, or the study of the soil. Physical study of soils. Chemical study of soils. Atmosphere, its composition. Meteorological phenomena, water, light. Revision. Improvement of soils. Manures, definition, classification. Farm manure. Manure of animal origin. Manure of vegetable origin. Mineral and chemical manures. Phosphates. Potash. Revision. Sulphate of iron, sea salt, sulphate of copper. *Champs d'expérience et de démonstration.* Fraud in the sale of artificial manure. Irrigation, drainage. Farming operations. Ploughing, etc. Plant study, germination, nutrition of the plant. Review of vegetable products. Choice and improvement of cultivated plants. Revision. Special crops, cereals, wheat, barley, etc., Winnowing machines. Artificial grass (Lucerne, etc.). Vetches, etc. Green crops. Ensilage. Natural pastures, permanent or temporary. Revision. Root crops. (beetroot, etc). Potatoes. Hemp. Agricultural industries of the region. Rotation of crops. Culture of the vine or apple trees, or both, if they both exist in village. Pear tree, perry. Fermentation of wine, cider, and brandy. Principal forest trees in the country. Revision. The kitchen garden, the work in it, making beds. Study of several kinds of vegetables. vegetables cultivated for their leaves, for their bulbs, for their roots, for their seeds. Other productions of the garden. Artichokes and asparagus. The strawberry plant. Revision. Fruit culture

by sowing and budding, by grafting. Forms given to trees, espaliers, etc. The classification of trees. The vine for table grapes. The peach tree. The plum tree. The cherry tree. The pear for the table. The apple tree. Ornamental plants. Medicinal plants. Revision. Seven final revision lessons.

The above "programme" appears to err on the side of attempting to be too thorough, and the agricultural professor himself told me it would probably have to be cut down. In fact, it was to be looked on as "under revision." The chief difference between this and the preceding programme is that it goes in directly for teaching agriculture, while the other only teaches it incidentally. Not that it neglects the scientific side, as it bears at the top the following direction: "The teacher arranges for the agricultural lessons to be preceded by science lessons bearing on them. He accompanies them with experiments and object lessons." The Sarthe programme is the more systematic as far as agriculture is concerned, but a child brought up on the other programme would probably possess more general knowledge.

In Calvados the programme is again different. Agriculture Calvados is taught in conjunction with hygiene and domestic economy, and the programme is, in fact, "general," as in Indre-et-Loire. It differs again from the latter by being divided into two parts, one for the *cours élémentaire* and the *cours préparatoire*, and the other common to the *cours moyen* and *cours supérieur*, whereas, it will be remembered, the Indre-et-Loire programme was *concentric*. The latter, again, was divided into town and country, while the former is for the whole department. All this is only another admirable instance of the decentralising influence of the departmental form of government. The first part of the programme is resumed under the following heads.

*To build one's house* (materials and workmen employed, etc.). *To give one light* (candles, lamps, etc.). *To give one warmth* (snow, cold, wood, coal, etc.). *To clothe oneself*. *To feed oneself*. *The human body*. *The domestic animals*. *Birds in general*. *A country walk* (the plants, etc.). *A walk round the farm*. *Water, the sea*. *Work on the farm*. *Stray notions* (storms, paper, books, etc.). This is evidently nothing but a compact little programme of object-lessons for the little ones, on common things. (The actual programme is about ten times as long.)

The scheme of work for the first three months will give a very fair notion of the "cast" of the second part of the programme.

*September-October*.—The three kingdoms in nature. The three states of bodies. The air, its composition. Oxygen. Pure and foul air. The atmosphere. Atmospheric pressure. Simple experiments which illustrate it. The barometer. Pumps. The siphon. Ballons. Water and hydrogen. Uses of water. Drinking and contaminated water. Changes in the state of water. Applications of these principles.

*November*.—Heat: Its effects. Evaporation. Boiling. Expansion. The thermometer. Conductivity. Utilisation of heat.



Radiation. Bell glasses. Glass frames. Light, its effects: Lighting and health. Carbon. Natural carbons: diamonds, coal, anthracite, turf. Artificial carbon. Charcoal, etc. Carbonic acid. Quick combustion. Slow Combustion. Heating: diverse methods and apparatus for heating. Their advantages and their inconveniences. Burns. Asphyxia.

Here the programme is more frankly scientific, and the agriculture which is duly introduced in the succeeding months is not so closely connected with the scientific portion as in the others, the science being roughly given in the first half of the course, and the agriculture in the second, instead of the teaching being *pari passu* as in the Sarthe programme.

horticulture  
agriculture  
for girls.

In all three departments there is either a programme for agricultural education for girls, or one is being prepared. The notion of agriculture for girls may make some critics smile, despite Lady Warwick's interesting experiments, but the point of the teaching is to instruct girls in certain notions connected with milk, butter-making, poultry, and gardening. (A whole month is devoted to the latter in Indre-et-Loire.) In Calvados the girls follow the same course as the boys in the *cours préparatoire* and *élémentaire*. In the higher portion of the programme a certain amount of science is left out, and replaced by notions on hygiene and domestic economy. In a mixed school, when the lesson is not common to both sexes, a science composition is given to those "who are sitting out." By the mere force of circumstances the wife of the French peasant naturally requires to be *au fait* with farm work when the entire holding is only an acre or two. Besides, the garden itself is specially regarded as her province. The celebrated Mathieu de Dombasle used to say: "Je ne connais qu'un moyen pour la culture économique d'un jardin dans une ferme, c'est que la fermière entreprenne elle-même la direction?" Many peasants, apparently, hold this view, for they look down on horticulture as women's work, and only labour in their gardens when they have nothing else to do. The rôle of women in farm life is well described by M. Mondiet, academy inspector of Landes, in a circular issued in 1889. "Are not," he asks, "agricultural notions indispensable to all who live in the country? Have not women a large share in the work on the farm? and does not everyone know how the domestic economy of the woman plays a large part in the success of farming operations?" Girls, then, he adds, "will concentrate their studies on these points: keeping up and cultivation of the school garden, flower cultivation, preservation and sale of fruit, feeding of animals, the attention they require, and kindness towards them, products of domestic animals, dairies, poultry, etc.; the function of artificial manures and preparation of manure; noxious plants, useful and harmful insects, services rendered to agriculture by the birds."

decisions on  
pro-  
nunes.

To sum up so far. The main object of these programmes seems to be threefold: (1) To give the children an insight into the reasons

underlying agricultural operations, in order to induce them later on to follow less blindly the routine which is still too much the rule with the French peasant. (2) To cultivate at the same time the knack of outward observation by means of experiments and object lessons. (3) To form housewives having the spirit of order and economy (programme of Calvados). (4) To increase in children the love for the country, and for a country life. M. Deries, academy inspector of Manche, has well said in his report of 1897, already alluded to: "The agricultural spirit is at first the love of the rustic life, in its labours at once rude and soothing. It is next the science of the soil, of the plant, the animal." While the primary inspector of Clermont Ferrand says: "The best way to make a workman love his work is to make him to understand it." Thus we have cultivation of the judgment, intelligence and observation, with training of the eye, but with one exception we shall see there is no manual training, and anyone who knows the problem in France will see that, though necessary, it is not so essential as in England.

Should manuals be used at all, at least by the pupils? With the note-book system, so in vogue in Germany, the teacher plays the part of the parent stork by carefully digesting the lesson in a dictation which is as carefully got up by heart by the pupil, but if the latter has any of that appetite that comes with eating, he can get no more, for he has nowhere to go to. Another grave disadvantage in the abolition of text-books is that the pupil, when he leaves school, does not know how to find his way about a book; having been fed exclusively on the peptonised food prepared by the teacher, he is unable to digest a subject served up in book form. Again, a manual acts as a kind of grammar, or book of reference, in which everything that has been learnt in a haphazard and isolated fashion finds itself reduced to a certain logical order, which tends to reproduce itself on the minds of those who use the book, and helps them thus to store their knowledge in an orderly fashion. Even if the knowledge acquired is not sufficiently comprehensive to be made into a regular system, the manual will still be very useful as a book of reference, if not of preparation, as two teachers of Die, in a *rapport* published in 1897, assert. The contrary evils to which the employment of regular text-books sometimes leads, have already been sufficiently indicated by the frequent allusions to the abuse of manuals. There is, however, a golden mean between the two, and the exact rôle of books in the matter is very happily defined in the Calvados programme.

Books will be useless in the *cours élémentaire préparatoire*; optional though advantageous, in the *cours moyen*; indispensable in the *cours supérieur*. The work placed in the hands of the pupils will only serve for reference (*memento*). In no case will it take the place of oral teaching.

Coming, then, to the text-books themselves, we find two specially popular, one by M. René Leblanc and the other by M. Barillot. Some teachers asserted that the first-named was too scientific for the lower classes, but they all agreed

it was an indispensable book of reference for the teachers. Barillot was a general favourite, though sundry critics thought the book did not go far enough, and others complained it was too exclusively agricultural. At any rate, it is appreciated by the parents, as I heard in two instances at least of parents having read the book with pleasure when brought home by their children. A local publication I came across was described as too scientific and possessing the fatal drawback of separating the theoretical part from its application. A very interesting volume was a manual by M. Lagrue, primary inspector at Bayeux, called "Summary of Science, Hygiene, and Agriculture of the Bessin," as the Bayeux district is called. Here, instead of writing a book which takes in all France, the author confines his agricultural applications of science to the particular husbandry of his own district, and draws all his illustrations from the condition of things in his own *arrondissement*—one of the best ways I have seen of bringing home to children the practical nature of the subject.

ures and  
grams,

Pictures of the diseases of the vine, and diagrams illustrating the advantage of using *engrais*, were to be seen in some schools, and the use of these might with advantage be multiplied. In one school I also saw an agronomic map of the commune, drawn by the teacher, and mention has already been made of the maps of the department giving the principal *cultures* according to the localities. The *musée scolaire* (see page 72) is useful for keeping specimens of the various chemicals which enter into agricultural science. It is still more useful when it contains, as at Chaumont (Loir-et-Cher), extracts of starch or salt made by the pupils themselves.

#### *The Experimental Side.*

Pot  
ure.

I came across a certain number of teachers who practised the experiments in pots. Some were satisfied with the results. Others had not been so successful. Sometimes the earth of the *témoin* turned out to possess latent agricultural virtues, and the plants without manure did as well as those with, an excellent proof that in manures, as in most things, enough is as good as a feast, but scarcely the result desired. At other times the effect of the weather ruined the experiments. Some teachers, I was told, neutralise these untoward effects by changing the tickets, but that is not playing fair.

Teachers'  
lens.

In this matter the procedure of the teachers varies considerably. Some keep their gardens to themselves. Others, like the teacher at Carpiquet (Calvados), take the children into the garden and allow them to watch the digging and planting. Another teacher informed me he did not make his pupils work in his garden because of the *mauvaises langues*. Mention has already been made of the teacher who instead of setting his pupils lines made them set cabbages. The master at Chauffour allows the children to plant but not to dig. They take great interest in what he does and help him to hunt out and keep down the

nóxious insects. The teacher at La Chaussée-Saint-Victor does still better. He organises a campaign against cockchafers, which are a terrible pest in his village, and the children are paid two sous a kilo for those they collect. The teacher at St. Avenin told me he took the children into the garden to give them practical lessons. When in the garden he pointed out to me a dying pear tree, which was withering because it had reached the rock in the subsoil below, and said it would come on as a lesson in a week or two. A very good idea! Some teachers also perform in their gardens instead of in pots the "fivefold experiment" with or without manures. It is not always successful. Sometimes the earth in the *témoin* plot, as in the pots, is not sufficiently sterile. The weather, too, is an uncertain factor, and, finally, the sparrows not infrequently eat up the seeds. Most school gardens are next to the school, but in one case the teacher's garden was at some distance away, a fact which, he said, prevented him from making experiments.

The two most necessary improvements in French rural economy (c) Grafting to-day are a more extensive use of natural and artificial manure and the reconstitution of the vine. After the advent of the phylloxera, and the various attempts more or less ineffectual made to combat it, the ruined peasants gave up the struggle in great numbers. Then followed the introduction of the American vines, the great majority of which are not immune, as some people think, but hardy enough to thrive all the same though attacked by the disease. Still, this did not solve the problem. It was soon noticed that by the substitution of American for French vines, the choice vintages which had been the produce of vines cultivated for centuries on the same spot were entirely lost. Happily, the phylloxera only attacks the roots of the plants. A systematic grafting was therefore the obvious remedy. Unluckily, the French method of grafting is comparatively uncertain in its effects. But with the introduction of the English method excellent results have been obtained, and the vines of France, at least, in the districts I visited, are everywhere being successfully reconstituted. This, of course, is largely due to the efforts of the departmental professor of agriculture. He has, however, been ably seconded by the teachers. In Sarthe, those who have taken up grafting are comparatively numerous, as well as in Indre-et-Loire and Loir-et-Cher. Many, in fact, have made themselves duly qualified grafters, although the examination is no easy one. The headmaster at Mayet told me when he passed he was one of only seventeen out of a total list of seventy candidates. He also showed me a bed of grafts he had made with the aid of the pupils. The children, being mostly the sons of peasants, take very readily to this form of instruction, and become very expert. They practise in their own gardens, and, as their sight is sharper, they are sometimes even more successful than their parents. Nor is this grafting confined to the vine alone. The teacher at Trun, in Orne, told me he taught the children grafting on apple-trees, and at La Chaussée Saint-Victor the teacher showed

me some flourishing pear-trees grafted by the pupils. I also came across a teacher who taught his children pruning, and doubtless there are many more.

*Champs  
d'expérience  
de démon-  
stration.*

Of the *champ d'expérience*, technically speaking, there are no examples in rural schools. It is really a field for scientific research. The so-called ordinary *champ d'expérience* ought in strict parlance to be called a *champ de démonstration*, as it is really a method of showing results already ascertained. Still, the term is so commonly misapplied that it has practically become a synonym for the other. The number of these *champs de démonstration* varied greatly in the departments I visited, and were by no means all under the control or even supervision of the primary teacher. They are sometimes lent by a peasant, sometimes hired by the commune, sometimes they take place in the teacher's garden. In Calvados out of 763 communes there are between twenty and thirty, of which probably not more than ten are supervised by the teachers. A teacher who looks after one of these *champs d'expérience* told me it was cultivated by the proprietor. He himself merely supervised it, and took his boys there occasionally to study and note the effects. In the case of another "trial field," about 10 kilometres away, the commune had provided the *engrais* and the proprietor lent the field. In Orne, with 512 communes, the Professor of Agriculture told me there are about sixty *champs d'expérience*, about twenty of which are looked after by the teachers. I visited one of these at Lonray with the schoolmaster. The peasant who owned the field went with us. As in other *champs d'expérience*, the effect of the artificial manure was clearly visible. What seemed to me still more important was to find the teacher on such good terms with the farmer. The director in the practising school at Alençon told me he had a *champ d'expérience* last year. The ordinary crop of the district is about fourteen hectolitres the hectare, or about sixteen bushels an acre; his plot produced twenty-six hectolitres, or nearly twenty-nine bushels an acre. His pupils not only sowed but cultivated the plot, and gave it a dressing of artificial manure. At Trun, again, there was a *champ d'expérience* of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres, in which experiments were being made with three sorts of manures. The field itself was lent by a private individual, the artificial and the seed being given by the department, the crop going to the proprietor. The parents, I was told, take much interest in the experiment. Sarthe is one of the most advanced departments in agricultural education in some ways. It has 386 communes, and possessed over 150 *champs de démonstration*. These included experiments in crops of all sorts and kinds, including *méteil* (a mixture of rye and wheat, of which the farmer makes his bread), and *melarde* (a mixture of barley and oats, with which they feed their cattle). At Mayet I visited two *champs d'expérience* looked after by the teacher. The first was a patch of oats, which showed very visibly the effect of the various *engrais*, and compared most flatteringly with other patches of oats in the

vicinity. This particular *champ* was hired by the teacher and sown by labourers he employed, the money being found by the departmental professor of agriculture. The second field belonged to a cultivator, and was also a piece of oats. The effects of manure were very marked, especially where the *purin*, or liquid manure, had been put on. We met the cultivator himself, who seemed highly satisfied with the experiment. The teacher also showed me some experiments he was making on a vineyard near with a view of combatting the phylloxera. In Indre-et-Loire the *champs d'expérience* are not so numerous. But one of the inspectors informed me a strong effort was going to be made to increase them. In Loir-et-Cher the departmental professor of agriculture was away at Paris, but judging by the fine laboratory at his disposition the department ought to be one of the most active as far as agricultural education is concerned. I visited a small *champ d'expérience* of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ares at St. Denis-la-Victoire, which was hired by the commune, and the "artificial" was given by a Paris firm to introduce their wares to the neighbourhood. The oats and barley both showed the effects of the treatment, but it was impossible to pronounce on the beetroot and haricot beans, as they were only just coming up.

The following extracts are from a MS. copy of the account of *champs d'expérience* and *de démonstration* in Sarthe during the season 1898-9, compiled by the departmental professor, M. Cassarini, and kindly copied for me through his permission. They will give some notion of the magnitude of the work, and also the extent to which the teachers share in it. 167 *champs* were created, thanks to the efforts of no less than 26 agricultural associations, and a certain number of teachers who were responsible for 50 of them, each being about quarter of an acre in size. The other parcels of ground measured on the average three-quarters of an acre apiece. The total area amounted to about 111 acres, not counting in the standard plots, which came to nearly the same superficies; the *témoins* represented in this case the ordinary methods of cultivation of the locality in which the trial plot was situated. Most of the trial fields were established to demonstrate the value of certain manures, or the choice of seeds. The experimental fields were devoted to a trial of a few new varieties of wheat, oats, and potatoes; experiments in the effect of manures were made in the schools. The demonstrations were made for the most part among the more progressive farmers. The results were very satisfactory, despite the bad season. Economic statistics are given to show that the use of well chosen manures is really a saving of money, being more than compensated for by the improvement in the crops, while the unexhausted improvement to the land must also be taken into account. This economic aspect is the gist of the whole matter. The comparative "yield" is no guide unless the comparative cost is considered. Details on successful experiments in comparative manures

follow. Mention is made of the economies realised by cultivators who have bought the raw materials for artificial manures, and mixed them under the direction of the departmental professor. Finally, the latter regrets that only a quarter of the farmers profit by these experiments and take the professor's advice. Time, more of these object-lessons, the spread of education, the disappearance of the older generation, with the new generation, who are less "untoward," to take its place, are all factors in the ultimate success of the new agriculture.

romenade  
clair.

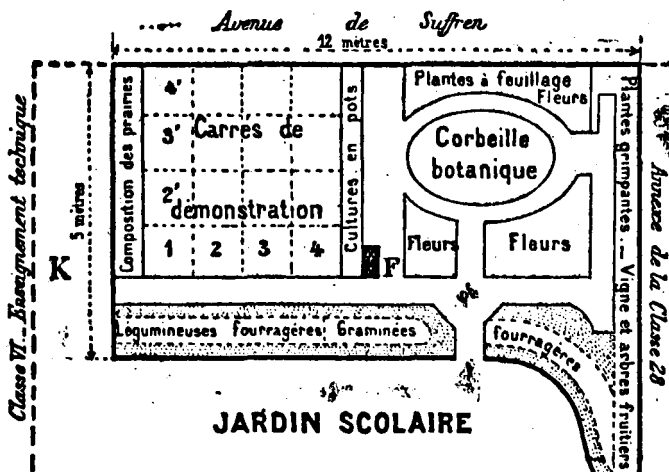
I came across several teachers who, apart from taking their pupils to visit the *champs d'expérience*, also made excursions with them, according to the instruction of 4th January, 1897. The children are often armed with note-books, the rough notes of which are furnished either by the teacher's explanations or their own reflections, and serve afterwards for an essay or an oral narration of the walk. Another good way of utilising these outings is that of the headmaster of St. Aubin's (Calvados), who encourages his pupils to form a botanical garden by collecting new plants during these excursions. The garden is divided into plots reserved for the principal families, and each new acquisition is planted in the bed reserved for the genus. This helps to impress the family on the pupil's mind.

neral  
pression.

Some of the older teachers are somewhat indifferent. They look on the subject rather as a new fad, though there are exceptions. I came across one veteran at La Chaussée-Saint-Victor, who had been an enthusiastic pioneer in the movement from the start. A certain number of teachers, I was told by one eminent authority, are rather lukewarm. They have gone into education because they detested agriculture. Such recruits are not very likely, therefore, to make the best of teachers in the matter. Again, there are districts where the movement has barely caught on at all. An inspector with a very big district told me he had about five teachers who seriously took up the matter, the rest confined themselves to class teaching. Some of the teaching, therefore, is too bookish, and it can scarcely be otherwise where the teacher makes no effort to render it real, either by experiments in his garden or in pots, or by forming at least a proper school museum. And here again I find my opinion supported by that of an inspector, who said he had no high opinion of the theoretical teaching as given in most of the schools. *Per contra*, the best teachers not only seem to be trying to make their teaching practical, but also to attach it to the local agriculture, of whatever nature it may be, insisting in the grass countries rather on questions of cattle and cattle-feeding; in the arable districts on cereals; in the vine regions, on the treatment of the vine. At the same time, they encourage the children to form botanical collections, help them to discriminate between the birds and insects useful to agriculture, and its enemies; take them for interesting excursions, and make them record their impressions, and kindle in them thereby not

only an interest in but a love of the country-side. The outlines of this teaching, if it is to be successful, have been very clearly laid down. It should be scientific, for it deals with "the science of the soil, of the plant, of the animal" (academy inspector of Manche 1897), and it must be practical, and to ensure this every school should have its own *champ d'expérience*. The head of one of the higher primary schools told me he had no very great belief in the *enseignement agricole* unless the teacher had a *champ d'expérience*. A very bright teacher at Chaumont confessed he felt he really could not do much without a *champ d'expérience*, and meant to ask the village council for one next year. And, again, the primary inspector of Vendôme looked on the multiplication of *champs d'expérience* as the one thing needful. This view is also strongly held by the *administration* at the present time, and M. René Leblanc, who is already ready to practise what he preaches, established in a small corner of the Exhibition a model school garden, which only covered about 74 square yards, or a little over two rods, an area which it should not be beyond the means of the smallest commune to provide. † The garden itself (see plan below) represents exactly the *mise en scène* of the principal demonstrations suggested in the celebrated circular of January 4th, 1898.\*

Need of  
*champs  
d'expéri  
everywi*



1. Maize. 2. Tomatoes. 3. Potatoes. 4. Leeks, spinach, strawberries, all without manure. 2<sup>1</sup>. Some strips with manure without phosphoric acid. 3<sup>1</sup>. Id., without nitrate. 4<sup>1</sup>. Same culture, with complete manure. F. Fountain. K. Meteorological kiosk.

\* So runs the official account in the "Revue Pédagogique," from which the extract which follows is taken.



The *jardin*  
*modèle* at  
the Exhibi-  
tion.

"Many of the plants were sent direct from school gardens. The botanical bed in the middle is composed of field flowers. It suffices for the study of the characteristics of the principal families, and is none the worse for being ornamental. In the foreground of the garden is a narrow bed containing the principal leguminous and gramineous plants that every cultivator ought to know. To the left five little squares of a mètre each have been sown with a suitable mixture of these leguminous and gramineous plants, in order to form specimen meadow plots. In a quadrangular plot of four mètres square, whose soil is practically sterile, four distinct strips have been prepared for demonstrative culture. The first is the standard with no manure; the last has received a complete dressing of manure. In the two others one fertilizing element is wanting: nitrate is lacking in one and phosphoric acid in the other. The plants in each are identical, and include maize, tomatoes, potatoes, and in the last square, leeks, spinach, and strawberries. Against the wall at the side are climbing plants, vines, and fruit-trees." In spite of the torrid heat and the persistent attentions of the Paris sparrows, the garden looked remarkably well, and the experiments were most satisfactory.

Need of  
sanction.

Finally, if the teaching is to have the full importance attached to it that it deserves, it must be placed on the same footing as the other compulsory subjects for the written part of the *certificat d'études*. Introduced at first among the oral subjects, it is now included in the written part of the examination, with the proviso, however, of only counting at the oral. As the latter part of the examination is often more or less a formality (only one or two per cent. of the candidates being plucked at it), it is evident that agricultural education should be placed on the same level as the other main subjects, with which it is certainly of equal importance.

The extra  
prizes.

It possesses, nevertheless, one advantage which is not shared by the other subjects. In most departments examinations are organised, at which prizes are awarded to the best pupils, and also to the masters who have taught them.\* My Russian colleague on the jury, to whose able report reference has already been made, reported unfavourably as to the practical value of those examinations. They led to mere cramming, and neither the examining staff was big enough to make the examination serious, nor was the time given to the examination sufficient. Since then it is plain much progress has been made. The improvement that has undoubtedly taken place in the schools must necessarily assert a beneficial effect on the qualities of pupils presented at the examinations, though I happened upon one or two persons who were still sceptical of their efficacy.

\* These are awarded partly on the performance of the pupils and partly on essays sent in by the teachers on some agricultural subject. To give the smaller schools a chance of competing, the schools in Sarthe are divided into three classes—(1) higher primary, (2) schools with three departments, and (3) schools with one or two departments.

The examination is in two parts. First there is a composition on some written subject (with perhaps other questions appended) common to all the schools examined, and then a sort of roving commission go round the schools and examine the children. For the following specimen papers I have to thank M. Javary, inspector at Tours. The method employed in the first part of these papers is familiar to the British public from the missing word competitions.

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Year 1900.

SCHOOL AGRICULTURAL COMPETITION.

Name of School

Schools of yours.

(GIRLS.)

KNOWLEDGE OF COMMON THINGS.

Name of Scholar

*(Read attentively each question and insert in the dotted space the proper word.)*

1. The air of the atmosphere is principally composed of two gases, which are:—1st, . . . . . ; 2nd, . . . . .
2. The one of these two gases which supports combustion and respiration is called . . . . .
3. Water appears in three different states according to its temperature ; these three states are : the . . . . . state ; the . . . . . state ; the . . . . . state.
4. Water is not always drinkable ; in order that it may be so it is necessary to . . . . . it or to . . . . . it.
5. Defective heating apparatus can cause asphyxia in allowing to escape into the room two dangerous gases, one called . . . . . and the other . . . . .
6. The four principal fermented drinks are . . . . .
7. All fermented drinks contain a dangerous element called . . . . .
8. Phosphorus enters into the composition of . . . . . and into the composition of chemical manures called . . . . .
9. The best clothes in summer and in winter are made of . . . . . stuff.
10. To get rid of insects and molluscs, injurious to cultivation, it is necessary to introduce into gardens . . . . . and . . . . .
11. The complete flower is composed of four principal parts, which are : 1st, the (masculine), composed of . . . . . ; 2nd, the (feminine), composed of . . . . . ; 3rd, the (plural) . . . . . ; 4th, the (masculine), composed of . . . . .
12. Bees are housed in . . . . . which contain a number of insects, which amount from . . . . . to . . . . . and contain each a . . . . . and . . . . . and . . . . .
13. The finest wools are derived from . . . . . sheep ; the sum total of the wool covering these sheep is called . . . . .

*Questions of Domestic Economy.*

*(Answer each question in the space left in blank—space given, from two to three lines.)*

1. Why must one air rooms? 2. Why should one not allow plants to be left in the room? 3. What precautions are to be taken in cleaning and preparing petroleum and spirit lamps? 4. What is the use of ashes in washing? 5. What precautions are to be taken during a thunderstorm in the house or in the fields?

6. What is the first aid to be given to a person who has been bitten by a viper? 7. In a case of poisoning what is the first aid to be given to the patient while awaiting the doctor's arrival? 8. Bread-making, the use of yeast.

*Drawing (space given, half a page).*

Design an apron. You will lightly indicate with a dotted line the hem, the belt, and the pockets.

*Book-keeping.*

A farmer's wife goes to the market. She sells 5 chickens at 3 fr. 75 cent. a piece, 6 kilos of butter at 2 fr. 10 cent. the half kilo, 3 dozen eggs at 90 cent. a dozen. She buys 3 metres of calico at 55 cent. a metre, 1 kilo 250 gr. of coffee at 5 fr. 50 cent. the kilo, and spends 2 fr. 40 cent. on small purchases. Make out her account for receipts and expenditure, and indicate the sum brought forward.

*Short Essay (about half a page).*

1. Butter: its making and preservation—salt butter, melted butter. 2. The Silkworm: its metamorphoses; products obtained from it.

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SCHOOL AGRICULTURAL COMPETITION.

Year 1900

(Boys.)

Schools of  
Tours.

KNOWLEDGE OF COMMON THINGS.

(Read attentively each question, and insert in the dotted space the proper word.)

1. Plants derive from the air a gas, . . . . . acid, which they decompose by means of their . . . . ., thanks to the light of the . . . . .

2. Fermented liquors (name four: . . . . .) . . . . . are (useful or injurious) . . . . . when taken in moderation; distilled liquors, such as . . . . . are always injurious.

3. Sulphur, whose colour is . . . . ., is employed in manufacture for . . . . . and in agriculture to combat a disease of the vine called . . . . .

4. Limestone is distinguishable from flint by the fact that limestone makes . . . . . with . . . . .; the effervescence is caused by the liberation of a gas called . . . . . acid.

5. Limestone is a carbonate of . . . . . while plaster is a . . . . of lime.

6. Lime is derived from a mineral called . . . . . which is burnt during several days in . . . apparatus called . . . . .

7. To increase the yield of artificial pastures one scatters on them . . . . . dust.
8. Atmospheric pressure is measured by the aid of instruments called . . . . . and temperature by the aid of instruments called . . . . .
9. In our districts when the barometer falls, it is a sign of . . . . .
10. Name two insectivorous mammals, the . . . . . and the . . . . .
11. The mammals most useful to man are : the . . . . . and the . . . . . ; they belong to the order of the . . . . .
12. Name an insect injurious to the vine ? . . . . . and one injurious to the corn ? . . . . .
13. Gives the names of the male, the female, and the young of the following races of animals :—
- Horses : 1st . . . . . ; 2nd . . . . . ; 3rd . . . . .
- Cattle : 1st . . . . . ; 2nd . . . . . ; 3rd . . . . .
- Sheep : 1st . . . . . ; 2nd . . . . . ; 3rd . . . . .
- Goats : 1st . . . . . ; 2nd . . . . . ; 3rd . . . . .
- Pigs : 1st . . . . . ; 2nd . . . . . ; 3rd . . . . .

*Short Agricultural Questions.*

*Reply briefly to each question in the space left blank (two or three lines generally left for each answer).*

1. How can one put out a chimney on fire ? 2. What precautions should be taken in a thunderstorm ? 3. What do you call a bird of prey ? How do you class them ? Are they useful or injurious ? 4. Among the batrachians one must respect the ugliest ; the . . . . . Why ? 5. What are the functions of the roots of plants ? 6. What is a pasture ? How many sorts of pastures are there ? 7. Name two plants which enter into the composition of natural pastures, and two others which enter into the composition of artificial pastures. 8. How do you manufacture spirits of wine, eau de vie, and cider brandy.

*Drawing.*

Design a simple leaf, indicating the name of the different parts of the leaf (lilac, or lime, or pear tree, for instance) ; next a composite (acacia, chestnut, for instance). (*Space given, half a page.*)

*Arithmetic.*

A vine owner buys 350 kilos of sulphur at 28 fr. the 100 kilos. As he pays ready money he profits by a certain discount, and only gives 93 fr. 10 cent. What is the rate of the discount ? (*Space given, half a page.*)

*Short Essays.*

*(Expand each of the following subjects.)*

1. The batrachians : characteristics and metamorphoses. (*Half a page.*)
2. Description of a storm : effects of atmospheric electricity ; how to protect oneself against the lightning.

In Calvados five out of six of the agricultural societies for the *arrondissements* hold similar examinations. The examiners are members of the associations and the professors of agriculture. The primary inspectors report to the academy inspector those teachers whose pupils have done particularly well, and the former receive medals and diplomas. Some even obtain the agricultural decoration. The *Société d'Encouragement* at Paris and other national agricultural societies also furnish subventions. I spoke to one of the inspectors about the practical nature of the examinations. He assured me the question had seriously occupied the attention of the agricultural associations, and that it now was really a thorough test, though he admitted that elsewhere teachers have sometimes taken it up as a speculation. (He spoke of one teacher as a *malin qui avait décroché une décoration.*) The system of agricultural education is probably more developed in Sarthe than in any other part of France. Last year (1899) for the prizes given by the agricultural society there were over 400 candidates in the *arrondissement* of Mamers. The children were all orally examined, and the questions bore particularly on the exact cultivation of their own particular district. Sarthe is particularly well equipped in agricultural education, as it possesses a professor for each *arrondissement*, as well as a departmental professor. For the whole of Sarthe there were last year (1898) over 800 candidates. The examination was held at thirty-three centres, mainly *chefs-lieux* of cantons, and it took a peripatetic board of examiners eight days to do the oral work. Again, in the regional examination, held by the Ministry of Agriculture every four years, in each of the four divisions of France, Sarthe, which is in the Western Division, obtained far the most prizes in the competition for that region. In Indre-et-Loire, in addition to the *concours agricoles*, I found there are *expositions agricoles*, at which the teachers exhibit the results of their experiments. The day is further utilised for the distribution of the rewards to the successful pupils in the agricultural competition, who are invited up to receive their prizes. Their expenses are paid, and the day is looked on as a very pleasant outing. These annual exhibitions are arranged by *arrondissements*, and are held in turn in the various *chefs lieux* of the cantons.

School  
agricultu  
exhibition

The moral of the whole curriculum of French primary education will be lost on English readers if they have not seen, from the brief notes on the ordinary subjects and the detailed examination of agricultural education, the way in which the subjects not only dovetail into one another but also overlap, with the result of producing, not indeed confusion, but cohesion.\* Thus the reading lesson is drawn on for *la morale*, the *morale* in its turn draws upon the history book, the history book is worked in with the geography, the geography, through its physical features, finds its basis in

The  
curriculum  
as a whole

\* The exact limits of the co-ordination of studies are well indicated in the "General Report of the Board Inspectors" to the London School Board (1901).

science, the science again is the *point de départ* for the agricultural teaching, which coalesces with arithmetic in the *compabilité agricole*, the arithmetic is utilised for the practical geometry, the practical geometry figures in the drawing syllabus, the drawing is closely linked to the writing\*, and the writing is worked through the spelling with the reading book, out of which springs again the recitation, which forms with it a happy hunting ground for the grammar questions. Thus the whole gamut of subjects are not only related, but inter-related, and finally correlated. And now, perhaps, is plain how impossible it is to completely isolate such a subject as *la morale* or agricultural education that cannot be severed from the whole curriculum without mutilating it, by cutting into at the time certain integral portions of other subjects, for the parts of the curriculum are not really detachable as the parts of a watch, they are members of a *corpus* of studies that make up the programme of elementary education.

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But when we come to the further question of how far it is possible to realise the programme, to put all these carefully-thought-out principles into execution, and follow out fully the indications of the different syllabuses, we at once come across the time problem, and the old difficulty which confronts all educators, of trying to get a quart of learning into a pint pot, presents itself. The French authorities try to get round the problem by telling the teachers to insist in their teaching on what seems to be the essential part, and in this way, no doubt, a country teacher will give his teaching a country cast, and a town teacher will give his a town cast. Yet, *qui s'embrasse trop étreint mal*, and many people think it would be better to regularise in theory what is already done in practice, and deliberately create a separate programme for town and country schools, as in fact has already been done in some departments for agriculture. A commencement of this has also been made in the *certificat d'études*, where agriculture and drawing figure as alternate subjects, with the result that country children generally take the former, and town children the latter. Such a division would have the immense benefit of preventing the teachers from attempting to cover too much ground. The teachers themselves appear to favour the idea. At the Congress of the "Amicales," at Paris, the following motion was carried. "Considering that it is unsuitable to impose on the sons of peasants the same studies as on the sons of workmen in the big towns, and that such a subject excellent at Paris is not at all so excellent in a sequestered village, and that each region, each big centre has different industrial and commercial aspirations; . . . the *Union* makes the following propositions: there shall be a different programme for town and country schools. For certain subjects a regional programme can be adopted." One inspector I spoke to on the subject told me he

\* Le dessin est une écriture particulière, l'écriture de la forme.—M. Pouillot, Academy Inspector of Cher, 1897.

had already proposed the idea at the conference at Havre, nor had he shrunk from carrying out the proposal to its logical conclusion of having different types of teachers for the different types of schools.

M. Le Chevallier, the Academy Inspector of Orne, is not only favourable to the change, but wrote about it in the pedagogical press, as far back as 1893-94. The director of a normal school declared himself to be a partisan of the idea, and added that it was acceptable to many inspectors, but that the *administration* was not yet converted. Government officials have necessarily to adopt a conservative attitude. Yet the problem in France is far simpler than with us. There is an absence of many complicating factors. The great inequalities in English salaries tend to rob the country of its best teachers, especially as the most valuable posts are in the towns. In France the towns possess but little economic attraction, for salaries are independent of localities. Hence rural teachers are less tempted to desert the country. A further tie is their official position as a government servant, which gives them a certain status in the village, to which they are often attached by birth or connexion. For, as has been already pointed out, the ordinary teacher often exhibits a strong tendency to gravitate back to his village or at least to its neighbourhood. There is already, therefore, a sort of unconscious selection at work among the teachers in France of a town or country post, the latter not being such a Hobson's choice as with us. This, combined with a general feeling in favour of some sort of decentralisation with a view to adapting the school more closely to local needs, renders an attempt at some sort of differentiation not altogether improbable.

## CHAPTER VI.—THE CERTIFICAT D'ETUDES.

The pedagogical and educational side of French education is supervised, as we have seen, by the inspectors. They look into the teaching given in the schools, and to them is entrusted the task of seeing that only fit and proper persons are admitted to the full exercise of the profession through the *certificat d'aptitude*. But their circumscriptions are often large and the distances very great. One inspector told me there were schools in his district he could only visit every other year. True, there are the annual or half-yearly teachers' meetings, which must be of considerable use in helping to keep the teachers and teaching methods together, even if the inspector does not always get the full value out of them.

The question therefore naturally arises, Is this yearly audit of the schools, with the teachers' meetings to talk over its results, sufficient? Dare the State, which is the largest shareholder in the national schools, content itself with these safeguards? Is not some sort of general examination test

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necessary for the masters themselves, to keep them more or less in line, and up to the mark, and to prevent them straggling? Otherwise, with no general standard before them, with no really binding syllabus on which to model their teaching, are not standard and perspective in teaching likely to suffer? Is not such a test an excellent thing for the pupils in presenting them with a definite goal to aim at, at least the most enterprising and promising of them? Such a test must not be an obligatory but a voluntary one, for the examination which acts as a sort of Caudine forks, under which all must pass, is not likely to be popular in any country, and its evils have been sufficiently patent in England to need of no recapitulation. But does not a voluntary test tend to create a sort of intellectual *elite* in primary schools? Why, then, should not what is a good thing for secondary and higher education be good for primary? Surely it is desirable to give to the best of the boys who leave the school some sort of hall-mark which shows that in their school career they have satisfied their natural judges. Are not employers likely to recognise this and give such boy the preference when a post is going? And in this case, is not it of the highest value to promote good relations between business men and the school, and draw them closer together, instead of the present happy-go-lucky fashion in which each party in this country goes its own way and puts all the blame on the other? Does not, at least in a country like France, such an examination escape from one of the great evils of an over-production of diplomas, which, as they imply more or less a Government guarantee of employment, suffer from a similar depreciation as other paper values, when the State has issued more bank notes than it can meet, whereas a certificate for passing the leaving examination in the primary school could never be construed into anything like a claim on the credit of the State for the humblest post? In setting up such a standard of attainment, which all have a chance of reaching if they have moderate abilities, without let or hindrance to their fellows, are not the most dangerous features of indiscriminate, "all against all," cut-throat, competition eliminated, and along with it many of the evils of over-pressure and over-work? And, lastly, when such a test is not written only, but oral, does it not act, not merely as an assay of knowledge, but also as a test for the application of knowledge, by putting a premium on qualities which are of real worth in daily life—presence of mind, power to utilise one's knowledge and intelligence, and to put them forth in a skilful and shapely fashion? Surely the knack of grasping a situation at once, or thinking out a problem quickly, when time is all important, of seeing a point two minutes before one's competitors, is, after soundness of judgment, one of the most valuable factors in business, and oral examinations are assuredly one of the best ways of bringing out such qualities.

ertifi- It is probable that arguments somewhat of this sort have led to the founding and maintenance of the *certificat d'études* in France,

But though it may be said to have entered into the habits and customs of the people, it has lately been made the subject of a very violent series of attacks, which shows how necessary it is to inquire carefully into all the workings of any system before pronouncing on its ultimate value. So much has this been the case that at the teachers' conference of *Amicales* no less than four reports out of nineteen presented on the subject demanded its suppression pure and simple, and all the others proposed modifications more or less profound.

One of the most thorough reports on the subject was that presented by the Paris teachers. It states that to-day the *certificat* is a hackneyed title which no longer signifies anything. This is due in the first case, according to the report, to the excessive easiness of the examination, and still more so to the abuse of the system of *repêchage*, which consists in going over the papers of those who are "ploughed" and attempting to find extenuating circumstances for such as are just the wrong side of the line, in order to bring their marks up to the necessary minimum. These "humane" proceedings have been pushed to such excess that candidates have been let through because they were at the end of their school time! Again, by the law of 1882 candidates can present themselves as soon as they are over eleven. This provision, which was framed with the idea of encouraging the children to present themselves for the examination, by offering the premium of a year's exemption to those who passed it, has led instead to the growing depopulation of the school and the premature departure of the more promising scholars. Other evils attributed to it are that it distorts the curriculum and creates unhealthy rivalry between the masters of different schools.

The criticisms of the numerous teachers I spoke to on the subject were not so sweeping in character, though on the whole they were rather unfavourable than favourable. The following is a rough table of their opinions. The certificate is a good subject for emulation, affording both teachers and taught a useful objective, according to one inspector, though several teachers said they could dispense with this stimulus. It leads to cramming; this cramming leads to over-pressure for the pupils and over-work for the masters, as one teacher bluntly put it, *c'est la mort aux maîtres*. But some of this over-pressure must be put down to the irregular attendance, according to an inspector. It is true that teachers are told not to press the children, but, on the other hand, they declare that much is required of them. Then another result of the examination is that the non-obligatory subjects suffer. In French schools the last month of the school year is given to revision, and the non-obligatory subjects are more or less dropped in view of the examination. Children are more inclined to leave after the *certificat* than formerly. The examination is good for maintaining the level of studies, but leads to exaggerated notions in the parents as to its value. It is regarded by some as a *petit bachot* (small

B.A.), confounded by others with the *brevet*, while in Brittany admiring parents look on a child who has been successful as a *petit notaire* (what a pathetic side there is to all this simplicity!), and many openly speak of him as *un petit savant*, who has learnt all that his master can teach him. The *certificat* is good for commercial circles, but its use is less obvious in the country. Again, the oral examination, which might be made most valuable, is too much of a formality. For whereas 23 per cent. are generally plucked at the *écrit*, only 1 or 2 per cent. are ploughed in the *viva-voce* portion.

nce.

This catalogue of defects is certainly a formidable one, but, after all, these criticisms are for the most part criticisms of detail. As the teachers of Paris say very truly in their report on the subject, there is much truth in the harsh criticism that the *certificat* has received, but if it were necessary to abolish all the institutions and laws which have engendered abuses, there would be none left to keep. Now the *certificat* is already an institution. It has become acclimatised, it is regarded as necessary\* by many parents and useful by business men, and the drawbacks cited above seem for the most part to be incidental to, rather than inherent in, the examination.

age  
r.

Most of the evils enumerated above come from the single fact that the candidates are presented too young. Being more or less immature they have to be forced by the teacher. This leads to over-pressure on both sides. Were the age raised to 12, or even 13, this would undoubtedly ease the pressure, though the number of those who take their examination before 12 years of age is exaggerated. Of the children who passed in 1896, 73 per cent. were over 12; 15 per cent. were 11 on the 1st January, 1896; 10 per cent. were eleven the day of the examination; and only 2 per cent. were under 11. One teacher, indeed, said to me that to raise the age would lessen the attractiveness of the examination. But, as he added, it was at present a great disgrace to fail at it, it could evidently afford to shed some of its specious attractiveness in order to gain in real value. With the prestige already attached to it, it should rather induce children to stay on and obtain it. By putting up the age first a year, and then at intervals another six months at a time, it might, perhaps, in the long run be raised to 13, a figure that some of the *Amicales* propose. Much can be done by the teachers themselves in discouraging the children from entering so young. Thanks to this system in the circonscription of Blois, practically no children are presented now under 12, and some are nearer 13 than 12. This was largely the doing of M. Charton, the primary inspector. The

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ms.

\*How thoroughly the *certificat* and diplomas generally have become a popular institution may be seen from the following passage from Mgr. the Bishop of Le Mans, who, in a pastoral letter, says: "Le diplôme est entré dans nos mœurs. Il jouit d'un grand crédit auprès des enfants et de leurs parents. On garde, on encadre, on expose avec complaisance cette attestation authentique du mérite reconnu. C'est une gloire de famille. Aussi bien, l'emploie-t-on sans cesse dans le monde scolaire."

neglect of the non-obligatory subjects could be met by including them either in the *écrit* or the oral, and by rendering the latter part of the examination more difficult. One obvious reform is the inclusion of the agricultural examination amongst the subjects which count in the written examination. As for the evils of the system of *repêchage*, it is evidently a matter of stiffening the hands of those who preside over the examinations. A circular from headquarters to the inspectors who act as chairmen of the examination board defining the limits beyond which the prerogative of mercy might not be strained should go far towards checking the abuse.

It is interesting to note that the teachers at their conference voted the necessity and retention of the *certificat* by a large majority, which showed that, despite its current defects, they appreciated its pedagogical and utilitarian value.

But there is one argument which all the attacks on the *certificat* have left untouched, and that is the argument of the interests of the State, which was put forward at the beginning of the chapter. The examination is, in fact, for the State one of the means of verifying the work of the school, and teachers, however honourable and disinterested they may be, cannot, from the mere force of things, be the best judges of how they should be supervised, any more than a body of workmen can prescribe the duties of their foreman, or civil servants lay down the exact manner in which they shall be controlled by the head of the office. Their criticism in this, as in other matters, is highly valuable, but they do not constitute the final court of appeal.

The *certificat* is, happily, by no means regarded as a sort of ark of covenant, on which any one who lays his hand is deemed sacrilegious in official circles. On the contrary, it has already undergone several useful reforms. The introduction of agriculture, first at the oral, and then at the *écrit*, only requires its being placed on the same footing as the other written subjects to prove a most useful innovation. A circular, called the circular Bourgeois, which laid down that spelling mistakes should be weighed rather than counted, has led to an advantageous relaxation in the somewhat Draconian rules that governed the orthographical section of the examination. This side of the examination will be further lightened by the Leygues circular on spelling, which cleared away a certain number of grammatical cobwebs spun by the *a priori* grammarians of the eighteenth century. Though the circular has been in part abrogated by a second circular, it has largely produced the effect desired of inducing teachers to no longer insist on an accurate knowledge of these minutiae from their pupils.

Of the general nature of the examination, and its rules and regulations, there is nothing to add to an exhaustive paper on the subject by Sir Joshua Fitch, published by the Board of Education, which contains a most valuable discussion on its possible adoption in England, that all should read. The following short description by an inspector of how the examination is carried out in the country may not be without interest:—

Claims of  
the State.

Previous  
reforms of  
the certifi-

Conduct  
of the  
examinati-

The examination lasts the whole day. It begins with the dictation, then follows the French composition and the arithmetic. While one subject is being done by the children the preceding one is corrected by the examiners. Then comes the *déjeuner*, which is taken *au galop*, followed by the drawing or the composition in agriculture. This is finished at three o'clock. By four o'clock all correcting is finished, and the classification of successful candidates is made. Those who have qualified for the oral examination are called in. The oral then begins, and lasts till seven. It includes reading, recitation, history, and geography. Only one or two children are plucked at the oral. It is not serious enough!

I was unable to be present at any examination in the provinces, as the best season for seeing the crops did not coincide with the examination "harvest," which comes off at the end of July. I was, however, through the kindness of a colleague of mine on the jury, M. Baudrillard, Primary Inspector of the Fifteenth arrondissement, present at the correction of a huge examination in Paris, which took several days to carry out. I was particularly interested in what I saw, as I came in for the *repêchage*, but did not think the judges were unduly lenient.

political  
influence.

There was one point I was particularly anxious to clear up, and that was the somewhat delicate question as to whether political and social influences made themselves felt at the examination, as had been suggested to me in one quarter. With that charming frankness which is so characteristic of the administration, and, it may be added, is such a mark of its strength, the various officials I approached freely conversed with me on the subject, and, as far as I could make out by very careful inquiry, the examination is well safeguarded in this respect. To begin with the pedagogical element are always in a majority on the examination board. The children's names are concealed, and each is denoted by a number. The inspector is president, and, as such, arranges the method of correction. If he even suspects any partiality, or undue tenderness for any candidate on the part of one of the lay members, he can easily checkmate this by getting the paper in question looked over by four or five persons, so that any startling discrepancy in the marking is easily noticed. Again, in the *repêchage* the copy is read out to the whole assembly, and the particular mark is made a point of general discussion. Of course, if these precautions are violated abuses can creep in, but *quis custodiet ipsos custodes*? One cannot protect those who are remiss against themselves.

setting the  
upers.

In each department the setting of the written work is divided up among the primary inspectors, one inspector selecting the questions in one subject, and another in another. In this way uniformity is secured for the whole department. Between the departments, however, there is no rigid uniformity, and I was told that the standard varied accordingly, being higher in the east of France than elsewhere, as education in that region is the most advanced.

conclusion.

To sum up. The *certificat* seems to be a valuable tool for sharpening the nation's intelligence. It has, however, need of further improvements to bring it up to its real pitch of efficiency. Previous reforms show that it is not an unprogressive

institution. With the raising of the age, the restriction of *repêchage*, and a few other minor changes, the chief of its present defects should disappear. There will remain the great advantage it possesses in interesting parents in the school, and in assisting employers to select their subordinates. For it is not a labour certificate, which is the sign of a bare minimum of efficiency, but it bears the hall mark of a merit diploma. And, finally, it forms a useful part of the State's audit, and enables the latter to maintain a certain evenness and level of attainment. At the same time it is elastic, inasmuch as the examination papers are not set for the whole country, which would lead to some of the worst species of uniformity, but by departments, which allows of the questions in special subjects like agriculture being framed to meet the needs of the teaching in the district. Yet another proof, if one were needed, of the departmental differentiation which is silently going on!

The bodily transfer of the *certificat* to England would probably be no easy matter. It would be an obvious mistake to make the examination a uniform one for the whole country. If it were made a local matter, perhaps, with the difficulties about areas in country districts, it would be as well to take the county as the unit of area, on the understanding that the examination itself would be held in at least one school in each administrative district. The examiners might include the inspector and his assistants, together with representatives of the school board and managers of voluntary schools. It would likewise be advantageous to invite the Technical Education Committee to participate in the examination, as a certain number of the brighter children in the elementary schools pass on to other classes and institutions in which they are interested. Under the same title the representatives of secondary education might be asked to sit on the Examination Board, for they too receive recruits through the County Council Scholarships from the Primary Schools. The chief opposition to such an examination would probably come from the teachers. They might, however, be conciliated by the adoption of the procedure of the German leaving *certificat*, in which the teacher of the school assists in the examination of his own boys. The French object to this plan on the ground that the teacher cannot be both judge and party. But the trial is not so much a hostile action of the State against an individual, as a friendly one of arbitration, in which the examiners have rather the rôle of assessors than judges.

Possibility  
transfer to  
England.

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## CHAPTER VII.—THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS (MAINLY PRIVATE).

France is under no inconsiderable obligations to the religious orders, and especially to the schools of the Christian Brotherhood (Les Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne), for what they have done for the past.

popular education in the past. According to the Pedagogical Dictionary of M. Buisson, the former Director of Primary Education, the name of their founder, \* Jean Baptiste de la Salle, "ought to be placed at the head of the organisers of primary instruction in France and Europe." Their teaching in certain of its developments is, according to the same authority, admittedly "the starting point of higher primary instruction," as well as forming "the first outline of lower secondary education." To them, apparently, also falls the honour of having been first in the field in commercial and industrial education. They also, as has been already noticed, upheld the methods of simultaneous teaching against the partisans of the mutual (or monitorial) method, and thereby conferred an important service to national pedagogy. Of their other useful innovations and improvements in the sphere of secondary education it is unnecessary to speak here.

Disappointing impressions.

It is all the more regrettable that one has to state that the private religious schools in rural districts, in so far as one can judge by the few specimens one visited, by no means produce such a favourable effect as the State schools. As regards buildings and equipment, there seemed little to choose between the two. It is rather in respect to staffing and teaching methods that the religious schools appear to be inferior. This inferiority is not of yesterday. In 1859 Matthew Arnold wrote:—"Hardly anywhere in France (in this the reports of all the inspectors concur) can the private boys' schools, whether they be lay or congreganist, hold their own in the competition with the public schools." And again he states that the instruction "of the best lay schools, however, is unquestionably, on the whole, more advanced," and shows in an interesting note that this superiority goes back as far as 1818, "when the rector of the Academy of Strasbourg gives as a reason why there were no schools of the brethren in Alsace, then, as now, one of the best educated districts in France, that, "dans les endroits plus populeux, et plus riches, on exige un enseignement supérieur à celui des Frères."

Extenuating circumstances.

In any criticism on these schools, however, it must not be forgotten that they are entirely self-supporting, receiving neither grants nor doles, which makes them a very heavy drain on their supporters. As Mr. Morant, in his able report on "the Higher Primary School of France," well puts it, they "have to compete, by means of voluntary subscriptions alone, without a farthing of State aid or public funds, with the now universally free public secular schools, with excellent buildings, admirable equipment,

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\* For an admirable account of the life of this saintly personage see the *Tablet*, May 26th and June 2nd, 1900, which gives a most touching picture of the utter self-effacement of this great man, and his sublime devotion to the cause of the education of the poor. The only part of the articles which seems open to criticism is the insufficient notice taken of previous workers in the same field. This may be supplemented by Matthew Arnold's account in his report. (M.A., pp. 21-24.)

and well-trained, State-paid, high-salaried staff of directors and teachers," whereas (apart altogether from the cost of new school buildings, which is wholly defrayed from voluntary contributions) the voluntary schools in England and Wales received from the State in 1898-9 a sum amounting to 77·7 per cent. of the total expenditure on their "maintenance."

Of the schools I visited there were, roughly, two types. Some-<sup>Organisa-</sup> times the school had been founded by a wealthy local magnate, <sup>tion.</sup> who also paid the teacher, who was a layman, with perhaps a religious sister to help him. Sometimes the teaching staff was entirely religious, and the building also belonged to them. The two lay teachers I came across were not badly paid (one received 1,200 francs, and was secretary to the *Mairie*). Both naturally enjoyed great freedom in the matter of arranging their lessons, subjects, and time-tables as they pleased, being responsible only to the patron of the school. The religious teachers were not always in so favourable a position. They depend to a large extent on the offerings of the faithful. This is supplemented by the *commissions diocésaines*, and the *curé* has also to put his hand in his pocket. Considering the slender stipends of the latter, who are passing rich on £40 a year, and who generally receive far less—the official income at St. Jean de Livet was only £16 a year—the strain on them must be very heavy.\* The *frères*, of course, give their services for nothing, but they certainly cannot be accused of living on the fat of the land. In one school the director told me there were just six francs a day (five shillings) to keep the three of them, himself, an adjoint, and a *frère* who did the cooking.

It has been already pointed out that all teachers since 1881 are <sup>The teach-</sup> obliged to possess at least the *brevet élémentaire*, but there are still in the religious schools a considerable number of teachers who were in office prior to the law. As regards training, I could not discover whether the lay teachers in religious schools are trained at all. Those *frères* belonging to the "Christian Brotherhood" are prepared in the *scholasticat* attached to its novitiate, but the period of training (a year or six months) is far shorter than that in the normal schools. The reason for this is that the religious schools have been very severely handicapped by the compulsory military service. To begin with, their teachers have to serve three years instead of one, like the State teachers. This ordeal proves too severe a strain for some of the weaker brethren, and a certain number throw up their vows before their term of service is over. This causes a shortage in the supply of teachers, and thereby obliges the young novices to largely act as monitors, instead of devoting their entire time to working for the *brevet*. So serious is this lack

\* "To-day the cost of the 'free schools' becomes heavier and heavier, and the *curés* are wondering if they will be able to continue. One will perhaps be obliged to largely abandon them."—Extract from letter appearing in the *Tablet*, December 8th, 1900, signed Henri Polack, 2<sup>me</sup> Vicaire de St. Augustin, Paris.



of supply in country districts, that in one *arrondissement* I was told on reliable authority, of all the seven religious schools for boys it contains, only one was not actually in contravention with the law in the matter of an adequate supply of teachers.

ethods.

The teaching methods again, according to the inspectors, are inferior to those in the State schools. This is probably due to the fact that the teachers, to begin with, are less efficiently trained, and what is more, they have no such thorough system of oversight to keep them up to the mark as prevails in the State schools. The public inspectors have only the right to examine the registers and the sanitary state of the school, but not the methods of teaching. They are very often asked to do so, but the greater number of them steadily refuse, and the few who do confirm the general opinion given above.

The following passage from Matthew Arnold, in 1859, shows that the practice is a long-standing one:—

So strongly do these establishments (private) feel the advantage conferred by the publicity and stimulant of thorough inspection that they constantly request the inspector to extend his examination from their school premises to their school instruction. Generally he refuses, and for reasons which his English brethren would do well to remember. "If I find the instruction ever so bad or injudicious," he says, "I have no power to get it changed, and I am bound to give public service where I know it can have results." Many an English squire in like manner wishes for the stimulant of inspection, while he is determined to keep his school independent. [The instance is no longer true, though it would be were inspectors dependent on petty local authorities, but it may stand as an illustration explaining the attitude of the French inspectorate.] In other words, he wishes to have a landscape-gardener or an architect to talk to him about his school, to have his advice, and to be free to dismiss him, as he might dismiss the landscape-gardener or the architect the moment his advice becomes unpalatable. He wishes to have a public functionary to act as showman to his school once a year. But it is not for this that the State pays its servants. State supervision is useless if it can be rejected the moment it becomes a reality, the moment it tends to enforce general reasons against individual caprice. The counsel of inspection to be of any real worth must be in some way or other authoritative.

The teaching, as far as I could learn and see, is still largely based on the old scholastic method of developing the memory, though the system is probably less mnemonic than it was. One teacher seemed to me to put the whole system in a nutshell when he openly regretted he had no longer any children who could stand up and recite off two or three pages by heart. This general impression was confirmed by what I afterwards saw in the otherwise remarkable exhibition of the Christian Brotherhood at the Exhibition, and it was endorsed by the opinion and vote of the great majority of my colleagues. It may not be the latest pedagogy, but it showed, at least at the Exhibition, what surprising results can still be obtained by this means. I was glad to have the good fortune to visit the latter, as it helped to lessen the indifferent impression I had received of the religious schools in the country districts.

ligious  
struction.

Religious instruction takes up about four and a-half hours a week, but much of this is given at the end of the class. In one

school it only amounted to about three hours. Much pains is taken with the spelling, but the writing, for which the *frères* are renowned, was generally poor. And such copy-books as I saw were neither so clean nor so tidy as those in the lay schools. I was told the *cahiers* are generally very neat, being mostly used to make fair copies of the revised lesson after it has been put on the black-board.

In most of the boys' schools I visited there was no agricultural instruction, but in one school I saw a very fine school museum, with specimens of different kinds of grain and chemicals. In none, however, was there any *champ d'expérience*.

Some teachers present their pupils for the *certificat d'études*, with good results. Others, who fancy that the examiners are down on children from the religious schools, present their scholars for a sort of kindred examination called the *certificat d'études libres*. At Le Mans there is a regular Catholic Committee, who have founded a *certificat d'instruction primaire et d'éducation chrétienne*. The Abbé Laude, in speaking of these examinations in his report of March, 1897, said :—" Our parchments are held in high esteem. . . . Our jury passes for severe. . . . The administration has never spoken ill of our examinations. One has rather spoken of them with deference in simply attempting to make the Sisters believe that the official diplomas are equal to ours." The number of candidates in 1891 was 158, and in 1892 it rose to 391. In 1895, 1,500 children had already taken the examination.

The books in the Christian Brotherhood schools are composed by a special commission. Anonymity is not, however, always preserved; some of the best geographical maps are the work of the Frère Alexis.

The system of prizes and rewards is pushed to a far greater extent in these schools than in those of the State. The "decoration" craze is probably overdone. An inspector told me of one school in which there were ten *décorés* out of sixty boys. In another school I saw an elaborate series of good conduct tickets of three colours (*très bien*, *assez bien*, and *bien*) for the month. The top children get a savings bank book. I also came across a sort of association for the more thoughtful children, called, if I mistake not, the *congrégation de la Vierge*, which no doubt has its religious uses.

The discipline seems to be easy. One teacher told me he solved all difficulties by threatening to send away any boy who was troublesome or unruly. At another school I was present during recreation time, and it was very pleasant to see the *frères* entering heart and soul into the children's games.

The *fréquentation* is apparently better than in the State schools. But there seems to be some doubt at headquarters whether the registers are always sufficiently carefully kept. One register I saw possessed the unique distinction of scoring 100 per cent. for its monthly compared with its yearly average. But it was not always so easy to get a look at the registers. In one school I found there

was a *bureau de bienfaisance*, which did much to help the *fréquentation*, especially in winter.

the girls' schools.

Of the one or two girls' schools I visited, the teachers seemed, with one exception, superior to the *frères*. The children looked generally contented and happy. I particularly recall the two lower classes at Beaumont (Sarthe), where the school is a State one but not yet laicised. The inspector put the children through their paces, and I was allowed to ask them a question or two, with the result that all parties seemed satisfied with the class, not excepting themselves. Both here and in other schools the tradition of good needlework was everywhere in evidence. A large sewing class at the convent school at Ecommoy showed me some very satisfactory work.

the future of these schools.

The boys' schools appear to be slowly on the decrease, which is not wonderful, considering the heavy strain on their supporters.\* In most country districts they are only to be found in a few of the small towns. Contrary to expectation, their chief strength lies in the big cities and in Paris, where the Christian Brotherhood have some fine schools. This is partly due to the fact that in these towns they can start paying classes. In rural districts, they are most numerous in the *château* country on the banks of the Loire. The religious schools for girls and infants are much more common, and probably hold their own better than the boys' schools, especially where they can levy fees, a point which gives them a certain air of respectability in the eyes of the small *bourgeoisie*.

statistics.

The figures of French educational statistics require rather careful scanning, in order to understand their exact significance. The laicisation voted in 1887 has now (1900) been completed for boys' schools, but a large number of the State mixed and girls' schools are still under *religieuses*, who hold the place for life. As these die off they are replaced by lay mistresses, and not infrequently the Catholics open a rival school in the neighbourhood for those girls whose parents wish them to continue under religious instruction. Thus if a State school of 100 pupils is laicised and a religious school is opened alongside and attracts 50 of the old pupils, according to one set of statistics the religious schools will apparently have gained 50 pupils during the year whereas the real truth is that the number of pupils under religious teaching has diminished by 50. This is, perhaps, best shown by the statistics for the schools. For whereas since 1882 the lay public and private have grown from 56,210 to 64,042 in 1897, the religious schools, public and private, have diminished from 19,425 to 18,451. In the period between 1891-1897 the number of pupils under religious teachers has fallen 35,881 (includes Algeria).

comparison between pupils under religious teachers.

The total number of pupils in primary and higher primary education in 1897 for all France under religious teachers in the State schools was 405,825, and in the private schools 1,197,626, or a

\* See page 39 and note on page 149.

grand total of 1,603,451, against 3,823,760 in the lay schools. This does not, however, include the maternal schools. If the pupils in these be added to the above, we find there are 1,955,199 children under religious teachers, against 4,175,656 under lay instructors. Excluding the maternal schools, there are only 436,726 boys in the *Congréganistes* schools, against 2,282,948 in the lay schools. According to their own statistics, the Christian Brotherhood have in France 1,063 schools, with 10,042 teachers and 215,326 pupils. It is worth noting that their schools are managed by regions.

The competition between the State and religious schools, which cannot be altogether an evil, is very keen. I was present at a friendly discussion on the subject between a religious teacher and an official representative of lay education. The *frère* complained of the violent recruitment carried on by the mayor, his adjoints, and all who bore office under him, in favour of the lay school. His opponent retorted that the children were veritably begged by the sisters and other good souls even before they came into the world. Such an example of the benefits of free competition, where there is no fear of the two interests combining, should gladden the heart of an old-fashioned economist. The other side of the shield is not quite so satisfactory, as some parents use the rival schools to play off one against the other, and send their children at one time to the lay school and at another to the religious, to the general distraction of the teachers in each.

The Competition between State and religious schools

## CHAPTER VIII.—THE TRAINING COLLEGES.

### (a) BUILDINGS, FINANCE, STAFF.

Each department, with a very few exceptions, is provided with a separate training college for men and women teachers, who, as has been already stated, nearly all are natives of the department, and return to its schools when they have finished their training. I visited no less than four of these institutions for men and three for girls, and took particular pains to get a general notion of their working, as well as of the agricultural education they provided, because they are the nursery of the rural teacher and help to explain many points in his culture and character.

We have already seen that according to the law of 1879 the departments were obliged to build and maintain in repair the buildings and furniture of the normal schools, the State paying for the teaching and the keep of the pupils.\* I inquired into the cost of some of the buildings I visited. That at Caen, which is an exceedingly fine edifice, standing in its own grounds of about ten acres, cost the enormous sum of two million francs (£80,000). This, however, was built at the height of the educational boom, and the lean years

Cost of building.

\* The cost to the State amounted in 1897 to 8,222,683 francs, or about £328,900. The vote in 1900 was slightly less—7,618,320 francs, or about £304,732.

that have since followed have made it impossible to shift the women's college at Caen from its present *locale*, which being part of the ancient palace of William the Conqueror, as an architectural monument leaves nothing to be desired, but is ill adapted to school uses. The *école normale pour les jeunes filles* at Alençon is a very fine new building, two stories high, standing in a delightful garden, and was built at a cost of 600,000 francs (£24,000). The men's college at Alençon was built in 1832 and rebuilt in 1840; it is therefore one of the oldest in France [the oldest of all the French *écoles normales* was that of Strassburg, which was founded in 1810]. Its cost was only 152,000 francs, and this included two and a-half acres of ground. I forgot to ask the cost of the men's college at Le Mans; the women's was erected for about 200,000 francs. At Loches the men's college, built in 1885, cost £16,000, apart from the site, which was given by the town. These sums seem well worth placing on record in order to indicate the liberal, not to say lavish, manner the local authorities have in times past subsidised education.

Cost of  
repairs.

The annual cost of up-keep and repairs to the departments, apart from the *amortissement* of the building debt, does not seem to be very formidable. Thus at Alençon the average outlay for the men's college is 800 francs a year for the building, 400 francs for the furniture. Of course, special credits are necessary from time to time. At Loches, for instance, no less than 3,200 francs was spent one year on extraordinary repairs, and in 1898 the department of Loir-et-Cher spent 12,388 francs on a house for the bursar, the State giving a subvention of 8,000 francs as well. These are, however, extraordinary outlays.

Cost to the  
State.

The cost to the State naturally varies. The average is rather higher in the smaller colleges than elsewhere, owing to the teaching expenses working out at more per head than in the larger schools. Caen\* (men's), about 540 francs (of which about 320 for food, 16 for washing, 31 for books, etc.). Le Mans (women), 486 francs in 1898, 474 in 1899 (293 for food, 30 for washing, 16 for books and paper. Le Mans (men) about 500 francs (of which 307 for food). Loches (men), 580 francs. All the above totals are for maintenance only. Another 500 a year may be reckoned for teaching. This brings Le Mans up to 1,000 francs, and Loches up to 1,080 francs.† The actual figures for Alençon (men) for certain years since 1882 are as follows:—

1882-951.	1890-1,272.	1897-1,251.
1888-1,198.	1893-1,247.	1898-1,246.
1889-1,115.	1895-1,314.	1899-1,291.

\* I have to thank M. Vieillot, the secretary to the Academy Inspector, for supplying me with a complete MS. copy of the *École Normale* budget and expenditure.

† These figures are taken from an interesting monograph on the school prepared by M. Enrray, the director of the school, for the Paris Exhibition which he kindly permitted me to copy.

Salaries are the chief reason for the increased cost in the last instance, as the director is now receiving the maximum treatment of 5,500 francs; on the other hand, one professor has been suppressed.

The State has hitherto paid for the pupils' books, but at the women's college at Le Mans it has been decided that the pupils shall hereafter buy their own, as they have suffered a certain amount of inconvenience in having no books of their own to take away.

The buildings for both sexes were in nearly all cases large and spacious. Even those of an older type, with the exception of the historic monument at Caen, were in no wise incommodious. In fact, with the exception of one school there was always plenty of room for all, and sometimes a good deal over. Thus, at Caen (men's), where I found the largest number, there were 72 pupils and room for 120. The other colleges had less pupils, but still plenty of room. Alençon with 32 pupils had room for 60, etc. The favourite form of building was round a shallow quadrangle with one side open. Time after time I find in my notes, "Class-room big, airy, and well lighted." There are also special rooms for physics and chemistry. In the latter, at least, the pupils not only receive lectures but perform experiments, and adequate *ateliers* are provided for the *travaux manuels*, whether in wood and iron work or in clay modelling and casting. The refectories are generally well lighted and large, though needing at times a new coat of paint or whitewash. Some of the modern kitchens are provided with noble ranges, which, being placed in the middle of the room, allow access on every side. The sanitation is satisfactory. In one or two schools the bath arrangements are insufficient. One director complained that he had only two baths at his disposal. At Alençon (women's) there was a room full of *bains à pied* for all, which fill or empty simultaneously through a simple mechanical contrivance. The dormitories were either divided up into cubicles or open. In the latter case there were generally two rows of beds down the room, though in a couple of schools they were placed three abreast. However, the windows were open everywhere. The dormitories were nearly always well lighted, in fact there was only one which suffered from the want of light. The lavatories were usually in a row at the side of the dormitories. The new school at Alençon (women's) was specially well provided in this respect. The ventilation everywhere was good. As a rule there was always an infirmary, but it generally formed part of the building; in one case the two sick-rooms were next the linen rooms, and in another adjoined a passage where the pupils' rifles were kept.

The ordinary staff of a normal college consists of a principal, with two professors of letters and two of science. When, however, the number of pupils falls below a certain level one of the professorships is suppressed and the work divided up between the principal and the remaining professors. This makes the work of the principal rather heavy, as he always takes the *morale* and pedagogics. In one school I found the director had eighteen hours' school work besides his duties as director.

recruitment  
and salaries  
of the staff.

The directors are recruited by the same methods of examination as the inspectors, and in fact are generally taken from their ranks. The directresses are also selected by the same examination. The former are divided into five classes, and receive from 3,500 to 5,500 francs a year. (The directresses receive from 3,000 to 5,000 francs a year.) They are also lodged, and have other allowances. One of the professors acts also as *économiste*, or bursar, for which the pay is about 300 francs a year. A separate bursar is only appointed in schools with more than 60 pupils. The duties of the bursar are to keep the books, buy the food, or look after it when bought by contract, and see that furniture is kept in proper repair. A special book is also obligatory, in which is kept an account of all the garden produce sold or consumed on the premises. The duties seem rather lengthy. A married *économiste* told me she came sometimes at 6.15 in the morning and left at 7 p.m., her teaching duties taking up most of the forenoons and afternoons. The bursar is evidently an important person, as he is regularly "sworn in," and has to deposit caution money. The *travaux manuels* are nearly always taught by one of the professors of science, but agriculture is taught by the departmental professor. Singing and gymnastics are often taken by outside professors, and drawing and English (or German) sometimes. The number of teaching hours varies from 16 to 18 (Rapport E. P.). Professors in the normal schools are divided into five classes and paid from 2,500 to 3,400 francs a year. Lodging and board are included. In the women's colleges the salaries vary from 2,200 to 3,000 francs. These teachers are nearly all trained in the *écoles normales primaires supérieures*, where they are not only taught and trained to teach, but also to teach teachers.

#### (b) RECRUITMENT, DISCIPLINE, EXAMINATIONS.

game.

The normal schools depend directly on the rector, who either supervises them himself, or makes the academy inspector his deputy. An annual inspection is also carried out by the *inspecteurs généraux*, and by special *inspecteurs* for drawing and for auditing the accounts. Each school has a "*conseil d'administration*," composed of the academy inspector, four members named by the rector, and two representatives of the departmental council. Their principal duty is to look after the budget, which is drafted by the head of the college upon the useful principle of always asking for more money than is likely to be spent.

manner of  
recruitment.

As regards the method of recruitment, the departmental committee proposes every year to the Ministry a certain number of free scholarships at the *écoles normales*, sufficient to secure the service of the department. This, however, is not infrequently cut down. The social class, districts, and schools from which the successful candidates come have been already discussed. The possession of the *brevet élémentaire* is a *sine quâ non* for admission to the examination, which is both written and oral. Gymnastics are included in the

examination for men, and sewing in that for girls. Candidates are put up at the normal schools, and during the week their examination lasts they are subjected in addition to a sort of searching moral and intellectual inquiry by their future masters. Several principals complained that the pupils come to them badly prepared. Two of the directresses thought they were unduly pressed and taken over too much ground. The same defect was emphasised by a director, who further pointed out that when the pupils enter the college they are obliged to go over it again in a more thorough fashion. This rather spoils the freshness of the subject. His remedy was to make the *normale* section in the higher primary school lead up to the *école normale* more than it does, and even shorten its curriculum, so that the pupils might enter the normal college earlier, and remain five years.

Calibre of recruits.

Discipline

Up to 1880 the discipline was more or less monastic. Masters and pupils were subjected to a *régime* that assimilated the schools to lay seminaries. Since then great progress has been made. At Caen I came across a director whose methods would gladden the heart of any Anglo-Saxon pedagogue. He had done away with *surveillants*, and made the head pupils responsible. This only left the director and the bursar as the sole representatives of law and order. The pupils were, further, allowed to go unattended to outside lectures, and were also free on Sundays, after they had been received by the director from nine to eleven. Certainly to an English mind the gradual relaxation of discipline in favour of persons who are within a year or two to occupy responsible positions seems to be the true apprenticeship of liberty. I am glad to be able to add, from what I heard incidentally from another quarter, that the pupils do not abuse their freedom. In another school there was a *surveillant*, but as he was also a master there was not that unfortunate separation of the *rôles* of the educator and the teacher which so often prevails in French schools. I found a similar system at work elsewhere the director of which wrote in 1898 as follows:—

What is needed is not a suspicious oversight, hostile to the pupil, seeking to catch him in the wrong, but, on the contrary, an oversight that supports him, comes to his aid, warns him, and preserves him from mistakes—in a word, which is preventive rather than repressive.

These ideas are not always, however, held in honour. I came across another director who had originally been in a secondary school. He, too, had no *surveillants*, but it was much against his wish. The professors were all married, and therefore had to live out. He made the strong remark that the want of surveillance deterred parents from sending their sons to the school, and he regarded with dislike the idea of having a practising school in the town, because the pupils would have to go through the streets to it. Still, such is my natural obstinacy, I venture to think the future is rather with those who hold the opposite ideas, but it is none the less necessary to register and respect the opinions of the other side.\*

\* Though the teachers as a rule have no supervision duty, they are all expected to take an active part in the life of the school.



The discipline in the girls' schools is shared by the teachers. A mistress or two sleep either near or in the girls' dormitories, and that is all. One directress told me she had never yet caught a single girl talking in dormitory, and it was not from lack of trying. So strong was the force of tradition. The "preparation" is often taken by a third-year student, the girls thus forming their own police. The directress at Le Mans was strongly in favour of a gradual relaxation of discipline with a view to encouraging self-responsibility.

This question of discipline is only one of the many points that mark off the *école normale* from the secondary school system. The tendency in England to-day to pass intending primary teachers through a course of secondary education has no counterpart in France. It is interesting to note that in Alençon the *école normale* was started as an *annexe* of the secondary school.\* This was not a success, as the school neglected the normal section, and especially pedagogics. The normal school was then refounded, and since that time has been completely independent. This does not condemn in any way the system we are now trying in England. It only shows there may be several solutions for apparently the same problem.

the pupils.

One thing that renders the discipline easy in most of these schools was the natural docility of the pupils. In fact, the professors often complained that they were too docile, and though not lacking in intelligence and willing to absorb all that was communicated to them, they showed a certain " *paresse d'esprit*" and want of energy and initiative that make them compare unfavourably with the more go-ahead and enterprising races of the eastern departments. Still, this defect does not weigh too deeply on their consciences. They struck me generally as a bright and happy lot, and one or two of my compatriots whom I had the good fortune to encounter in these schools fully endorsed my impressions. It was not till I got to Touraine, the county of Balzac and Rabelais, that I noticed I had left behind me the land of easy-going phlegmatic people, and come among quite a different race, which one teacher well described as " *franc, spirituel, narquois et un peu sensuel,*" such, in fact, as that "merry-go-round" Rabelais painted. In such a country the discipline is naturally not so easy.

Their life.

Early rising is the rule. Pupils get up at six o'clock at women's college, Caen, and go to bed at 8.45. At Alençon (men's) morning school begins at 8.45, and lasts till 11.45, with work again in the afternoon. The pupils retire at nine. Meals are taken in a refectory. When at Alençon I saw the pupils at lunch, and the director kindly gave me a specimen copy of the menu for the week:—

\* The 108th article of Napoleon's decree in 1808, founding the universities, laid down that there should be formed in the lycées and grammar schools normal classes, destined to train masters for the primary schools. In these classes were to be taught "the best methods for bringing to perfection the art of teaching children to read, write, and cipher." (*Recueil de Lois et Règlements concernant l'Instruction Publique.* Paris, 1814. Vol. iv., p. 23.)

ÉCOLE NORMALE D'INSTITUTEURS D'ALENÇON.

Année 1899. Mois de Juin. 5<sup>e</sup> Semaine.

MENU DE LA SEMAINE.

DIMANCHE :	Potage maigre, fromage.	JEUDI :	Café au lait.
LUNDI :	id. noix.	VENDREDI :	Potage maigre, légumes.
MARDI :	id. confitures.	SAMEDI :	id. pruneaux.
MERCREDI :	id. sardines.		

			MAITRES.
			Œuf sur le plat.
DIMANCHE	{ Dîner : Potage gras Tripes, Charcuterie, Café.		Pommes frites.
	{ Souper : Bœuf mironton, Salade, Cerises.		Radis et beurre.
LUNDI	{ Dîner : Potage maigre Porc rôti, Pommes purée.		Salade.
	{ Souper : Bœuf mode, Haricots.		Artichauts.
MARDI	{ Dîner : Potage Gras, Bœuf bouilli, Radis roses, Petits pois.		Œuf à l'oseille.
	{ Souper : Mouton rôti, Salade.		Haricots verts.
MERCREDI	{ Dîner : Potage maigre, Saucisses aux choux, Asperges vinaigrette.		Salade.
	{ Souper : Bœuf au jus, Macaroni Gratiné.		Œuf sur le plat.
JEUDI	{ Dîner : Potage gras, Bœuf, Cresson, Carottes au jus.		Petits pois.
	{ Souper : Veau rôti, Salade, Fraises.		Côtelette de mouton.
VENDREDI	{ Dîner : Potage maigre, Poisson, Pois, Mange-tout.		Grillade de bœuf.
	{ Souper : Œufs à l'oseille, Riz au lait.		Radis et beurre.
SAMEDI	{ Dîner : Potage Maigre, Bœuf rôti, Pommes frites.		Salade.
	{ Souper : Ragout de veau, Lentilles.		

Alençon, le 17 Juin, 1899.

Le Directeur,  
ENNRAY.

The food was good, and there was no stint, and this is borne out by what the pupils themselves told me in another school. The pupils generally wear blouses, even in class, which produces rather a curious effect on an English eye.

Pupils remain three years at the school. At the end of each year there is an examination called "*de passage*," which pupils must pass or else leave the school. From such statistics as I saw it seems probable that pupils are hardly ever refused their promotion from one year to another, the figures for all the colleges that I saw being cent per cent. in passes. The progress of the pupils is communicated to the parents by means of reports, which no doubt help to keep them up to the mark. Places were determined, at least in one school, by the results of weekly examinations in French, arithmetic, and science, etc., covering the work of the last six weeks. It is in accordance with these places that pupils are appointed to vacancies on leaving the college. All students prepare for the *brevet supérieur*, but two directresses said to me it might be an advantage for some girls not to be obliged to prepare for the higher examination, but to concentrate on certain subjects.

## (c.) CURRICULUM.

(1.) *For Men.*

General  
idea.

The main lines of the present programmes were laid down in 1881. I was assured that the programme is absolutely the same for all France.\* In defence of this uniformity it was urged that one cannot foresee the future of the teacher, and that, after all, a knowledge of agriculture is not a disadvantage even to a town teacher. The only difference therefore between the various colleges is the arrangement of the time tables. The first part of the day is assigned to the harder studies; singing, manual work, and agriculture are generally taken in the afternoon. I heard no complaints as to the curriculum being too extensive or difficult in the men's colleges; in the women's the two directresses, alluded to above, thought the programme was rather too heavy a burden for the more backward pupils.

Programme  
in the men's  
colleges.

The programme in the men's college is as follows:—

SUBJECTS.	Total of hours a week.		
	First year.	Second year.	Third year.
<i>Literary Teaching.</i>			
Psychology, morale, pedagogics - -	2	2	2
French language and literature - -	5	4	4
History and civic instruction - -	3	3	3
Geography - - - - -	1	1	1
Writing - - - - -	2	1	-
Modern languages - - - - -	2	2	2
† For conversation - - - - -	+1	+1	+1
<b>Total for literary subjects - -</b>	<b>15 (16)</b>	<b>13 (14)</b>	<b>13 (14)</b>
<i>Science Teaching.</i>			
Mathematics - - - - -	3	4	4
Physics and chemistry - - - - -	2	2	3
Natural science and hygiene (including geology in last year) - - -	1	1	1
Drawing and modelling - - - - -	4	4	4
Theory of agriculture - - - - -	-	1	1
	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
Manual and agricultural work - -	5	5	5
Gymnastics and military drill - -	3	3	3
Singing and music - - - - -	2	2	2

\* On writing my report it struck me that I had not seen any agricultural operations at the Auteuil training college. I therefore wrote to my friend, the principal, M. Devinat, to inquire whether the pupils were prepared for agriculture, and, if so, in that case, whether the point aimed at was the cultivation of the Parisian pavements. He replied: "The programme of the normal schools is the same for all France, and we have at Paris a course of cultivation. But reassure yourself. The programme is an elastic thing. Use is made of it in a reasonable fashion, and account is taken of environment and circumstances; and that is why we do not teach our pupils to cultivate the Parisian pavements."

† The hour for conversation is taken either out of the school hours or the pupils' free time.

I was present at one or two lessons other than those on agriculture. Impressio  
one or tw  
les ons. One on French literature was devoted to Chateaubriand. I do not know whether my sudden apparition startled the pupil who was criticising his *mémoires d'outre-tombe*, anyway it had the effect of checking the flow of his eloquence. The professor, however, saved the situation, and the lesson as a whole was a good one, as might be expected of any lesson on literature in a French school. A lesson on mathematics in another school impressed me very favourably. The sixth (not the first) pupil in the third year tackled at sight a stiffish problem in geometry set at the last examination for the *brevet supérieur*, and solved it in a most satisfactory fashion almost without the teacher's aid. A preliminary lesson on the geography of Algeria was remarkable for the clearness of its introduction. A revision in arithmetic in another school was less successful. A sort of "rot" set in, which all who have been teachers have some time or other experienced, and one pupil after another came up to the blackboard only to be ignominiously dismissed. A history lesson was chiefly noticeable for the clear *résumé* given by one of the *élève-maitre* of the previous lesson, explaining the state of affairs that led up to the War of Independence in America. Apparently the pupils do not prepare the lesson, but the professor lectures, and then gives a *résumé* which they get up by heart; the professor, however, recommending certain books and authors to be used in connection. I came across one or two teachers of English who seemed to be thoroughly masters of their subject, and spoke with a remarkably good accent. This is due to the fact that most of these teachers have spent a year, or sometimes two, abroad, thanks to the excellent system of travelling scholarships established by the French Government. The conversational side of the teaching is further cultivated, at least in the women's colleges, by the engagement of English *répétitrices*. I came across two of these girls, who were both going into teaching afterwards. They each spoke well of their sojourn in the schools. My opinion of the satisfactory fashion in which English is taught, considering the limited time allotted to it, was further confirmed by the perusal at the exhibition of one of the best monographs on the subject by the professor at the Douai Normal School, which I am pleased to think received the reward it merited.

The programme in manual work was fixed by the decree of the 3rd Manual  
work. January, 1891, by which three hours a week during the three years are given up to this subject. The pupils begin at the very beginning. At Caen, I saw the first year at work making cardboard boxes. The teaching of geometry and geometrical drawing runs parallel with the manual work. I afterwards visited the show-rooms of iron and wood work, together with the *modelage* and *moulage*, for a selection of which the school received a silver medal at Rouen. I was lucky enough to catch the second year at work in the normal school at Le Mans. The pupils were engaged on wood-work and turning. The system seemed well throughout, and graduated in difficulties, the first object to be made being

a little model ladder in wood. Pupils were allowed to keep their work. They were also instructed in the making and mending of tools—a very practical object. There was some forge work (though the teacher said it took too much time to do much with it), as well as a lot of useful wire-work. The class appeared very keen, and the teacher very enthusiastic on the subject. In the same school, the third year were busily engaged in modelling in clay, and seemed also to take great interest in their work. Considering the thorough way the pupils are trained, it is almost a pity they have not a chance of utilising their skill in the rural schools.

gymnastics

In the men's training colleges a good deal is made of gymnastics, for which a certificate can be obtained. In the school at Alençon over 150 have obtained the certificate, and in 1898, in Sarthe, the whole third year passed this examination. The third year at Blois accomplished a similar feat.

Additional subjects.

In addition to the regular programme, I came across in one school a class in "hippology" given by a veterinary surgeon, by the leave of the rector, and paid for by the department. This seems very sensible, considering the frequent intercourse of the teachers with the farmers, provided it is made practical enough. Another subject studied in the same school was *dialectologie*, or a study of the dialect of the district. Certainly the services of the teachers might be enlisted in taking down and collecting the fast vanishing forms of *patois* in country districts; but, otherwise, the utility is less apparent. At Loches, bookbinding is taught to first year pupils.

## (2) *Science applied to Hygiene and Agricultural Teaching.*

Physics and chemistry subjects of the teaching.

Physics and chemistry figure in the programme of the *écoles normales* with practical work, at least in chemistry, for the pupils. The teaching throughout is as concrete as possible, and hygiene and agriculture are treated as the logical outcome of the science thus taught. The object of the whole course is to render the future teacher capable of teaching agricultural notions in the day school, and of collaborating in the evening school by his action on adults in the work of the departmental professor of agriculture. By the circular of 20th March, 1897, a further development of hygiene is recommended in the direction of instructions on the dangers of alcoholism.

"The teaching in agriculture is given by the departmental professor of agriculture. The course, spread over forty lessons (in the second and third years), includes the study of vegetable and animal production, with practical notions in fruit and vegetable gardening, notions of zootechnology special to the animals of the district, of agriculture, and silkworm culture, the hygiene of live stock, the elements of rural economy. Great stress is rightly laid on agriculture, excursions, on practical experiments in gardens, and on farms. Each normal school is naturally provided with a cabinet of physical apparatus and a chemical laboratory. In addition it possesses natural history collections, a botanical garden, intended for experiments and for work in fruit growing and market gardening,

in which the pupils execute themselves the principal operations of gardening, breaking up the soil, hoeing, spreading manure, sowing, weeding beds, grafting, training, pruning, trimming, etc., fruit trees and the vine."

Such is the description given by the Report on Primary Education which I have already had so often occasion to quote. As far as my experience goes, and it is limited to four or at most five departments, I cannot say that these ideas have been altogether fully realised. Great progress, however, has been made since M. Kovalesky made his inspection in 1890. Believing that some of his criticisms on the then existing state of affairs may not be without value or interest for us in England to-day, I give a very brief *résumé* of agricultural education as he found it in the normal schools at the time of his visit.

He divided up the teaching then in vogue into four types. The first consisted of a theoretical course in school, with some digging in the school garden, which was more of a recreation than a serious method of giving agricultural instruction. The second type he describes as being mainly of the horticultural or kitchen garden order. The third type consisted of a theoretical course with *champs d'expérience* cultivated by the pupils, cultivation being sometimes by groups. The defects of this system were that the *champs d'expérience* were often badly kept and too small, and the crops came to maturity during the holidays. He further insisted on the danger of experiments on too small a scale, and the hasty generalisations they engender. The fourth type was represented by the system of sending teachers after their normal course to an agricultural school (*école pratique d'agriculture*) where the teacher received a theoretical education and took part in the practical work.

It is worth noting that this fourth system, preferred by M. Kovalesky, has been abandoned. One objection to it was that the teachers from the towns did not like it, especially as they had to pay 150 to 600 francs out of their own pockets and forgot their other studies during the year on the farm. M. Kovalesky further considered the number of visits to farms insufficient, and regretted the bad state of the college gardens. He also remarked that the departmental professors of agriculture were so overworked that, despite themselves, they were obliged to neglect the practical side of their teaching in the normal schools. He noted the despatch of seeds by the Museum at Paris, and referred to the Russian method of supplying seeds and seedlings free to normal schools up to a cost of 50 francs. In his opinion, the ideal garden should contain a nursery, a kitchen garden, trees in the open, or vines, according to the district, a small botanical garden with specimens of food, medicinal and poisonous plants, and an ornamental garden. The two objects of the garden should be: (1) to supply the professor with illustrations for his lecture; (2) to provide work in gardening for the pupils. He further proposed to have special agricultural teachers in the normal schools, and deprecated mere

weeding by the pupils as unnecessary, suggested the working of pupils in groups, and insisted on the need of a skilled gardener being attached to the school. He wound up by advocating an "agricultural test" at the final examination, more practical experiments, higher cultivation in the gardens, a sharper surveillance of the pupils when at work, and more frequent visits to farms.

Theoretical  
teaching  
probably  
satisfactory:

The agricultural education as given to-day is certainly far beyond these experimental stages. The theoretical instruction is probably well organised, the departmental professor of agriculture taking care to adapt his course to subjects particularly applicable to the department. Thus, in one of the schools, I had the pleasure of listening to an instructive lesson on cider making, which, with butter and cheese making, was the staple industry of the district. The professor gave an admirable *exposé* of the various methods of making cider, and alluded to certain practical experiments in fermentation which had been made in conjunction with the pupils. While stating what were the chief reasons in favour of this or that process, he was careful to bring home to the pupils the numerous points on which we are still ignorant of the real action of fermentation, and to impress on them not to be led away by the often erroneous explanations of the peasants.

Importance  
of practical  
work.

The real test, however, of all this teaching is the practical work to which more than twice as much time is devoted as is given to the theoretical part, and this certainly seemed to be the less satisfactory side of the teaching, though the outdoor work and teaching are certainly much improved since M. Kovalesky's time.

Description  
of four  
gardens.

In one department I was informed by a high official that the agricultural teaching was not up to much at the *école normale*. The departmental professor was keener on holding conferences and beating up the peasants to attend them. On the other hand, I learnt on good authority that the work was serious, the pupils took delight in it, and went in for pruning, grafting, and gardening generally with much zest. The garden itself was not large, but fairly well kept. It contained a small *champ d'expérience* and a botanical garden. The *champ d'expérience* seemed scarcely big enough to merit its name. In addition, there were some experiments in pot cultivation, preparations of subsoils by pupils, and some small pear trees planted by the pupils. They had also done a certain amount of grafting on rose trees, and there were a few fruit trees for them to try their prentice hands on. The director seemed fairly content with these results. Another school had a very big garden amounting to nearly ten acres, of which about six or seven were under cultivation. The garden was rather foul. Dandelion was much in evidence, and an attempt was being made to bury a large quantity of this. There were several experimental plots with potatoes, cabbages, etc., which were not very successful owing to the season. Certain patches had been handed over to groups of students

to cultivate. The fruit trees were rather cut by the wind. They afforded a fine instance of the damage possible from noxious insects, for caterpillars and snails abounded. Grafting is taught by the gardener. Altogether, I was not very favourably impressed by the practical work. It did not seem to be thorough or systematic enough. As regards the interest taken by the pupils in the work, I had the good fortune to speak about it with some of the *élèves-maîtres* whom I met. They told me they were allowed to dig but not to plant. The work that interested them most was the pruning. Of their comrades, there were some who were indifferent, others were very keen, and often spent their half-holiday working in the garden.

In a third school the garden was large and well kept. The potatoes were well advanced, and there was a very fine row of standard roses, and a splendid show of apples, but that was nearly everywhere the case: the apricots, however, were "shy." There was also a very fine bed of asparagus. The garden supplied the school with 600 francs worth of vegetables, and sold for another 250 francs. The garden was about 2½ acres. As for the agricultural teaching, I was told the theoretical instruction was good, but the departmental professor did little practical work. Now and then he teaches a little pruning, and sometimes takes the pupils into the garden to illustrate some point in his lectures, but more often he is away; in fact, he only comes about once a week, and the pupils dig and garden under the guidance of the gardener and the director. They do a good deal of hard digging. There are no real experimental plots.

About the fourth garden I also heard rather contradictory accounts. One official told me the work was satisfactory, and I was informed in another quarter that the teaching was serious, and the pupils took delight in it. Against this I must set the opinion of another authority, who assured me the teaching was superficial and somewhat neglected by the departmental professor. The latter was often absent during the hours of practical work. The director had himself been obliged to set the pupils to work. In the garden I was shown a part which had been reserved for practical experiments, but the professor took no trouble about it, so it is now cultivated in the ordinary way. There is, however, a botanical garden. The garden itself is neatly kept, and though not over large furnishes the college with all sorts of vegetables except potatoes. The cost of the upkeep of a garden was in one case £60, but about £40 of this was covered by the value of vegetables sold or consumed on the premises.

I was further told by a competent authority that in the normal colleges of several departments the agricultural instruction is poor, although it counts for the final examination. There is not enough surveillance, and the pupils take it easy in consequence.

It seems from these notes that, though considerable progress Conclusion: has been made, and the aim and object of the education thus given has been clearly thought out and defined, the



programme, so far, has not been thoroughly realised. Before any blame is assigned, however, to the departmental professors of agriculture, it must be admitted that if they tried to do all the work that really wants doing, they would not be able to do it even if they worked twice as hard as at present. Apart from their duties in the *écoles normales* (for they also sometimes give courses in the women's colleges), they have their conferences, their *champs d'expérience*, their laboratory investigations, which range from original research to the analysis of soils and manures, and their consultations with the peasants. Perhaps under the present conditions the best way of lightening their task would be to place, when possible, the special professors for *arrondissements* directly under them. This would enable them to delegate some of their duties, and prevent a certain amount of overlapping and waste of co-operation which comes from the present independent state of the special professors. In theory, indeed, the *écoles normales* have joint claims on their services, but as the professors depend on the Minister of Agriculture and not of Public Instruction, these claims are not always easy to enforce. Yet it is not enough to free the overworked departmental professor from some of his numerous duties. If the agricultural teaching is to be the real outcome and practical issue of the science instruction in the school, there must be close co-operation between the professor of science and the agricultural professor. They must play into each other's hands, and arrange their several courses in such a fashion that one may be the natural sequence of the other. As for the practical part, it should be rendered as systematic as it can be, and the experiments should be adapted as far as possible to the agriculture of the locality, and finally, these experiments should be as largely as possible performed by the pupils themselves. By all means let them do their fair share of digging and hoeing, but they must also be allowed to sow, to plant, to graft, and to prune. If all these things, which are now done intermittently and in part, are done thoroughly and systematically, in fact, if the interlocking between theory and practice be complete, there seems no reason to doubt of the ultimate success of agricultural education in the French normal schools.

Grafting.

Allusion has already been made in the section on agricultural education in the schools to the prominent part played by some teachers in the reconstitution of the vine in certain departments. This movement has now gained some of the training colleges, with the result that the pupils have taken up the subject with great ardour. Thus at Blois in 1898 twelve out of thirteen of the third year gained certificates for grafting.

Holiday  
courses in  
agriculture  
abandoned.

Over and above the training in the normal schools there is no agricultural instruction for teachers in France. Holiday courses for those already in the profession have been tried in some of the training colleges and abandoned. It is true a few teachers, after finishing their normal course, have gone for a year to the agricultural colleges, but then they have afterwards taken up agricultural teaching as a profession.

## (3) For Women.

The programme for the women's training colleges is the same as regards the literary part; but the scientific part is reduced. On the other hand, they are instructed in domestic economy. The practical side of the curriculum includes, in addition to gardening, first aid to the wounded, sewing, and, in some cases, laundry work and cooking.

As regards horticulture and agriculture, the first is a necessary accomplishment for an *élève-maîtresse*, as many of her pupils will be expected at home to look after the gardens. Hence, in the few schools I visited, there seemed to be a certain amount of gardening going on wherever it was practicable. At Alençon, for instance, nearly all the pupils go in for it, the favourite method being the *jardinage à deux*. As, however, many female teachers become in time the head of mixed schools, it is clear they likewise require a certain amount of training in agricultural teaching. It is not surprising, therefore, that a course of agriculture, relating especially to the poultry-yard, butter and cheese making, etc., has been established at the normal school at Caen, and I heard of another to be started at Le Mans. Horticulture and agriculture

At the Caen school four pupils prepare the food for the mistresses' table twice a week for a week. The lesson lasts from three to four hours, and the cooking was only once a failure. The mistresses' table is taken because there are less to cater for and more variety. The building used for the purpose was originally meant for an infirmary, but the lower part proved too damp. So permission was obtained to use the rooms on the ground floor as a kitchen. The table, dressers, etc., were all put together on the spot, so there was practically no initial outlay. The directress kindly showed me over the place herself. We found the pupils hard at work preparing some mutton cutlets, and certainly they seemed to take great interest in their *métier*. At Alençon cookery is taught by the *économiste*, who personally conducted me over the building. Pupils make little dishes. The lesson lasts about an hour, and is confined to the third year students. At Le Mans I found a course of cookery for the third year. Once a week (Saturday) the girls prepare their own dinner. Cooking.

At Caen no washing is done in the school, but every week the washerwoman leaves a certain number of things that have not been washed or ironed, and a graduated course has been formed in laundry work, consisting of groups of six pupils at a time. It takes the place for these of their Thursday afternoon walk. This practice, the directress told me, was not general in all normal schools. At Alençon, however, all the ironing is done in the schools. Pupils work at it in groups of eight. At Le Mans the washing is done in the town, but pupils iron their own linen. Laundry work.

At Caen there was formerly a good deal more than at present, as an hour a week has been taken out. The reason probably is that Sewing.

it is not obligatory for the *brevet supérieur*, for which all have to work, though demanded at the *brevet élémentaire*. At Le Mans the sewing takes two hours a week. It is not ornamental but practical. Formerly the girls made their own dresses, but the practice has been abandoned, as it took too much time.

gymnastics.

At Alençon the *exercices physiques* take place in recreation time. I saw the gymnasium, which is a very fair one. The directress of another school told me that Swedish exercises were almost unknown. A lady who had been in Switzerland had introduced them at Dijon and Versailles. She herself would not object to these things if they took place out of school hours.

#### (d) THE TRAINING.

The pupils in the French normal schools arrive altogether untrained. At most they have acted occasionally as monitors at school.

two types of practising schools.

There are two types of practising schools. The training is given either in an *école annexe*, or school inside the building, or in an *école d'application*, which is an outside school attached to the college. I visited several of these schools, including one maternal one. The system of training varies from place to place. In some colleges the pupil teachers teach for a whole week on end; in others they divide their time between the college and the training school, passing the morning in one and the afternoon in the other. But the time allotted in both cases (60 half days) is the same in both, which is roughly equivalent to a month a year for two out of the three years of the pupils' stay at the school.\* In addition, every Thursday or Sunday morning a model lesson is given by the third year pupils before the principal and the head of the *école annexe*. The practice at the girls' school at Caen is for each pupil in turn to give public lessons, specially prepared, of half an hour each while she is in the training school. Later on she gives a lesson once a week in college before the last two years, the class being brought into the college to be taught. When the lesson is over, pupils and mistresses criticise it. At another college I came across two pupil teachers hard at work correcting the scholars' work. The *cahiers* struck me as not being so good as elsewhere, and the writing was indifferent. In another *école annexe* the principal feature of the school was the drawing, which was very good. The writing seemed poor throughout. The teaching by the *élèves-maîtres* revealed nothing remarkable. The same criticism applies to the reading. Altogether the school produced on my mind a somewhat mediocre impression. In another *annexe* school which I was shown over, there were three classes but only one master. The rest of the work was done by the *élèves-maîtres*, who spend the usual month a year in the classes, which in this case were rather larger than usual. I saw nothing very note-

le écoles annexes.

\* They do not start teaching till the Easter of their first year, and leave off at Easter in their third year.

worthy either way in the exercise books. The writing was rather below the average. In one of the lower classes a pupil teacher was trying to give an object lesson on a cylinder. He did not seem to be very expert. The director helped the class out with questions. They replied with plenty of verve and go, which showed they only wanted a good class leader to be a smart lot. I was taken over another *école annexe* in which there were only twenty-eight pupils for four divisions. The reason for this was the existence of a religious school in the commune, which gets the bulk of the children, and the town itself was too far away to have an *école d'application* in it.

I only saw one *école d'application*, but that was such a good one that, if the others are only something like it, they should certainly be superior to the ordinary run of *écoles annexes*. The school itself was at Alençon, where there had previously existed an *école annexe*, which only contained fourteen to sixteen pupils. This had been suppressed, and one of the four schools had been taken on in its place, containing about 300 pupils with a director and four *adjoints*. I visited this school. The classes were rather big, 30, 42, 35, etc. But the director was evidently a first-rate teacher. One thing that struck my eye at once was that he put his worst children in front. The class room unfortunately was lighted from the wrong end. The reading was very good both separately and in chorus, and the class took great interest in the subject, which was about carrier pigeons. In the third class the teacher showed his *cahier* for preparing lessons, which was a model of clearness and neatness. An *élève-maitre* in his second year was taking the fourth class when we arrived. He was giving an object lesson, but I am afraid our posse of four frightened what little method he had away. After attempting to reassure him we left. On our return to the first class we found an *élève-maitre* of the first year teaching drawing. He went about his work in such a quiet and business-like way I was obliged to ask how he had so rapidly acquired this professional manner. It turned out that he had been monitor in his father's school. The director further informed me he had made a point of holding reunions once a week with his subordinates in order to provoke criticism and discussion. This accounts for the feeling of unity that seemed to pervade the school, and is due no doubt in part to each teacher being content to work at his proper level. Several authorities I spoke to were in favour of adopting an *école d'application* for the *école annexe* where it was practical. Certainly the few *écoles annexes* I saw struck me as being generally inferior to the ordinary run of schools, and this, I am told, is due to the fact that the *école annexe* is often used as a sort of "dumping ground" for unsatisfactory children. The chief defect, however, in my humble judgment, is that the majority of the classes are too small. The pupil teacher who has learnt to handle one of these skeleton brigades with eight or ten pupils feels hopelessly lost when he finds himself pitchforked into a class of forty. (I speak,

alas! from personal experience!) The difference between the experience gained in a small *école annexe* or a big *école d'application* is similar to that gained in a sham fight or in a real battle.\*

Criticism.  
insufficient  
training.

On the question of whether teachers are sufficiently trained in the *école normale* I encountered some somewhat severe criticism.† One inspector bluntly described the training as *nulle*. He was also dissatisfied with the theoretical knowledge of pedagogics the *élèves-maîtres* received, and ascribed it to the fact that the majority of directors are recruited from the higher normal schools, and so have never taught in a primary school, and are, therefore, often unaware of what is suitable in the way of methods, etc. If this is true, surely a stage of five years in the inspectorate as a necessary preliminary to becoming director would meet the objections of such criticism.

he reply.

In answer to these objections, it was pointed out to me that the main idea of the *école normale* was to educate the pupil teachers, and give them rather an orientation in teaching than a complete training. This was frankly recognised by the State refusing to allow anyone to present himself for the examination of fully certificated teacher still he has spent two years at least in a school as "probationer." I have already spoken of the searching nature of these examinations, not forgetting the case of the teacher who had taken eight years to pass the test, and so, whatever may be the exact value of the pedagogical training in the normal schools, there is no doubt it is very hard for a "real duffer" to qualify as a full teacher.

#### (e) RECREATION—ASSOCIATIONS OF FORMER PUPILS.

libraries and  
museums.

All the schools I visited were supplied with excellent libraries, placed in rooms that were generally the best in the building. In two cases, at least, these rooms were used as common rooms by the professors. These libraries are not, as in some countries, guarded with all the precautions suitable to the surveillance of a powder magazine; on the contrary, the pupils are in many instances constrained to take out at least one book a week. At Loches I found the pupils read in the library every Saturday from 4.30 till 8. Their reading is superintended by the French professor, for whom they compose summaries of useful books or make extracts. It was at Loches, too, that I was shown a remarkable collection of fossils and antiquities found in the neighbourhood. The soil, being a *sable calcaire*, contains many curiosities, and especially chipped flints, some of which are more than a foot long.

\* In the debate on the Budget, 1900, M. Gautret, in the Chamber of Deputies, demanded the total suppression of the *écoles annexes*, of which he pointed out "the uselessness and grave disadvantages from the point of view of the teaching of our *élèves-maîtres*." The Minister, in reply, observed, and after him M. Bayet, that the administration has suppressed these schools wherever it was practicable.

† It is worth noting that M. Bayet in the Rapport E.P. says (page xiv.), "Nous devons . . . fortifier encore l'apprentissage professionnel."

The same school possesses a good cabinet of natural history, with a collection of artificial manures and some curious models of the different varieties of pears which grow freely in that part of the country, but otherwise there were no agricultural specimens.

Apart from libraries, a good deal is done for the recreation of the pupils out of school hours. At Caen I came across a football team who had just carried off the "Association" championship of all Normandy. The pupils at Le Mans have also a team and a ground of their own to play on. At Loches the pupils have likewise started to play. The director was very favourable to the idea. He did not think the pupils took enough physical exercise. In this he resembled another French teacher who told me his colleagues had not yet learned to appreciate the full value of fresh air, a point in which, as far as my experience goes, I can in no way bear him out. I found the schools exceptionally well ventilated as a rule. But perhaps he was thinking of the winter. Anyhow, he added that a large number die of consumption, and to show the insufficiency of gymnastics without indoor sports, he stated that the teacher of gymnastics at the *école normale* had just died of consumption. Certainly a had advertisement for gymnastics!

One school I visited had a stand of muskets, which it uses for military drill and for shooting. The precision of these weapons was somewhat defective, and hopes were entertained that next year the Minister of War would serve out a better weapon.

One school was just starting a band or *fanfare*. In another I found one in full blast. At Loches the director told me the pupils were very keen on their band. It seems a pity that the girls' schools do not yet appear to have gone in for forming orchestras like the men's colleges.

The men's college at Alençon possesses a *bassin de natation*, which consists of a horseshoe channel whose two ends communicate with the river. The depth varies from 2 ft. 8 in. to 10 ft., and photographs that were given me show that this open-air bath is well patronised in summer.

I was also shown at Loches a dark room for lovers of photography, whether masters or pupils.

At the same college the pupils of the first year are formed into a fire brigade. I saw them at practice, and they certainly worked with a will. They had already received their "baptism of fire" at a conflagration in the neighbourhood.

Several of the schools have associations of former pupils. That of the men's college at Le Mans has already 250 members, although only founded in 1893. There is a general meeting and banquet every year. The women's college in the same place has no regular association, but the library is open to former students, and meetings are held once a month. At Blois, the old boys' association numbers 336 members (academy inspectors' report for 1899), and gives a prize of forty francs for the best pupil in the third year. The women's college has also its association, with an annual *fête*, which takes place on the day of its general meeting.

## (f) THE "BREVETS."

ret.  
entaire.

The examination for the *brevet élémentaire*, the possession of which is obligatory for all candidates who aspire to enter the normal schools, is held by a commission appointed by the rector, and presided over by the academy inspector, who also superintends the examination for the *brevet supérieur*. The commission must contain two inspectors, two members of primary education, three heads of and two professors in the normal colleges and higher primary schools, and at least one member of the private schools; other representatives from public or private primary, secondary, or higher education are often added. Special examiners in agriculture, modern languages, gymnastics, singing, etc., are sometimes appointed. They have only a consultative voice in their particular subject. Candidates must be at least sixteen years of age. The subjects for the examinations are divided into three series.

- (a) (1) A dictation of about a page. (2) French composition. (3) An arithmetic question, and a problem, to be worked out and explained.
- (b) (1) A writing examination. (2) A piece of freehand drawing. (3) Elementary gymnastic exercises of the type common to the primary schools; for girls, gymnastics are replaced by sewing.
- (c) *Oral*. (1) Reading and explanation of points in the text. (2) Questions in arithmetic. (3) Questions on natural history, and civic instruction with geography of France. (4) Elementary questions and exercises in sol-fa. (5) Elementary notions of physics and natural science, and agricultural education.

ret.  
rieur.

The *brevet supérieur* is now practically the leaving examination of the *école normale*. Candidates must be 18 years of age. The examination is reputed difficult. The pupils, however, show up well in it. In Sarthe, in 1898, out of 12 male candidates 10 passed. In June, 1898, in Orne, 9 out of 11 male pupils and 8 out of 11 female pupils satisfied the examiners, and two women redeemed their failure next session. The men's college at Caen sent in 22 in 1897, who all got through! and the women's college had 18 out of 20 successful candidates. In Indre-et-Loire for 1897, 12 out of 13 "aspirantes" passed. In Loir-et-Cher, in 1898, 13 men presented themselves and 12 passed, and all the women candidates were "received." The average percentage of passes for all candidates is far lower. Thus while in Indre-et-Loire 12 out of 13 women from the *école normale* passed, the successful candidates for the whole department totalled only 32 out of 58, and as 10 of these were from the men's college, assuming that 8, a low percentage, passed, only 12 out of 35 of the outside examinees passed, or something like 34 per cent., against over 90 per cent. for the normal colleges.

The examination consists of two series:—

- A. (1) A paper which contains a problem in arithmetic (with

a geometrical question applied to practical operations for men only), and a composition on physics and natural science, with their application to hygiene, industry, agriculture, and horticulture (time given, 4 hours). (2) A French composition (literary or moral), (3 hours). (3) A composition in drawing, with model in relief (3 hours). (4) A paper in modern languages, consisting of an exercise and a piece of translation (dictionary allowed) (3 hours).

B. This includes *vixi voce* in *la morale*, education, French, geography and history of France, with notions of geography in general, arithmetic, book-keeping (with elementary notions in algebra, geometry, and land surveying, for men only), notions of physics and chemistry (with notions on agriculture and horticulture, for men only). Translation at sight from a modern language. It is noteworthy that agricultural science is obligatory as a written subject in both these examinations, and counts in them. It is probable it will not be long before it is placed on the same footing in the examination for the *certificat d'études*.

(g) TWO QUESTIONS.

One of the points under discussion to-day is the question of sup-<sup>Regional</sup>pressing some of the departmental colleges and substituting in <sup>departme</sup>their place regional schools.\* Apart from economic reasons <sup>colleges.</sup>the chief arguments in favour of such a change seems to be the small number of pupils in some of the smaller departmental schools, which deprives the pupils of the many advantages that are attached to schools whose numbers are bigger. The difficulties, however, of effecting an alteration are undoubtedly great. The departments who have made such sacrifices in the way of building are little likely to consent to seeing the school given up, and the local tradesmen in the smaller towns will probably also oppose the change. As far as one can judge, the departmental college has come to stay, and, as has already been pointed out, it falls in well with the local sympathies of the teachers themselves. Centralised schools might give them wider ideas, but perhaps at the cost of much local patriotism, which is after all a very desirable thing. I spoke to several officials about the proposed fusion. One directress expressed herself in favour of fusion when the normal schools were very small, but did not think it was realisable on a large scale. Others looked on the thing as impracticable. One point which was not brought out, but which seems to me to tell in favour of the present system, is that the academy inspector would be far less directly interested in the normal school than he is. At present he naturally takes the liveliest interest in what is virtually the nursery of his teaching staff. He would not have so great an inducement to exercise the same

\* Alpes Maritimes sends its female pupils to the normal school of another department, the territory of Belfort does the same. Gers and Vaucluse have also merged their schools with those of two other departments. Basses-Alpes and Hautes Pyrénées have been authorised to join Gers and Vaucluse.



Resolution.

close and paternal oversight over pupils who are "here to-day and gone to-morrow." And what the pupils might gain in superiority of training at the regional college they would lose in the continuity of influence to which they are at present subjected. The best remedy for the paucity of numbers in some of the normal schools is to adopt the suggestion of M. Jost that all teachers should be trained. At present only seven-tenths of the male teachers and six-tenths of the female have been through the schools. If normal training were made compulsory, it would thus raise the average of those on the books by thirty per cent., although it is only fair to point out that in the departments I visited the number of pupils in the normal schools was, as a rule, sufficient for the demands of the departments. That some such measure is desirable is clearly the opinion of the writers of the Report on Primary Education in dealing with the normal schools, where it is stated that the insufficiency of money voted for education has prevented the Administration from keeping up the effective in the normal schools, and compelled it to its great regret to maintain the service in the great majority of departments by enlisting masters who, not coming from the *écoles normales* are evidently less well prepared. This constituted a serious danger, for on the value of the masters depends the value of the schools, and, if care were not taken, the whole of primary education might suffer under this heading a grievous loss. The Report goes on to say that, in consequence, the Administration has asked Parliament for more money, in order to keep the normal schools up to their proper pitch.

Differentiation in normal schools.

But behind the question of regional or departmental colleges lurks a question quite as difficult, that of a different form of training for town and country teachers. In the discussion on different curricula for urban and rural schools, it has been already pointed out that the differentiation of the teachers would be its necessary corollary. Such a differentiation if introduced into departmental colleges, would necessitate a bifurcation into two sides, with an increase in the staff and an augmentation of the teaching expenses which already amount to £20 a head. One proposition that was suggested to me by a high official was that there should be two types of colleges, one departmental, for country teachers, and the other regional, for the higher teachers who would go to the towns. This, however, would further depopulate the departmental colleges. To obviate this drawback, it might be suggested as an improvement that the departments in the same university area should combine, in order to adopt the *école normale* in the university town for a town teachers' training college, and divide up the balance of country pupils of this particular department among the normal schools of the other departments, which would thus become strictly rural. Some of the advantages of the paternal supervision alluded to above would be lost, but a considerable gain might be effected by bringing about a *rapprochement* between the departmental university and the normal school for

teachers, which would be highly beneficial to both. The best pupils in the normal schools would thus have the chance to earn a university degree, and the university in adapting its programme to include these new comers would only be fulfilling its ideal of being truly universal. Nor would the education of the country teachers be neglected either. On the contrary, they would benefit by a programme more suited to their needs, interpreted by professors thoroughly equipped for country teaching, for such a change would ultimately prolong the cleavage into the *écoles normales primaires supérieures*, and oblige them to prepare professors for the rural normal schools. Such a method of re-arrangement would lead to a minimum of dislocation, and prevent the disfranchisement of any town that has hitherto possessed a departmental college.

Differentiation on such lines would naturally tend to sunder the teachers into two classes. Probably the teachers would oppose it on this account. But it may be pointed out that in secondary, and still more in higher education, differentiation is the law, and not the exception. Only governesses, or other educational *bonnes à tout-faire*, can now profess to explain the universe to the mind of the small child. Anyone who aspires to teach in a good secondary school, at any rate in France, has to make up his mind at the latest at the beginning of his university career whether he will be a classical, science, or modern language teacher. It is only in England, in a certain number of unfortunate subjects which anybody is supposed to be able to teach at a pinch, there is still any latitude of choice. Why then should it be any greater hardship to primary teachers to split them, not into three or four classes, as in secondary education, but only into two, and make them decide at the outset whether they will qualify for a town or country curriculum? Nor would the bar in this case be so formidable an obstacle to get over, as in the higher grades of the profession. There might well be extra examinations in the parts of the whole curriculum peculiar to each, such as science applied to agriculture for the country, or industrial training for the town, with a certificate for either section, which would enable a teacher who had already adopted one type of teaching to qualify, if he wished, for both sorts of schools on the register.

If the French teachers have sufficient energy and industry to prepare for the exceedingly severe examination for the inspectorate, they will find the passing of such examinations not very arduous. The only real danger of such a scheme is the fear that people might tend to regard the position of the country teacher as inferior to that of the urban. But as long as the practical equality of salaries were preserved between the two teachers, the equality in teaching capacity between the two would be likewise maintained. But in England, where salaries are all "at sixes and sevens," this feeling about the inferiority of the country teacher, which already exists to a large extent in a confused state, would be focussed as soon as the differentiation became an accomplished fact. The "ear-marking" of the grants for salaries seems to be the only remedy, were the differentiation

Division  
teachers

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in Engle

adopted. This would involve the fixing for teachers, who are on "the strength," that is, the certificated teachers 'a certain "living" wage below which it would be impossible to descend. Enterprising school boards or liberal school managers might, "of their very great bounty," go higher if they pleased. But if we had some equality in salaries between town and country (not merely apparent, but proportional to the cost of living) we should probably have something like uniformity of capacity between the two categories of teachers, and there would be no chance in the future of the country being regarded as a sort of dumping ground for the duller type of teachers. The country teacher might, and would, be probably different from the town teacher, but, in his own line he would be the latter's equal. But we in England are not so far advanced as the French for trying the problem. Apart from the question of uniformity of salaries come the long string of grievances connected with housing, water supply, drainage, etc., which are all bound up with the question of the teacher's comfort, and go far towards influencing him in favour of a town rather than a country life, not to mention the delicate question of the social status of the English primary teacher in the village, which is not so good as that of his French colleague, not because there may be anything to choose between them, but because the social organisation in the two countries is not the same, and the French teacher fits the more easily of the two into the *milieu* he finds himself in. And lastly there is the crying need of more training colleges. The average French department is about the size of the mean between Devon and Norfolk; Indre-et-Loire, the 43rd department, in point of size, contains about 1,520,677 acres, against Devon, 1,650,705; and Norfolk, 1,291,170. The departments vary, however, comparatively little. Calvados, which comes 60th, has 569,200 hectares, and Loir-et-Cher, which comes 31st, has 642,000 hectares, which makes a difference of only about 180,000 acres, an area less than the size of Huntingdonshire. It comes, therefore, to this, that if England were as well supplied as France in training colleges, we should have about two at least in areas a little bigger than Norfolk, but as the population is much denser in England than in France, the unit, if decided by population, would be much smaller. In France (excluding Algeria) there are 168 training colleges (85 for men and 83 for women). The population of France (1896) was 38,517,975. This works out at one training college for every 229,273 inhabitants. On the average, even such a comparatively rural part of England as Norfolk would be well entitled to two colleges (population over 460,000 in 1891). In England and Wales there were, in 1899, 58 training colleges (44 residential and 14 day training colleges). This works out on the 1891 census figures (29,002,525) at one residential college to something over every 650,000 inhabitants, or, reckoning in the day training colleges, one training college to a little over every 500,000. Were England and Wales provided with training colleges on the same scale as France,

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ages—a  
parison.

we should have about 127, instead of 58. But the average of students in a French training college is 41 (1892); in England and Wales it is just under 82 (1899). So the actual figures of colleges are not so bad as they look. Perhaps, however, one of the best points of comparison is the number of students in training. In England and Wales they amounted to 4,750 (1899), and in France to 7,736 (1897). But of these English and Welsh students only 3,700 were residential, while all the French ones were "in college." Another index of the lack of training in England and Wales is the percentage of candidates who passed the Queen's Scholarship Examination in 1899 and were admitted to training colleges. In all 26.9 per cent. were admitted to training colleges—day and residential—of which total only 19.8 entered the residential colleges, and most of these will go into town schools; whereas the number of teachers in training in France to-day is probably nearer 60 than 50 per cent. of the whole number who enter the profession, and most of these will go into town schools. If people wish to have really satisfactory rural education they must insist on having normal schools for teachers to attend. When the day comes for their building, if it ever does, they must further look out that if some of them are not reserved for preparing rural teachers, they should have at least sides attached to them for training the latter. Were education a county matter instead of being locally a sort of Thuringia of isolated petty authorities, the day for such reforms might not be so far distant.

The French, on the other hand, might well make some sort of experiment in differentiation. As has been already pointed out, if France tried it. the ground is comparatively clear, and with their faculty for tackling administrative problems they would easily schedule the areas which should give a rural or a town education, and draw up two maxima programmes for each section. They could leave it to their excellent academy inspectors to decide not only what would best suit some school on the dividing line, but also allow them to modify either of the main programmes in accordance with local needs. It would not be necessary to subject all the schools of France to the experiment. The authorities could take as a unit one of the university areas, and carry out at a comparatively little trouble and expense an experiment of capital importance not only to France, but to all civilised countries.

#### APPENDIX ON PROFESSORS OF AGRICULTURE.

The departmental chairs of agriculture were created by the law of the Department of 16th June, 1879. Candidates for the post of professor of agriculture in any department must present themselves before an examining board consisting of agricultural and educational experts. The examination takes place at the *chef-lieu* of the department, and the subjects embrace agriculture, viticulture, forestry and horticulture in their application to the department. The examination is threefold. There is written composition, and an oral and practical examination.

The professor is paid partly by the Ministry of Agriculture and partly by the Ministry of Public Instruction. His travelling expenses are defrayed by the department. There are four classes; the top class receive 4,500 francs a year, and the lowest 3,000. Their official duties, which resemble in some respects those of an organising secretary to a county council technical committee, comprise, among other things, agricultural teaching in the normal colleges for three hours a week, and the organisation of popular conferences on agriculture. The number of the latter is fixed at twenty-six a year. They are also required by the authorities to furnish any statistical information that may be required.

3 special  
fess. rs.

The special professors of agriculture, also known as agricultural professors for arrondissements, are likewise chosen by a competitive examination. They, too, are divided into four classes; the top class, which can never contain more than 10 per cent. of the effective number, receive 3,400 francs, and the lowest only 2,400. Their duties, with the exception of teaching in the normal colleges, are practically the same as those of the departmental professors. They depend on the prefects or sub-prefects, to whom they are bound to furnish every year certain statistics and reports. They are further placed under the control and inspection of the departmental professors, as far as the organisation, surveillance, and conduct of *champs d'expérience* or *de démonstration* are concerned. It seems, however, it would be better if they were placed directly under the departmental professor. The latter has often need of adjoint or secretary, which the Ministry cannot see their way to supply. As it is, in a busy department the chief professor has almost too much to do, yet he has no claims over his subordinates, who generally go their own way, with the result of a certain loss in co-ordination in effort and direction as far as the department is concerned.

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The teachers are of great assistance in helping them to organise conferences, and bringing their own pupils to listen. In fact, one teacher seemed to think that he and his class formed the business part of the meeting. The aid the teachers also render in the creation and superintendence of *champs de démonstration* has already been noticed. The funds for these experiments are found by the department, which provides a certain credit for the purchase of *engrais*. The large artificial manure companies also place a certain amount of their products at the disposal of the departmental professor, in order to popularise their use among the peasants. In fact, one of the professors I met is energetic enough to run a store merely to promote the employment of *engrais*, which he buys in bulk. The utility of this increased use of *engrais* is to be seen in the improvement in the corn crops. Round Beaumont, in Sarthe, a local corn merchant told me the yield had been almost doubled. The teachers have also lent a helping hand in the great crusade in favour of the re-plantation of the vine which is going on everywhere, and their services in promoting the best methods of grafting have been already recognised. It seems a pity that the professors should appear a little jealous of the teachers in some departments, considering the latter are in many ways the best intermediaries they have.

Another point in which the professors of agriculture do no little good is to break down certain bad habits which have grown up, as, for instance, faulty rotation of crops, such as raising two successive corn crops, a very common practice, or inferior modes of cultivation. *A propos* of the latter, the departmental professor told me in Sarthe he had all the pains in the world to get the peasants to give up the system of planting their potatoes in rows, too wide apart, their system being to plant them more than 3ft. 4in. apart, and at a foot or 16 in. from each other. Again, the professors have proved especially useful in times of drought or difficult seasons, in advising farmers what to plant. In fact, one of their most important duties is to give consultations gratis on market days to the peasants on any knotty point, or even to attend markets for that purpose. In connection with this should be mentioned the services they render in analysing soils or suspicious artificial manures that do not appear to be up to sample, and some, as in Loir-

et-Cher, have very fine laboratories at their disposal. Their duties in the agricultural examination for schools have been already touched on. They also take a leading part in the conduct of agricultural shows, the formation of syndicates for the purchase of manures, bulls, etc., or the creation of mutual assurance societies against loss of cattle or hail. What spare time they have left they devote to agricultural research, generally in connection with some question that interests the department. M. Cassarini, the professor in Sarthe, gave me quite a bundle of scientific investigations he has published. In spite of this, there still exists in some departments a distinct opposition to the departmental professors, which is made up of rather conservative farmers and proprietors of the old school. They consider practical agriculture sufficient, and think it adequately encouraged by agricultural shows, and look on experiments in manures and popular conferences as little better than a fad. Happily, as the departmental professor in Sarthe hints in his summary of field experiments, these opinions are not widely shared by the rising generation.

As we have seen, the departmental professors are under the condominium of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Public Instruction. I asked several persons interested in agricultural education whether the present system was the best or not. The following are roughly the chief pros and cons.

From the strictly educational standpoint it seemed rather a disadvantage, especially for the *écoles normales*. The departmental professor is a very busy man, and having so many irons in the fire, he is not always able to do justice to his educational duties at the training colleges. Sometimes, too, he is a man more interested in experiments and research, and looks on teaching callow youths as rather drudgery.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that the most important part of his work lay with the farmers, and the education of adults. Were he placed under the Ministry of Public Instruction, this side of his duties would suffer, and were his present duties divided in two and given to a professor under each Ministry, there would not only be a danger of the work at the normal school becoming too theoretical, through the teacher losing his present close contact with agriculture (it was a teacher who urged this!) but also as the *élèves-maîtres* at the normal schools are destined one day to become his "right hand" men in the villages, it is only proper he should have a hand in their bringing up. What does want doing, is to see that the first call the director of the *école normale* has on his services is rendered possible by affording him outside assistance from the special professors of agriculture, where it is practicable, and in seeing that in all cases the science taught in the normal schools bears directly on agriculture.

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## CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUATION OF RURAL EDUCATION (DAY).

### (1) SECONDARY EDUCATION.

What is the future of the clever boy in the elementary schools in rural districts? One chance for him is to enter the *collège* or *lycée* in the country town by means of a scholarship. At Caen I was told the Ministry had given the head of the *lycée* a thousand francs to disburse in this fashion, and that ten or twelve boys, mainly out of the primary schools, had been thus attracted to the secondary school. Whether this is altogether an advantage for the sons of poorer parents may be rather doubtful. The disadvantage under which French grammar schools, or at least those in the smaller towns, labour is that they are compelled to adopt the ambitious

programme, with its course of studies arranged for boys who will stay on till eighteen or nineteen, which does very well for the big Paris schools, but is ill adapted for country schools, where the leaving age is probably nearer sixteen. What is wanted in these schools, as M. Ribot's Commission has already pointed out, is the establishment of a shorter secondary programme to finish at sixteen. Again, the whole tendency of such schools is to give an education that prepares for the liberal professions or the civil service. The child of poor parents is unable to study for the former owing to his lack of means; his chief hope, therefore, is to enter the ranks of an already over-crowded administration. It is only fair, however, to state that several of these schools are making efforts to bring themselves more into relation with rural needs. An hour a week in the theory of agriculture is given at the secondary school at Caen by the departmental professor. I heard of a similar practice at the collège at Argentan. A professor of agriculture told me, also, of a theoretical course he started in a *lycée*. At first he had only five or six pupils, but the class gradually rose to thirty. Unfortunately, they were not a very brilliant lot. All the "ne'er-do-wells" of the school had been shunted into the class, a practice not unknown in English schools. After a three years' trial the professor gave up the class, which was not surprising, as there was no remuneration. This gratuitous instruction is not the rule in all the Departments; in some such teaching is paid either by the State or the *Conseil Général*.

Attempt to  
cater for local  
needs.

The following passage from a paper read by M. René Leblanc, the well-known authority on agricultural education, at the Sixth International Congress, held at Paris during 1900, confirms and completes in a curious manner the above remarks:—

The pupils admitted to the agricultural course belong most often to the classes of the modern side. Their ages vary as their aptitudes. Their knowledge of physics and natural science is also as little homogeneous as the class itself, and is rarely in accord with the agricultural notions which are the subject of the course. The latter is the object of no public test (*sanction*), and its results are in general but little appreciable. This summary organisation is only therefore an appeal for a rural *clientèle*; in order to be really alive, it ought to be completely and profoundly modified in the direction indicated by the *enseignement primaire supérieur*.

Other efforts.

A more promising departure in the light of rural needs is the creation of a school with an industrial or agricultural crown or side, a type of which I was told exists at Flers, a country town in Orne, of considerable industrial activity. The course must be a serious one, for boys remain in some cases till eighteen. I hope I am betraying no secret in stating that the academy inspector for Orne is already thinking of trying to establish an agricultural section at Domfront, in the college there. In order to make it sufficiently practical he proposes to link it on to the *ferme école* of Saint-Gautier in the neighbourhood. It is true the section would be rather for the sons of the better to do peasant proprietors, but that is just the class who require such a training. Good country secondary education is as necessary in France as elsewhere. It

was in Orne, again, that I heard of a wealthy Frenchman domiciled in Moscow who had offered to found an agricultural chair in the college of his native town of Sées.

## (2) THE COURS COMPLÉMENTAIRE.

But the most natural outlet for the clever boy who wishes to continue his studies is the *cours complémentaire*, the *école primaire supérieure*, or the *école professionnelle*. The admirable monograph of Mr. Morant on the French system of higher primary schools renders superfluous any detailed explanation of these schools. An attempt will only be made to describe the agricultural education given in these establishments, together with certain points which it will be necessary to repeat or complete in order to render the aim of the schools intelligible. Such, for instance, is the distinction which has gradually been growing up between these various types, dictated by the desire to render the aim of each as clear as possible, in order to establish the schools, each on its own particular basis, with the result that to-day the function of each of these types is carefully defined, and the differentiation between the *cours complémentaire* and the *école primaire supérieure* is quite as clear cut as that between the *école primaire supérieure* and the *école professionnelle*.

True continuation of primary education.

To take the first distinction. The *cours complémentaire* is only an *annexe* to the elementary school; the *école primaire supérieure* is a separate establishment, although in one school I came across a sort of *cours préparatoire* was attached to it. In this way the *cours complémentaire* recalls in organisation our higher grade schools, which have always had elementary classes attached to them, and are rather an outgrowth of the primary system than a distinct offshoot. There is, again, a difference in the curriculum between the *cours complémentaire* and the *école primaire supérieure*. In the *cours complémentaire* it is only a year, according to the official report, though at Caen it is spread over two, according to the academy inspector's report for 1897. The duration, again, must be at least two in the higher primary school. The staffs in the two establishments are not on the same footing. In the *cours complémentaire* the master is an *instituteur*, with the *brevet supérieur* appointed by the Prefect; in the *école primaire supérieure* he is a professor and nominated by the Ministry.

Difference between *cours complémentaire* and *école primaire supérieure*.

A *cours complémentaire* cannot be created in a school that has not a *cours supérieur*, so careful are the French of preserving the idea of standard in education. In addition, the commune in which the school is situated must engage to pay for the usual cost of keeping up the class-room, etc., for a minimum period of five years.

Rules for its creation.

If the *cours* falls below twelve pupils for three consecutive years the State can close it. A very interesting point is that there is no *general programme*. It is laid down that the head of the school, with the master of the class, should draw up the curriculum—(1) according to the intellectual level of the pupils; (2) in

Above all no (fixed) programme.



accordance with the local needs of the district. The programme must be approved by the primary inspector and endorsed by the academy inspector. There is the inevitable examination at the end.

To prevent any tampering with the standard, no pupil can enter the *cours complémentaire* who has not passed the *certificat d'études* and spent at least a year in the *cours supérieur*. There are now no scholarships attached to these classes. Those which were previously given have now been transferred to the *écoles primaires supérieures*, as the Ministry has decided these classes are local and not regional, as was held at the time Mr. Morant wrote.

One or two specimens.

The *cours complémentaire* are naturally confined to the towns. In Calvados, in 1897-8 they amounted to four, with 106 pupils. I did not visit those in Caen, because there was no agriculture taught, and the whole of the teaching was commercial and industrial. In Orne I came across one at Trun,\* which was also a boarding school with accommodation for thirty boarders, the actual numbers being twenty-three. The pupils paid 400 francs a year, and their ages varied from twelve to sixteen. Most of them came out of the communes round, and were the sons of the better class peasants. The teacher was keen on agricultural education, and had a *champ d'expérience*, which has already been mentioned. The pupils were certainly well looked after. There were military exercises and gymnastics in school, and football was played on the fine open green in front. Then there was a *tir scolaire*, and a small orchestra as well. Altogether the school seemed flourishing, and from what I heard outside, the agricultural teaching is very sound. I also came across a *cours complémentaire* at Mayet, in Sarthe. Here there were thirty-four boys in the top class, twelve of whom possessed the *certificat*. The teacher had one boarder. The fees were only 350 francs a year, but the teacher was public-spirited enough to wish to take *pensionnaires* in order to raise the status of his school, as day boys rarely remain after passing the *certificat*. I have already described the highly successful agricultural experiments of this teacher in another place.

### (3) HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

What is Higher Primary Education?

Higher primary education in France is not an "unhappy counterfeit of secondary education; the higher primary school is not a degenerate college but a perfected school."† "Higher primary instruction is recognisable at once from its character, which is frankly utilitarian and practical; in this general sense it is professional." Nevertheless it is "a veritable instruction; it is not to be confounded with apprenticeship. It is a school, not a workshop."† It is destined "to continue the work of education commenced in the primary school, and to favour that culture of mind which forms the judgment, the heart, the

\* The headmaster assured me he had a *cours complémentaire* and was preparing three boys for the *brevet*. His school does not seem, however, to have been so far officially recognised as containing a regular *cours complémentaire*. (See "Annuaire de l'Enseignement, 1900.")

† See Rapport E. P., pp. 350, 351, 355.

will, the character."\* Yet in the second or third year these schools can specialise in agriculture, industry, or commerce to a certain extent, the general parts of the programme being reduced to allow of these alternatives. In the other primary schools and even in the *cours complémentaires*, *cours accessoires* can be created by the Ministry for preparation in the same special subjects.

The programmes, which in their present form date from 1893, include *la morale* and civics, French literature and language, history and geography, common law, and one modern language. In mathematics the professors are particularly enjoined to take their problems from industry, commerce, and agriculture; book-keeping is also taught. Physics and chemistry are specially directed towards agriculture, and science in general is always rendered as practical as possible. Thus in chemistry, should the subject be phosphorus, the professor passes rapidly over the history of its discovery and the methods of its preparation; he takes only passing note of the three phosphoric acids and their reactions from the analytical point of view. On the contrary, he insists on the natural phosphates, deposits of which are indicated in geology or geography, on the super phosphates, etc. The botanical garden has always a part to play in the teaching of science. Some schools content themselves with a dried and dusty herbarium, which, merely containing mummified specimens of plants, can never give an adequate idea of their life and surroundings. As the Report on Primary Education says, what is wanted is a garden, or rather section in a garden, in which are grouped not the rarities of the region, but the plants the pupils ought to know, whether with a view to cultivation or extirpation. Not one plant alone, but several specimens ought to be cultivated of the most characteristic plants, in order that the professor can distribute samples of them to the pupils during the lesson. The *promenades scolaires* are everywhere utilised for making collections of plants and minerals. In order to bring home to the pupils the importance of studying and understanding the nature of the soil, the General Inspection has proposed the display in a prominent place in the schools of a geological map of the department, with indications of its characteristic fossils.

A theoretical course of agriculture is given in all three years of the general section at the rate of an hour a week, while three hours are allotted for the agricultural section. It is confided sometimes to a special professor who depends on the Ministry of Agriculture, and sometimes to the master who teaches science and possesses a certificate for teaching agriculture. I came across teachers of the two types. At Mamers Higher Primary School the one hour a week is given by the agricultural professor of the *arrondissement*, while at Amboise, in Indre-et-Loire, a member of the staff teaches agriculture. As regards the value of the hour a week of theoretical training, the majority of persons I met did not rate it very high. They all

The programme. Science and its application to agriculture.

Agriculture Theoretical teaching.

\* See Rapport E. P., pp. 350, 351, 355.

recognised that it is difficult to make progress in a subject which is only taught for one hour a week, and above all they regretted the absence of any practical work to illustrate and bring home to the pupils the real meaning of this theoretical instruction.

The need of a close connection between the science and agricultural teaching, when in different hands, was strongly insisted on by the Ministry in a circular and set of official instructions issued in 1898. It is here obviously a case of seeing that one waters where another has planted. Of course in a school like Ambroise, where the two subjects are taught by a single person, the danger does not exist.

Practical  
work.

In the agricultural section six hours a week are given to practical work according to the official programme. This is divided into two groups, outdoor work during the fine season, and indoor work during the winter, or on rainy days. A portion of the latter time is passed in the workshops, where the pupils learn a certain amount of mending and repairing. The rest of the indoor work consists of chemical experiments relating to the constitution of soils, of manures, and the analysis of milk, etc.; putting together and taking to pieces agricultural implements, observations on cattle, as regards the feeding and fattening, etc. "All these practical demonstrations are an indispensable complement to the theoretical lessons if one wishes the outdoor work to be performed with intelligence."

The outdoor work comprises all operations in the garden and the *champ de démonstration*. However, if the surface to be cultivated is considerable, the tillage is executed by a neighbouring farmer, the school only possessing the usual tools for manual labour. The practical work of the pupils consists in dividing up and measuring the land, the preparation, weighing, and spreading of manure and sowing of seeds, hoeing and light work, and lastly harvesting, threshing, weighing, or other operations for calculating the yield, for establishing the prime cost, and the balance between the crop gathered and the manure to be returned to the soil.

The garden work consists principally of market gardening and fruit culture, and comprises pruning and grafting, in winter indoor grafting for the vine, the training of fruit trees, and finally the keeping in order of clumps of trees, and the preparation of flower beds. Some schools have a poultry yard, a rabbit hutch, and even a cowstall; often also a well kept set of hives, and sometimes a small silkworm nursery.

The programme of practical work is completed by visits to nurseries, gardens, farms, fairs and markets. Every pupil is obliged to write a descriptive account of each visit, which is afterwards carefully corrected by the professor.\*

Examina-  
tion.

The *école primaire supérieure* has its terminal examination, as most other grades of French education. The general part of the

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\* The above paragraphs on agricultural teaching are a reproduction in a shortened form of the account given in the Report on Primary Education.

examination includes a "moral" and a "French" essay, as well as a question in science and drawing. It is perhaps worth noticing that for pupils who have specialised in agriculture the special examination is divided into three parts—written, oral, and practical. The written lasts two hours, and is devoted to two questions, one taken from the theory of agriculture as taught in the school, and the other treating of some practical question. In the oral examination, the length of which must not exceed more than an hour for each candidate, there is an interrogation in general history and geography, agriculture, and questions on the physics and natural science that bear on the subject, an interrogation on arithmetic and geometry applied to land measurement and the work of farming; an interrogation on the notions of book keeping, common law, and political economy. The practical examination is limited to one or more of the exercises specified in the programme of practical indoor and outdoor work. Candidates have also to pass in singing and gymnastics. At present certain *lycées* and *collèges* prepare pupils for the examination. The International Congress proposed to change the title from *certificat* to *diplôme de fin d'études*. M. Doliveux, who comments on this in his report of the International Primary Congress, is unable to explain the proposition. It cannot mean to confine the leaving examination to the higher primary schools, for this would be to shut out the *collèges* and *lycées*. *Cruelle énigme!*

Of the three *écoles supérieures* that I visited, that of Loué in Sarthe is probably well known for the splendid display it made at the Exhibition of the experiments which had been executed to illustrate the different effects of varying manure combinations on wheat. The school itself lies about twenty miles from Le Mans, as the crow flies, and is linked to the departmental metropolis by one of the numerous light railways which have done so much for the prosperity of the department and its shareholders.

The schools  
visited.

I was present at one lesson in the *classe préparatoire* on agriculture, which was rather disappointing. The subject was the feeding of cows, and the answers struck me as rather bookish and stereotyped. There was some hesitation when I asked what was the principal breed of cattle in the neighbourhood, and this was repeated when I enquired after the principal crops. The same uncertainty was manifested when I asked if it was a good or bad season for farmers. These questions were not, of course, strictly science applied to agriculture, but I deliberately put them in order to see to what extent the subject was real to the children, and if the scientific training of the school added a zest towards keeping up in the actualities of the subject. By a question on the composition of the soil I learnt that it was calcareous, as the teacher pointed out the full name of the town was Loué en Champagne. Hence the cattle have large bones, and a certain amount of barley is grown, a large portion of which finds its way to England. There

were thirty-three children in the class, the copies were neat and the writing was good. In the *classe des petits* there were two divisions, and the top boy was six. I omitted to ask if these lower classes were regarded as a separate school, or only a sort of preparatory section, such as is allowed according to the official report. The bigger boys were having a gymnastic lesson, so the upper school was empty. The agricultural teaching in these classes is evidently very thorough. The teacher has made a selection from the agricultural programme of the Ministry, and illustrated it by a series of agricultural and geological tables, which are remarkable for their clearness and continuity. One shows the experiments proper to the introduction of agricultural teaching, the second experiments in agriculture performed in the school garden, and the third the results of the experiments in the *champ d'expérience* in '94-95 and '95-96. The latter, which contains 4½ acres, had not been such a success this year owing to the drought. To attract passers-by and give them a clear notion of what is being attempted, there are large notice boards stating results and the rotation adopted. The latter seems particularly useful, as the peasants have a bad habit of sowing barley after wheat, which exhausts the land.

Champ  
d'expérience.

School  
garden.

The teacher has a large garden, but, unhappily, as in many calcareous districts, the water supply is deficient. He told me he was quite comfortable, and had no desire to move. The only complaint he had was that the children came to him sometimes insufficiently prepared. From the reputation the school has in the country there is no doubt it is doing good work. The fees were very low: £16 a year for boarders and £8 for day boarders.

Amboise

There seemed to be no agricultural section in the higher primary school at Tours, so I did not visit it. On the other hand, at Amboise I was fortunate enough to hunt down the professor of agriculture at the higher primary school, and spent a very pleasant and profitable Sunday with him at the house of his father-in-law—a small proprietor, whose hospitality and conversation I much enjoyed, especially as he had all the strong common-sense and shrewdness of his class. Amboise is one of the comparatively rare schools in which there is an agricultural section. It is, however, small, and contains only ten pupils out of a total of seventy-five, the industrial section being the largest. The professor gives five hours a week in agricultural teaching, and of these three are common to all sections. The pupils lend a hand in the cultivation of the *champ d'expérience*, which is provided by the town. They sow, hoe, and learn to sharpen tools. They practice pruning and grafting—the vine is the chief cultivation of the department. The professor holds the diploma of *maître greffeur*, and is proud of it. The professor follows the official programme, and lays special stress on the species of cultivation in vogue in the department. The school has taken part in the School Exhibitions already alluded to, and on one occasion exhibited some wheat in the straw,

the yield of which, on a plot of four *ares*, or a tenth of an acre, was at the rate of sixty hectolitres an hectare, or about sixty-seven bushels an acre. The plot, it will be seen, was rather a small one. The professor, however, admitted this, and very sensibly remarked that the real question was how to use the *engrais*. First, there was the difficulty of seasons, and a good deal depended on the exact nature of the soil. The latter could be decided by analysis, but there was no control over the seasons, although they are probably less trying in that part of France than with us.

The third higher primary school I visited was the well-known *Onzain* establishment of Onzain. The school was started by the *conseil général* of the department of Loir-et-Cher in 1881, in a former private boarding school, and as one of the first *école primaire supérieure* of the new type to be created, it has served, to a certain extent, as a model for others. There are boarders and day boys. The boarders pay 510 francs a year for everything, and the teaching costs the State another 500 francs more, so that the net cost is almost exactly the same as that of a pupil at the normal schools. The school had once forty-five State scholars, but since then, with the creation of other schools, the number has been reduced to five. The numbers in the school went down for a short period in consequence, but the school has already recovered its former prosperity. The discipline dispenses with detention, and few impositions are set. There are two *surveillants*, but each professor is supposed to spend three to four hours a day out of the school with the boys during recreation. As regards religious instruction, the director leaves it to the parents to decide whether they wish their children to be prepared for their first communion or not. The average age of the pupils is fifteen to sixteen. There is a preliminary class for those who have not obtained the *certificat*. This is useful, as it prevents the children from being snapt up by the *établissements religieux*. The director, M. Crocheton, informed me he was not troubled by boys leaving early, as the programme is *concentrique*. The full school course is, however, three years.

The director also kindly showed me over the school and grounds. He took me into the garden where experiments were being conducted with wheat, barley, oats, and potatoes. The results were very conclusive. The *témoin* and the patch without nitrate were a long way behind the others. The rye, unfortunately, had been ruined by a storm. Another excellent experiment was a nursery of all kinds of vines, in order to show which did best in the district. This is one of the few spots which the phylloxera has not yet invaded, though I was witness of some of its ravages at no very great distance. There were no sections in the school. The director does not believe in sections. "It is like having a foot in one Ministry and the other in another, and one has no firm foothold." He attempts to diversify the instruction according to the tastes of the pupils. Great stress is laid on the practical side of agricultural teaching. Pupils are frequently taken into the garden to watch

the results of the experiments they are conducting. They are also initiated into grafting and pruning. *Travaux manuels* and gymnastics are likewise a feature in the school work.

to increase  
the supply of  
higher pri-  
mary schools.

I did not visit any higher primary schools in Calvados, for there were none to visit. The existence of a number of little local colleges has prevented their creation. The advantages of the two branches of education, primary and secondary, being under a single head are thus strikingly illustrated, though perhaps this desire to prevent overlapping and fear of injuring the little local grammar school has been pushed too far, to the profit of the religious secondary schools, which, with a perfectly elastic programme, are open to cater for all and sundry, and to fall in with the every desire the parents may express. It must not be thought, however, that the opening of higher primary schools everywhere would prove a universal attraction. There are two

The neces-  
sity of close  
sympathy  
with local  
educa-

factors in the question. The first point is the necessity of bringing the curriculum still more into sympathy with local needs. This should not, however, prove very difficult. As the resolutions of the International Congress on primary education, which deal with this subject, point out, all that is wanted is, while preserving the official programmes of 1893, to look on these rather as guides than regulations, leaving each school free to reduce or enlarge them, varying them on the professional side according to the needs of the district, and further giving the director in council with his staff power to draw up the programme and the time table, the whole to be approved by the academy inspector—an excellent piece of decentralisation according to the reporter of the Congress, M. Doliveux; in fact, it is only an illustration of the rule that syllabuses are "good servants but bad masters." In the case of schools containing an agricultural section, special stress was also laid by the Congress on the need of providing *champs d'expérience* and workshops for learning about agricultural implements, their manufacture, and repair. The second point is the necessity of taking into account class and social distinctions. Even our higher grade schools, while professing to be absolutely and entirely democratic, tend in some places to become class schools, of a class at any rate one degree removed from the lower orders, and in our other schools the class factor is still more pronounced. Into the rightness and wrongness of such ideas this is not the place to enter. But in France, and even in rural France, the same distinctions exist, perhaps in some districts even more than with us. The higher primary schools are entirely gratuitous, and parents who fear the *promiscuité* prefer to send their children to the paying classes of the religious schools. This point was clearly brought home to me by one or two academy inspectors; one at least, who could not be described as anything else than a keen reformer, and was in favour of making the curricula for primary and secondary identical up to eight years of age, recognised the impossibility of a single school for all classes, and told me if fees could only be taken in the higher

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primary schools the attendance at them would be half as large again. He was actually engaged in trying to persuade the Ministry to create an extra paying class, and begged them to find some loophole whereby the lower middle class might be able to be educated at the higher primary school. To anyone who looks beyond the letter of the law, it seems difficult to understand why the State, which has both secondary and primary education under its control, should exact payment for one type of education and refuse to take it for another. If paying classes will pay, why should not the State start them? It may be urged that teaching is a State affair, and so the State has no right to show preferential treatment to any class in the same grade of education. But the true point seems to be that the State is bound to afford an adequate minimum of accommodation, but after that may grant additional facilities to those who are willing to pay for them. Otherwise, what right has a State which owns a railway system like the *Chemin de Fer d'État* to take money from first-class passengers for the additional facilities they desire? If parents on the State railway are allowed to pay for superior accommodation, why should not the same privilege be refused them when the State schools are concerned? The idea, too, of a school with free and paying sections is common in France, where it has largely been adopted by the *congréganistes*.

But this innovation, as M. Doliveux points out in an excellent article on the subject in the "*Revue Pédagogique*" of 18th May, 1900, will not always render the higher primary school a success. "La petite bourgeoisie n'est pas ambitieuse, mais elle est très vaniteuse. Elle n'ira jamais à l'école primaire supérieure. Jamais quoi que vous fassiez."\* For such people the higher primary school is not good enough. As one inspector said to me, for many a mother, the *casquette* (we should say *college-cap*) that her son wears possesses an irresistible attraction, as being a kind of outward and visible badge of gentility. The same inspector was not over sanguine of the introduction of an *enseignement spécial moderne* ending at sixteen into the *lycée* of his own town. The peasant is proud, and it would be easy to put it about that the *lycée* was giving an inferior education, though surely this could be met by having a sort of *cours complémentaire*, in which those who wished to stop on could specialise until nineteen. On the other hand, the religious school was willing to fall in with the parents' wishes, even if the pupils only came for six months, and would probably manage to avoid submitting its pupils to the test of a leaving examination for the *enseignement spécial moderne*, on the pretext

Even this  
insufficient!

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\* M. Doliveux (*Revue Pédagogique*, May, 1900) deals with the objection, that the educational unity, and above all the moral unity, of the nation, are thereby imperilled in creating schools of different categories. Facts are against the *école unique*, and, after all, the moral unity of the nation depends much less on the oneness of the school than on oneness of doctrine.



that it was only a second class affair. The mere fact of the lower middle class bearing a certain resemblance to the common people only makes them more desirous of emphasizing the distinction. It is obvious, where differences are represented by millimetres, it requires great attention to prevent their obliteration. Differences in metres can take care of themselves. M. Doliveux expresses this distinction under another figure. "It is always on the frontiers that the opposition is most keen."

the future of  
the grammar  
school.

Still, the remedy for the present decay of the local *collèges* seems to lie, as M. Doliveux points out, not in the excessive multiplication of higher primary schools, to which the small *bourgeoisie* will refuse to go, but in a modification of the too ambitious programme of the local secondary schools, in order to bring them more into keeping with local requirements by the creation of an *enseignement spécial moderne* to finish at sixteen, which has already been started in some *collèges* under the title of *Enseignement moderne B*, to distinguish it from the ordinary *Enseignement moderne* that finishes at nineteen. But will not this *enseignement* tend little by little to become the same thing as the higher primary programme? Already the *lycées* and *collèges* who prepare pupils for the *Arts et métiers* schools are obliged to send in their pupils for the higher primary certificate. "Higher primary education will, in a few years, be given in the *collèges* (and even in certain *lycées*) and in the high primary schools. This *enseignement spécial* will not—cannot be—anything else than higher primary education." Such is M. Doliveux's opinion in his summary of the International Congress in the "Revue Pédagogique" for November.\* But here, perhaps, two objections might be urged. The leaving age in the higher primary school will probably, to judge by England, be still below that in the *collège*, and secondly, the parents of the boys in the secondary school, being in easier circumstances, will be more inclined to give their sons a rather more liberal education† and slightly less utilitarian preparation than the ordinary higher primary boy would receive. The latter, having no resources of his own, requires to be certain of finding a place in business on the morrow of the day he leaves the school. But, even if the programmes of the two types of school become more or less identical, will there be a cut-throat competition between the two? No, says M. Doliveux, if care is taken not to plant one alongside the other. Their *clientèle*

\* This opinion is not shared by MM. Lacabe and Petit, preliminary reporters to the International Congress on Primary Education. They write: "Although presenting certain analogies, these three forms of education—modern, secondary, technical, and higher primary—differ in their means as well as their objects."

† This might be done by adoption of the suggestion of MM. Lacabe and Petit, who suggest that if, in order to live, such and such small grammar school (*collège*) experiences the need to add to these two forms of education (classical and modern) technical courses of study, it would be better then to transform it into a higher primary school, to which one could annex a Latin class.

will never be the same ; one will find its recruits among the small *bourgeoisie*, the other among the smart boys of the lower orders.\*

Allusion has been already made to the division into sections of the higher primary schools. These sections, however, seem to be the exception and not the rule. Of 207 boys' higher primary schools in France, only fifty-three contain industrial sections, twenty-five commercial, and only twenty agricultural (M. Doliveux), the Official Report on Primary Education only enumerates fifteen ! M. René Leblanc, in the International Congress on Agriculture, explained the cause of this backwardness. "We are here in a vicious circle ; on the one side the teachers assert there are not enough pupils to form a section, and on the other the agriculturists do not send their children because the section is not organised." As the *enseignement* in the urban higher primary schools becomes more distinctly technical, industrial, or commercial, that in the rural districts should become very clearly agricultural, and M. Leblanc suggested the Congress should propose a resolution to that effect. M. Compayré, the Rector of Lyon, in a speech made a year ago at Belley, spoke of the services the rural higher primary schools with agricultural sections could render. Yet M. Doliveux is not sanguine of their increase. The country is a bad "gathering ground." Distances are great ; there is the question of finding the pupils places when they leave ; and besides, as has been pointed out, the small *bourgeoisie* would rather send their sons to the college. This statement is entirely borne out by a friend of mine, who regretted to me that the wife of one of his tenants had persuaded her husband to send their son to the local college, where he would certainly not receive the education that would best suit him for his after career. Still, the official report urges the creation of an agricultural section in rural higher primary schools, and points out that the agricultural education given in the *école pratique* under the Ministry of Agriculture does not take its place. The small proprietor does not always want anyone to teach his son his work ; he does want him to have a good scientific preparation for it, with a good general education to boot.

There are some eighty higher primary schools for girls, but I did not visit any of them, and in fact there were not more than three or four in all the departments under observation. The programme, however, is much the same as it is for boys, with the exception of the theoretical part in agriculture, which has been suppressed, a course that perhaps might be followed in the boys' schools. The chief point which interested me, the *enseignement ménager*, is only represented by a theoretical course of instruction, though in a few schools it also

\* Here M. Doliveux is in agreement with MM. Zacabe and Petit. These three forms (see previous note) each "appeal to a distinct following. There where they pose as antagonists, they fail in their mission: one or other gives itself up to encroachments that their clearly defined programmes in nowise sanction."

More agricultural sections.

Girls' higher primary schools.

includes a certain amount of laundry work and cooking. The drawback to any wide extension of this teaching is the cost of proper apparatus. A certain effort is being made to render the teaching of household economics scientific by giving the girls an insight into the component chemical parts of the various simple dishes. The Ministry is also anxious that they should take up gardening, both theoretical and practical.

(4) THE ÉCOLES NATIONALES PROFESSIONNELLES (HIGHER PRIMARY TECHNICAL).

Their nature. The *écoles primaires supérieures* are, as has been seen, partially professional. They never, however, lose their predominant character of giving at the same time a general training. The *écoles nationales professionnelles*, of which there were unfortunately no examples in the Departments I visited, were originally progressive schools of apprenticeship, more or less primary schools with a technical top. A clear idea of their aim is given by the following definition from M. Buisson :—

They are by no means special technical schools, or schools of arts and crafts, more or less complete ; they are school groups comprising the national school, the elementary primary school, and the higher primary school, and embracing at all its degrees the professional education which rises progressively from the first year, in which it is hardly anything, to the last term, in which it is everything.

Efficiency on higher primary.

The best way of distinguishing between the two types, higher primary and professional (technical), is a comparison of the time tables of the two :—

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS IN SECOND AND THIRD YEAR COURSES IN				
(1) <i>Ecole Prim. Super.</i>		(2) <i>Ecole prat. d'industrie.</i>		
General Section.	Industrial.	Second Year.	Third year.	
20	14	12	7½	
10	14	36	39	
2:1	1:1	1:3	1:5	

Teaching theory. Technical work. Proportion.

These professional schools seem to have enjoyed a good deal of prosperity, and the numbers of their pupils have steadily increased. The schooling is free, and pupils enter the higher classes by means of scholarships. The programme is mostly industrial, but at Voiron there is an agricultural pavilion, which contains not only classrooms, but a perfect arsenal of agricultural tools and machinery. There is also attached to this school a large agricultural laboratory and a wheelwright's shop.

Their future

Up to 1900 the four most important of these schools were under the condominium of the Ministry of Public Instruction and that of Commerce. A vote in the Budget has since transferred them to the Ministry of Commerce. Hitherto they have made a point of insisting on a quantum of general education. Thus the programme of Vierzon states that no specialisation is allowed there except in the workshop, and that only after the first year. The rôle of these schools, says

the Director of Armentières is to develop the general instruction of the pupils. The Director of Vierzon observes: "Our young people are not in general instruction inferior to the higher primary people." It will be interesting to watch whether these schools will still retain this characteristic or become assimilated to the *écoles pratiques d'industrie*, whose object is the *apprentissage immédiat*. The latter schools suffer from a further disadvantage of having interpreted industry in the narrow sense of carpentry and "fitting." They do not give satisfaction "to the sons of bakers, confectioners, jam-makers, bootmakers, tailors, hatters, potters, and so many others, the enumeration of whom would be endless."\* In fact the training they give is of little or no use to the rural inhabitants living round a country town. So great has been the over-production of mechanics through this narrow interpretation of technical education, that already the workmen in metallurgy are beginning to suffer from the competition they cause among themselves. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the International Primary Congress on its own initiative proposed that the condominium should remain for these schools which had not been transferred, not with a view of extending it, for, as M. Doliveux says, "It has not given in general satisfactory results," but in order to prevent the technicalisation of any more higher primary schools through this channel.

It is curious to note that while in England to-day there is a growing tendency to place all forms of education—technical, agricultural, and professional—under the new Board of Education, in France the opposite tendency is at work, not only in technology but agriculture, where the *écoles pratiques d'agriculture*, and, in fact, all the agricultural educational establishments are under the Ministry of Agriculture, and even the teachers of that subject in the *écoles normales* are mainly dependent on it.

There is one very interesting point connected with the transfer of these national professional schools, which was indicated to me by an official. The discipline in the professional schools, under the Ministry of Commerce, has been at times rather difficult. It will be very instructive to see whether the four professional schools which, under the pedagogical influence of the Ministry of Public Instruction, have met with no such difficulties, will find themselves later on exposed to similar experiences. My informant attributed these difficulties to the difference of regime, the discipline in the purely technical schools being rather of a military nature.

#### (5) AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS—CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER.

More directly bearing than the preceding category on the education of the country children are the farm schools and practical agricultural schools, which are well described in Mr. Austin Lee's

\* Armentières, Vierzon, Voiron, Nantes. For list of the others see official statistics, page xli.

comprehensive little report on Agricultural Education.\* Unfortunately they are rather few and far between; in the five departments I visited there was only one—a *ferme école* at Saint Gautier, near Domfront. The farm was founded in 1850. The soil was rather poor, having only recently come under cultivation. It was also let down by the late proprietor. The present director has, however, worked it up again; as much as £80 a year was spent at one time on artificial manure, though the sum is now less. A certain amount of draining has also been carried out, but the high ground requires planting, as it would help to protect the crops. The farm comprises about 321 acres, of which about 74 are arable, 125 pasture, 7-8 garden, 80 wood, 30 common and furze, and 5 are covered with buildings, etc. The rotation of crops observed is: first year, one-third roots, two-thirds buckwheat; second year, four-fifths wheat, one-fifth rye; third year, oats and barley; fourth, clover and temporary grass. The chief danger to the wheat are the drenching showers that sometimes occur. The average yield,  $24\frac{1}{2}$ — $25\frac{1}{2}$  bushels per acre. The buckwheat yields 28 to 33 bushels an acre, and the oats about 45 bushels. There are six mares kept, and the colts are sold. The dairy consists of 18 Normandy cows. The styes contain one boar, two sows for breeding, and 5 or 6 pigs, which are kept to fatten. There are 23 pupils, but they are rather young. The average age is only 14 years 10 months. The course is two years in duration. The Government pay the staff, which at Saint Gautier consists of a director, a teacher superintendent, who keeps the books, an overseer of practical work, a gardener, a drainer, a veterinary surgeon, and a drill instructor, and it also contributes 270 francs a year for each pupil. The *ferme école* is generally run by the director at his own risk. The defect of the *ferme école* is, therefore, this, that the director, being obliged, above all things, to make ends meet, is apt to neglect the more moderate pupils, as it pays him best to give the work to the most capable hands he finds among the pupils. Two of my informants who had actually been at such schools described the work as extremely hard. One who went at twenty-one only stayed two years, but the full course for pupils of fourteen to sixteen is three. Another, who to-day is an agricultural professor, spoke in favour of the farm school, though he admitted it was often used as a stepping stone to the higher schools. As he truly said, everything depended on whether the director was good or not. In confirmation of what he said, a peasant proprietor in Sarthe told me how a neighbour of his had been at a farm school, and that he was a farmer *hors ligne*. Though, as Mr. Lee says, the present importance of these schools is comparatively small—they have fallen from seventy-five to fourteen—they still render some service in turning out improved cultivators of the small farmer type.

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\* Diplomatic and Consular Reports, No. 505, Miscellaneous Series.

The *écoles pratiques d'agriculture* are fully described by Mr. Lee. The only addition I can make to his description is the criticism of several competent persons who asserted that the sons of cultivators for whom these schools were intended do not sufficiently frequent them. Too often the wrong sort go there, attracted by the scholarships, in the hope to get a place somewhere, or to move on to something higher, like Grignon. Hence the education which would benefit a farmer's son is insufficient for these pupils, because they lack the necessary practical grounding.

For a description of the other agricultural establishments of a more advanced type, whether secondary or higher, Mr. Lee's pamphlet will be found useful. One should also add, *honoris causa*, the name of the Christian Brothers' Institute at Beauvais. The horticultural school at Versailles, which is described by Mr. Lee, was visited by my colleague and myself. As an establishment for turning out high-class gardeners who can turn their hand to anything it should be quite unequalled. The garden itself is quite a picture of neatness and productiveness.

Of the agricultural institutions for girls, besides those mentioned by Mr. Austin Lee, there are two dairy schools in Brittany, one at Kerliver and the other at Coëtlogon. The course lasts a year. Girls are received at fourteen. There are scholarships for the necessitous. Mme. Bodin, who read a paper on them at the sixth International Congress on Agriculture, would like to see the course increased to two years, and the multiplication of such schools in suitable rural districts.

#### *Higher Education in Rural France and England.*

Summing up briefly one's impressions on what the French have done recently in the way of education above elementary in the country and for the country, it is probable they have accomplished more than we. But our country educational authorities have been greatly hampered by the limited character of their statutory powers. The French have set up in the country districts a certain number of higher primary schools and *cours complémentaires*, with occasionally agricultural sides, as well as founding some forty-one *écoles pratiques d'agriculture*. Yet, as we have already seen, they, too, have to face similar difficulties to our own—the question of distances, of lack of locomotion, and the framing of curricula, and the starting of schools for social classes a little above those whose children frequent the elementary schools. This latter is, perhaps, for us in England the most serious problem. Only in our case it is a somewhat higher class that finds itself left out in the cold. In many parts of England the country shopkeeper, the struggling district doctor, the impoverished parson, and the small-tenant farmer have literally no day school within hail to which they can send their children over and above the elementary school. Nor have we, as in France, a religious party who make it their business

to take an active share in intermediate education in the country, and even reduce the price of board and tuition to something below its prime cost in their efforts to compete with the State schools. We shall probably have to copy the French in creating schools in waste places, which, as they will cater for a still higher class than those who refuse to enter the French higher primary schools, will have, of necessity, to be christened secondary. We must, further, recognise, as they, that country secondary education ends at sixteen or, at the latest, at seventeen, and largely modernise the curricula of most of our country grammar schools, and if we may not subsidise private enterprise, yet at least we might allow, like the French have done, public scholarships to be held at such private schools as fulfil the tests of efficiency in districts where the educational supply is inadequate.\*

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CHAPTER X.—THE EXTENSION OF THE SCHOOL'S WORK,  
ŒUVRES COMPLÉMENTAIRES.

(a) INSIDE THE SCHOOL.

The  
vis viva of  
French  
primary  
education.

The vigorous life of the French primary schools is indicated by the broad view taken by the teachers of their sphere of action. Under the steady encouragement of an all-seeing, intelligent, and sympathetic Executive, they have been able to utilise their superfluous energies in a regular cycle of good works, in which public bodies and private individuals have alike co-operated.† These might, in a way, be likened to flying buttresses, which go far to shore up and strengthen the already strong position the school has acquired in the country. This work may be roughly divided up into educational effort inside and outside the school. Under the first head may be classed the *caisse des écoles*, the school savings bank, the *mutualité scolaire*, the school libraries, the temperance societies, the associations for the protection of birds, the school shooting clubs, etc. The school libraries, which are in the first category, extend into the second in the cases in which they are open to parents as well as to pupils. Under the second head come the school patronage societies, the associations of former pupils, and last, but not least, the great work of evening teaching and recreative work, consisting of popular readings, lectures, and evening classes for both sexes, leading up to and embracing the new-founded popular universities, which are practically a form of our University Extension movement. In addition, we find in the towns a strong feeling in favour of school colonies, a number of school children being every year planted out during the summer

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\* See Rapport E. P., p. 370.

† The part of the teachers in these "works of supererogation" is very fairly measured by the proportion of memoirs contributed by them to the International Congress on the subject of evening continuation schools (twenty out of twenty-three).

holidays in the country, not being billeted among the villagers, but quartered in the country boarding schools, which are kindly lent for the purpose. Some, of course, of the above undertakings, are more or less obligatory, but the success which has attended them has in nearly all cases been due to the teachers and inspectors, for the finest scheme in theory will not work without the expenditure of human energy.

The *caisse des écoles* has already been treated of as a means for promoting regularity of attendance by providing the children of the indigent with books and clothes. I did not, however, come across the school restaurant (*cantine scolaire*), which is an established thing in Paris, and provides both gratuitous and paying meals, though I was informed in one or two schools that the children receive bread in winter. Some of the teachers, however, kindly look after the children who come from a distance, and cook and warm their dinners for them. At Coquainvilliers the children who stop during the mid-day interval pay a sou a day for cooking, etc., and the poorer children pay nothing. At the girls' school at Oully (Calvados) I saw a table neatly set out with the victuals the children had brought. Each child had its bottle of cider, with meat, or sausages, or eggs. The teacher only charges for the use of the crockery, cooking, etc., 1 franc 50 cents a month. At Neufchâtel, in Sarthe, the children who come from a long way off are allowed to warm their food on the school stove, which smacks strangely of one's schoolboy efforts at the culinary art on the hot-water pipes. A few figures will show the extent of the work of the *caisse des écoles* in the districts I visited. In Calvados, 1897-98, 3,832 children received clothes, 2,613 food, and 12,837 school books. There were 720 schools with *caisses*, and their total budget amounted to 124,607 francs 65 centimes. In Loir-et-Cher in 1898 there were 244 *caisses*, and the communes contributed 70,044 francs. In Sarthe, which is a rich department, a *bureau de bienfaisance* is to be found in nearly every commune. The subsidy of the commune seems to vary; it was 50 francs at Neufchâtel, 15 at St. Paterno, and at Chargé (Indre-et-Loire) it was only 10 francs.

The *caisse d'épargne scolaire* seems to be on the down grade in France. In 1886 there were 23,375 *caisses* for the same number of schools (out of some 100,000), with 484,162 depositors and 12,338,253 francs on deposit; in 1887 there were only 16,878 *caisses*, with 327,999 depositors and 9,880,031 francs as deposits. There are two reasons for the present decline—one the adoption of the *caisse d'épargne postale*, and the other the diversion of the scholars' money to the *mutualité scolaire*. Looking through the statistics of the departments visited, it appears that in Calvados the number of children depositors was 4,266, and the sum amounted to 171,356 francs. The depositors showed an increase of 69 on the preceding year; but the deposits fell 10,076 francs. In Orne in 1898 there were 66 *caisses* working, with 1,204 depositors and 27,346 francs on deposit. The Academy Inspector remarks: "This institution is slowly dis-



appearing ; it is being replaced by the post office savings bank. In Loir-et-Cher, on the other hand, the *caisse d'épargne* is in the ascendant. In 1894 there were only 142 *caisses*, with 2,646 depositors and 42,351 francs to their credit ; whereas in 1897 there were 262 *caisses*, with 5,001 depositors, with 89,414 francs to their names. In this department I came across one or two remarkable cases of saving. At St. Denis-la-Victoire each of the nineteen children had a savings bank book."

A similar system to our device of sticking postage stamps on a sheet was shown me by a teacher at Chauffour. The stamps in this case are those of 5 centimes. When they reach 20 they are accepted by the *caisse*, and credited to the child. At the same school I was told twenty-two out of thirty-one children had opened an account. This seems a high percentage, but Sarthe is one of the most thrifty and saving Departments.

Other methods for encouraging saving are the giving of centimes as good marks to children either for work or attendance, and the presentation of a bank book with a small sum in it in the place of a book at prize-givings. This practice is also common in religious schools. Thus at the boys' school at Alençon the top children receive banking books as rewards. In the various sums given or bequeathed to the primary schools in Loir-et-Cher in 1899 one comes across such entries as—"M. Le Baron Blanquet, un livret de caisse d'épargne de 10 francs pour récompenser l'élève, etc.; M. de Bernard, 50 francs pour livrets de caisse d'épargne, etc.; Mme. Veuve Sudrot, 20 francs pour prix et livrets de caisse d'épargne, etc. Legs Munier, 200 francs répartis en 4 livrets de caisse d'épargne," etc. This method of acknowledging the gifts of private donors in the official report for the year is not without its value *pour encourager les autres*.

*Mutualité  
scolaire.*

The *caisse d'épargne scolaire* has been the stepping-stone to the *mutualité scolaire*. This system of mutual insurance was founded by M. J. C. Cavé in the XIX. arrondissement of Paris (la Villette). He was president of the Mutual Aid Society, and was struck by the smallness of the pensions to which an adult could look forward. He therefore bethought him of the child. The system is very simple. The child pays in 10 centimes a week ; half of this is put by to provide the child with an old age pension, the other 5 centimes are employed to serve as "sick pay," at the rate of 25 to 50 centimes a day for the family of the contributor. (At Caen the pay is 50 centimes a day for the first month and 25 centimes afterwards.) Thus, as M. Edouard Petit has pointed out, the society is at once a society of thrift and of solidarity. The ordinary schools are also being interested in it. Already ten *lycées* and *collèges* for girls and fifteen for boys have taken it up. The *lycées* contribute the same as the others, but abandon their rights to sick pay. Funds are also derived from honorary members in Calvados ; these pay a minimum of 5 francs. It is calculated that at fifty-five a contributor of a penny a week will be entitled to £10 a year ! The movement has had

a great success. In 1895-96 there were seventy societies. To-day there are 871 in full working order and 250 under consideration.\* More than 300,000 children are mutualists.

As regards the extra work for the teachers, it is stated that in the six classes of the Ecole Boileau at Paris, which counts over 150 members, each teacher does not spend ten minutes once a week to register the receipts, and the whole business does not involve an hour's work for the head teacher. The particular form that the mutuality takes is varied. Thus, in Calvados it embraces the whole department; in Sarthe it goes by arrondissements (Saint Calais, La Flèche). In other departments it is by cantons, as apparently at Tours. Some persons hold that the department is too big a unit, but, as one inspector said to me, there could not be any great difficulty to split the society up in sections to correspond to the arrondissements. I did not happen upon the system in the course of my rounds through other departments, but M. Petit, primary inspector at Argentan (Orne), told me they were thinking of starting a society there.

In some schools there is a shooting range. I came across *Tir scolaire*. one or two, but they are not very numerous. This year for the *tir scolaire* at Rouen, which was for all the region, only fifteen schools competed. At St. Aubin-sur-Mer I found a "tir." The distance was twelve metres, and the teacher had invented an ingenious system of pulleys for removing or replacing the "cartons" or cardboard discs, which obviated the need of going near the target at all. At Chauffour the teacher told me he allowed the elder pupils to "faire un carton" (fire a set of rounds), once a week, as a sort of reward for good work (an excellent idea!)

Of the various temperance societies which have branches *Temperance societies* in the schools or among the old boys I did not come across any examples. To judge by their exhibition at the Paris Show, they seem to be becoming increasingly active. It should be noted, however, that they are not teetotal societies, which in such a country as France, where wine and cider are the national beverages, would never gain a foothold. They allow, in fact, of a moderate use of fermented liquors, whether wine, cider, or beer, and merely pledge their adherents against the use of the various distilled liquors, many of them violent poisons, so unfortunately popular in France to-day, owing to the partial failure of the wine crop through the phylloxera.

School libraries were established by the decree of the 1st of June, 1862, in every primary school. Their contents should *School libraries* include (1) the needful books for class use; (2) those books presented by the Ministry to the school; † (3) those given by the prefect, which have been bought with the money voted by the Conseils-généraux; (4) books given by private individuals, including authors, successful or otherwise; and (5) works acquired

\* According to the "Petit Parisien" of October 6th, 1900, the number is now 1600.

† In 1899 the Government vote was 93,000 francs of which 10,000 was to be specially spent on agricultural work.

by the library's own funds. A yearly report has to be made each year by every head teacher on his library. The following figures for all France and Algeria give the following figures:—

	1892.	1897.
Number of libraries - - -	39,645	41,498
Number of volumes - - -	4,858,120	6,190,973
Number of "issues" - - -	6,862,350	7,219,438

It must be remembered that in some cases these books are taken out by adults.

In the department under observation I came across the following figures for Calvados (1897). Number of libraries, 686; volumes, 64,595; readers, 15,804; books taken out, 35,143, which showed an increase of six libraries on the year and 304 volumes. The number of readers was 1,139 less, the number of books taken out 650 more. The reason of this decrease is clearly indicated by the academy inspector. Many of the libraries consist of old-fashioned books, and the presentations made by the State and the town and parish councils are quite insufficient to restock them. In Indre-et-Loire (1897-98) there were 387 libraries, 54,560 volumes, and 66,997 borrowers. The academy inspector in his report speaks of the happy idea of certain teachers to open subscriptions for their libraries. In Orne, in 1898, there were 475 libraries, or two more than the preceding year. The volumes amounted to 49,996, and the books issued to 27,931, against 26,532 the year before. This increase is put down by the academy inspector to the expenditure on new books, of money voted by the department and communes, or subscribed by private individuals. The need of interesting books, of which he complains, is easily seen from a comparison between the books and the volumes issued, which amount to little more than half. In Loir-et-Cher the figures were rather better. There were two libraries more in 1899 than in 1898; the number of books and readers showed an increase of 198, and 443; and, what is more important, there were 46,319 books taken out against 41,912 volumes. In Loir-et-Cher 4,884 francs were spent on the libraries, and nearly as much was contributed in Sarthe by the joint efforts of the department and the communes, who voted 2,000 and 2,552 francs respectively.

The criticisms of the academy inspectors confirm my own experiences. Where the books were either too few or too old-fashioned the library was but little used. At Neufchâtel the school library contained such unsuitable books as "Boileau" and "La Vie de Jésus Christ son nouveau traducteur," a work of deep erudition, by a member of the Institute. Happily, however, the teacher has started a "popular" library, open to parents and scholars alike. Although the authorities were not at first very favourable, the library has turned out to be a most precious link between the parents and the school. The commune gave a nest-egg of 50 francs, and last year alone fifty borrowers contributed no less than 30 francs by taking out 300 volumes, for which they paid 1d. a time. The money thus earned will be spent in new purchases. It is interesting to note that the most popular books

are "Monte Cristo," "The Last of the Mohicans," "The Three Musketeers," and "Jane Eyre"; the last is *beaucoup lu*. At Beaumont, in Sarthe, I was told there was a *bibliothèque populaire*, much patronised by everyone and largely supported by the munificence of the *délégué cantonal*, who was a good friend to the school in general. I forgot to ask whether there was a regular children's section, such has been created in some of our large free libraries. At Montlivaut there is a library of the Société Républicaine, part of which is reserved to members and the other part open to the commune and the school. In fact the libraries seem to be generally well patronised wherever they contain suitable books.\* At Chauffour (Sarthe) the teachers obtained leave to purge the library of reactionary books and add others. The volumes issued, which amounted to sixty-two and sixty-seven for the preceding years, at once mounted in half a year to over 100 for thirty-five children. Some of the books were given by the department. The commune contributed 15 francs, and there was a surplus of 30 francs over and above from the *tombola*, which had been raised to buy a magic lantern, which itself had cost 70 francs.† The teacher informed me the children frequently came and told him they had not brought back the book, as their mother had kept it to read. Other children often read aloud to their parents in winter, especially if the latter are illiterate. This was also the case at Chaumont (Loir-et-Cher), where no less than 360 books were taken out by sixty-eight children (an average of practically six per head against a little over one for all France). Another good figure I copied down was at Lonray (Orne), where twelve children took out sixty books.

#### (b) OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL.

##### (i) *School Patronage and Former Pupils' Societies.*

The school patronage societies, which are more numerous in the towns than in the country, are really a corporation of friends of the school, who help to provide the school with evening entertainments and assist in placing the pupils when they leave. I came

School  
patronage  
societies.

\* This opinion on the need of suitable books was the subject of a remarkable conference by M. Périé, the present academy inspector of Loir-et-Cher, when academy inspector in Savoie in 1888, in which he gives some interesting figures on the number of readers in a single circonscription. Out of 76,444, 30,000 could read, 6,000 were occasional readers, and 500 habitual readers. Starting from these figures, which show that the appetite of most of those who read is very slight, he insists, in order that it may grow with eating, on the supreme necessity of readable books. We often blame our public libraries in England for not creating a demand for more serious literature. We, too, forget that the majority of readers have not yet cut their milk teeth, and we expect them, all the same, to masticate the toughest of standard authors.

† One of the most original methods of procuring the funds for a library is that invented by a Society called "Les Amis des Livres" in Jura. They hired a field of about an acre, and the seed potatoes were furnished by the members, who also gave their labour for nothing. It is reckoned that the able-bodied members, who numbered 33, would not have to devote more than seven hours apiece during the year to the work. The proceeds of the crop went to augment the funds of the library.

association  
former  
pupils.

across one of these societies at Ecommoy, in Sarthe. It seemed to be in a very flourishing state, possessing 115 associates, and having already disbursed some £80 in prizes. According to M. Edouard Petit, these societies are tending to become assimilated to those of associations of former pupils, in which the outside element figure on the list of adherents as honorary members. The latter, which are often called *les petites A*, are extremely numerous in some departments. Thus in the *Côte d'Or* there are 293 rural *amitiés*, which specially occupy themselves with questions of agriculture and viticulture. The total for all France in 1898-9 was 3,761 associations for boys and 1,500 for girls, the patronage societies being 986. These *petites A* seem to be less common in the districts under observation, though I came across several instances. In Sarthe they amount to twenty-eight. The reasons of this backwardness are naturally manifold. But in two schools, at least, it was not due to a want of energy on the part of the teachers. At Vimoutiers the director of the school told me he had tried to hunt up the old boys, and could not find more than twenty, and those were too poor to form an association. In another school the teacher had made a similar investigation, but discovered there were not enough in his village to form a nucleus. In many villages the young men who were at the school have left, and only the old folks and children remain.

specimen  
society.

One of the most complete societies I came across was that of the Société Amicale des Elèves et anciens Elèves de l'École des Garçons at Saint Aubin-sur-Mer (Calvados), which numbers 175 members (of whom fifty are old boys), out of a total population of only 700. According to the statutes the triple object of the school is to keep up school acquaintances, encourage the sentiment of solidarity, and react against the cabaret by the substitution of harmless and patriotic recreation. The annual subscription is 1 franc; honorary members pay 2, and life governors 20 francs. Religious and political discussions are forbidden. The society has already given several musical and theatrical evenings. The teacher and his class have constructed a temporary stage, and even painted some scenery. The fêtes and soirées are very popular. They have attracted audiences of over 500 people, and have even given rise to the production of a local comedy:—

LE VOYAGE A SAINT-AUBIN-SUR-MER.

Comédie en 2 actes.

DISTRIBUTION DES ROLES.

Lancelot, commerçant retiré	MM. A. DELAUNAY
Maxime, étudiant aux beaux-arts, neveu de Lancelot	G. LACROIX
Alfred, lieutenant de vaisseau, neveu de Lancelot	A. SEVESTRE
Laurent, étudiant en médecine, ami de Maxime	L. MERIEL
Saladin, domestique de Maxime	P. FLAMBARD
Alcibiade, concierge puis marin	CH. CAILLOT
Cérusard, marchand de couleurs	P. AMBROISE
Marins, Huissiers.	

The finances, too, are in a very satisfactory state, the receipts being 201 francs and the expenses 146 francs. As a specimen of how to render village life more attractive in a cheap and satisfactory fashion the above seems an excellent object lesson; the outlay of 10d. a year ought not to be beyond the means of the humblest subscriber. The inspector, M. Trabuc, was loud in his praises of such institutions. They make for local homogeneity, inculcate co-operation, and counteract alcoholism. The young folks at the most critical age come to the school, which is turned into a club room on Sunday, instead of going to the cabaret. In fine weather they play tennis and *le chapeau* on the beach. One Sunday, the teacher told me, there were no games; the result was he met two of his old pupils tipsy. The association take in four newspapers, and lately out of their superfluous funds have bought a phonograph. They were also thinking at the time of my visit of getting up a *tombola* for taking the school to the exhibition.

(ii.) *Evening Continuation Classes.*

The evening continuation classes have had a rather chequered <sup>Historical</sup> existence. In 1867, under Victor Duruy, the number of classes <sup>sketch</sup> amounted to 28,586; in 1889 it had fallen to 7,322. The idea had got abroad that the laicisation of the schools, compulsory attendance and the abolition of fees would render the evening school superfluous. The State subscription, which had been as high as 1,300,000 francs, sank to a meagre 20,000 francs. But it was soon remarked that the reforms of Jules Ferry, despite their thoroughness and comprehensiveness, were not a universal panacea. The school attendance was not altogether satisfactory, and, further, it was seen that the most fruitful years of the pupil's life for the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of character are passed outside the school itself. About 1894 a new movement in favour of evening classes declared itself. The numerous societies\* for improving popular education, of which the "Ligue Française de l'Enseignement" is perhaps the most important, took up the new crusade in favour of evening schools, which in the big towns was already being carried on by such societies as the Polytechnic and Philotechnic Associations. Among their most ardent backers were M. Léon Bourgeois and M. Ferdinand Buisson. In 1895, M. Poincaré, then Minister of Public Instruction, issued a circular on the subject, which has been described as the charter of popular education.

The line taken by M. Poincaré has been followed by M. Rambaud, his successor, and M. Leygues, the present minister, who has found a worthy second in the present head of Primary Instruction, M. Bayet. But the life and soul of the present renaissance in evening <sup>Evening</sup> schools has been M. Edouard Petit, who has gone through the <sup>schools</sup> length and breadth of the country in order to start new centres

\* M. Edouard Petit puts these at 1,200.

or revive old ones. Still, the movement could not have been so widespread if it had not fallen on good ground, in the shape of the primary teachers, who have nobly risen to the occasion. It was in reference to this work that a teacher of Clermont Ferrand proudly wrote:—"One can count on the absolute devotion of the teachers whenever it is a matter of working for social regeneration and strengthening the Republic." A few eloquent figures on the progress of the work will show that these are no idle words. In 1894-6 there were 7,322 *cours* for men, in 1899 there were 26,881; nor are the girls neglected. These classes, which are generally taken on Sundays, owing to the objection to their being held at night, have felt the influence of this vigorous movement in favour of adding a "morrow to the school life." In 1894-95 there were 966. In 1899-1900 they had risen to 16,610.

The increasing interest of the State is best shown by the following figures. In 1894-95, its contribution was only £800. In 1896-97, it was over £5,000. To-day it stands at £8,000. This sum is split up into small subsidies, that vary according to the departments. In 1898, 650 francs, or £26, of this money went into the pockets of the teachers of Loir-et-Cher, and a similar sum was distributed among the teachers of Sarthe.

The bulk of the money is found by the local authorities, who have raised their grants in aid from £46,000 in 1895-96 to £64,000. This is doled out in sums of 150 francs on rare occasions, more often of 100 and even 50 francs; sometimes it is only 25 francs, and in not a few cases the teachers get nothing. The rest of the contributions come from private sources, which in 1895-96 were responsible for £1,800, and last year for £10,000. The movement is further encouraged by a distribution of decorations, medals, diplomas, books, and letters of congratulation to the teachers.

The five rural departments under observation, though far from the "madding" crowd of Paris, have not remained unaffected by the movement. In Calvados, in 1897-98, the statistics were as follows:—Evening schools under male teachers, 131; under female teachers, 23: total, 154. Number of enrolments: men, 2,152; women, 245: total, 2,397, or an increase of 61 in the classes and of 980 in the enrolments. The number of State teachers in the department is 1,228. Orne did still better in 1888-89. With 1,014 State teachers, the number of *cours* rose from 137 to 167, and the hearers from 4,968 to 5,903. Sarthe, with 999 teachers, had 214 men's classes and 97 female, or a total of 311 classes. The enrolments amounted to 5,248, or a little inferior to Orne, but the increase on the year was 623. In 1897-98, Indre-et-Loire, with 820 teachers, had only 131 *cours* instead of 139 the year before. The number of pupils, however, shows a small increase—2,995 instead of 2,947. A very satisfactory item was the regular attendance, which stood at the exceedingly high figure of 2,445 against 2,379 of the year before; or something like 84 per cent. (against about 57 per cent. for all France). In Loir-et-Cher, with

769 teachers, the *cours* show in 1888-89 a rise from 311 to 328. The attendance also worked out from 5,182 to 5,308.

Of course the number of teachers is not altogether a correct guide to the number of *cours*. In Indre-et-Loire, 143 teachers participated in 131 *cours*, and at Mayet I was told the *cours d'adultes* was shared by the director and his three subordinates. At another school the teacher's wife told me that owing to the illness of her husband she took the major part of the work, for which her husband received later on an official reward. Deductions should also be made for those teaching in the maternal schools. But as a rough and ready approximation of the activity of the various departments it is highly interesting. Thus in 1897-98, in Calvados, at least one teacher in eight was interested in the work; in 1899, in Orne, one in six; in 1899, in Sarthe, nearly one in three; in Indre-et-Loire, 1897-98, less than one in six, and in Loir-et-Cher, nearly one in two. A comparison with some of our English counties would be interesting. According to the official statistics for 1897-98, Calvados, Orne, and Indre-et-Loire were among the most backward departments, Orne being last but two in the number of *cours*, and Calvados, again being among the last ten for fewness of students.

The sizes of classes were in Calvados (1898) about 15; in Orne (1899) over 35; in Sarthe (1899) nearly 17; in Indre-et-Loire (1898) over 22; in Loir-et-Cher (1899) about 16. The average for all France in 1897-98 was about 28.

I was anxious to find out if these numbers were mainly swollen by the town classes, and the country schools contributed mainly "skeleton" departments. In one or two instances I certainly found very small numbers. In one place there were three, in another four pupils, in another eight, and in a fourth ten, but then there were only twenty-one children in the whole school. Against this I must set such numbers as 23 at Chauffour (school population 35); 29 at Trun (school population 115); 20 at Loué; 22 at St. Avenin, with an average attendance of 20; Mayet, 26 (school population 178). The same teacher in another village of 579 inhabitants collected all the conscripts. Neufchâtel, 25 to 30 (school population 70); Montlivaut, 21 (school population 21); La Chaussée Saint Victor 18 (school population 37), once as many as 40, but numbers cut into by the establishment of a musical society; Chaumont, 31 (school population 68); Mosnes, 40 (school population 58); Ecommoy, 50 (school population 184).

The duration of the session, length of lessons, and number per week vary. Being essentially a winter school, its extreme limits are October and April. In Indre-et-Loire the lessons averaged five and a half hours a week and lasted 3½ months. In Loir-et-Cher the average duration was three months. In several schools the number of hours was three and a half a week. In Calvados, according to M. Vieillot, the secretary to the academy inspector, the classes are held two or three or four times a week. In fact



every teacher is more or less a law unto himself, as there is no evening schools code.

riety of  
work.

For the same reason, the choice and variety of subjects taught are very great. Some, as M. Edouard Petit says, hold classes to help the backward to make up leeway, others prefer continuation classes, while others indulge in teaching which is rather technical. Most of the instruction in the rural districts falls under the first two heads. At Vimoutiers the class composed of workmen is taken in arithmetic and composition. At Ecommoy the subjects are the ordinary ones, interspersed with readings by the teachers, a system that M. Edouard Petit says is very popular and gives good results. The teacher at Mayet told me he did, a little of everything, and attempted to make the teaching, above all, interesting and practical. He especially eschewed dictations. At St. Avenin the teacher tries to make his class a continuation of the day school, with applications to industry, agriculture, and practical drawing, drainage, and some simple notions of the law of ownership, such as the laws about mortgages, fences, servitudes, maintenance of roads, and other practical matters. At Chaumont the evening school is more or less a continuation of the school studies. At Lonray, the mistress gives Sunday lessons to the girls in household matters. Such agricultural education as is given in the evening schools seems rather to be given in the form of conferences.

moral  
3.

Nor is the moral side of education neglected. The social *ñños* and atmosphere of the primary schools are continued in the classes for adults. This is especially true of the crusade against alcoholism. On this point the Academy Inspector for Orne writes:—

In the majority of the adult classes the lessons, work, and passages for reading have likewise frequently borne on alcoholism, and have had for objective the treatment of the question from the double point of view of morality and the physiological consequences on the individual and the race, and it must be admitted this last point makes more impression than the first. When the teachers make known the ravages of alcohol on the different organs of the body, relate precise facts verified by the doctors, show and hand round pictures relating to their subjects, adults and children are obliged to reflect. There is ground for believing that these reflections will bring about good resolutions, that efforts will be made, and that the scourge of alcoholism will gradually disappear.

Some of us may, from a different conception of human nature, consider the academy inspector unduly sanguine. More than one teacher admitted to me that they thought there was little to be done with the older people, and that is, it is to be feared, much the same case all the world over. We all know Harvey's remark as to the impossibility of finding any doctor over forty who believed in his discovery of the circulation of the blood. But there is one bright spot. In many places the teachers have got hold of the children, and, as an English bishop is reported to have said, when speaking of East London the other day, those who have got the children have got the future.

I spoke to a good many people about these classes. One inspector told me he did not look on them as serious, and another said there were too many playing at "make-belief" among the teachers (*farceurs*). Two teachers told me they had given up their classes, and one said in excuse he had too much to do. It was the only case I came across of a teacher who kicked at these extraneous tasks. Several were rather lukewarm. It is evident that local difficulties and habits must be considered. A teacher who had only a small class told me he found the young men preferred to *courir la rue*. At Carpiquet the teacher, who certainly cannot be accused of want of energy, informed me he could only get together twelve pupils (school population, thirty), as the bulk of the population are masons who work in Caen, about four or five kilomètres away, and were, therefore, too tired to come in the evening. Distance, again, is another obstacle; people cannot be expected to turn out for a three kilomètres' trudge to the school on a dark winter's night. At St. Paterne the teacher could not hold Sunday classes for girls, and the reason seemed an adequate one. The inhabitants of the village start work in Alençon, about two kilomètres off, at 5.30, even in the winter, which means rising at 4.30, and only get home at seven. Sunday is therefore the only free day for them and their children to be together. These various difficulties are frankly recognised by the academy inspector of Orne, who sums up very well the different obstacles. "Unhappily it is not possible to open adult classes everywhere. The causes are the sparseness of the population, fatigue, emigration of the young to the towns, the insufficiency of the resources of the communes to assure what is certainly a minimum, the heating and lighting of the schoolroom."

But the greater number of those with whom I conversed were favourable, and, in some cases, even enthusiastic, about the evening schools. These sentiments have even gained the villagers in some instances. One teacher in Indre-et-Loire assured me that if he did not give evening classes the commune would agitate for his removal, and that many communes in the neighbourhood held similar views. There seems little doubt that in numerous districts the French teachers have thrown themselves with great heartiness into the fray. Allusion has already been made to the teachers in Seine Inférieure, whose ardour the authorities have had to curb by reminding them that, after all, the first of their duties is towards the day school.

But if this fine and far-reaching movement is to take deep and abiding root, it is obvious it must be rendered economically sound. The subsidy of the State, excellent as it is as a sign of encouragement, is only a fleabite in the matter. The 650 francs for Loir-et-Cher work out at under two francs per teacher engaged, and that for Sarthe at about the same figure. The system of diplomas and rewards is also useful, but this again can only be an accessory. One teacher seemed to me to put the matter very plainly when he stated he had received more complimentary letters than he knew what to do with.

Seriousness  
of the work

Need of  
putting  
whole on  
economic  
basis.

Private initiative, too, though helpful, is insufficient. The best system seems to be that of persuading the *municipalités* to assist the work by giving small grants, which will at least cover the out-of-pocket expenses of the teachers, who often spend some twenty-five to thirty francs out of their slender stipends. This, as has already been alluded to, has been largely done in Sarthe, where one inspector alone has managed to secure 6,000 francs from the various communes in the district, and, in fact, yearly grants for no less than 12,706 francs have been obtained in the whole department. Loiret-Cher did even better, obtaining 23,207 in 1899 from the communes. This view is also shared by the academy inspector of Indre-et-Loire, who strongly insists on the need of proper and regular subsidies from the town and parish councils. It is also supported by the paper of a teacher on the reorganisation of the *cours d'adultes* at Clermont Ferrand, who says :—" One will not found a durable work if the zeal of the masters is not sustained by a reasonable remuneration." A possible alternative is, of course, paying classes. In Sarthe in 1898-99 no less than 2,630 francs was contributed by the pupils to the evening schools. A teacher who had adopted the system in his previous school told me it answered well, and those who paid always turned up punctually. Still, in most neighbourhoods the classes have been "free gratis and for nothing," so that a complete return to a fee system would be well-nigh impossible. Under such circumstances the best course to follow seems to be the adoption of the proposal of the International Congress, to make the *indemnité*, hitherto facultative, obligatory for the departments or the communes, failing the State.\*

a possi-  
 ility of com-  
 mission.

Such a proposition, if adopted, would probably do more than render the *cours* more efficient and more widespread. It would also bring the question of obligatory attendance at the evening school within sight. One or two teachers I met, notably the teacher at Montlivaut, broached the subject. And the point was also raised in several papers contributed to the section on the *œuvres post-scolaires* at the International Congress on Primary Education. The advocates of such a reform made a good point by drawing attention to the compulsory attendance which already exists in Switzerland, Hungary, and Germany.

rtificate.

Another point raised at the same congress was the establishment of certificates for evening classes stating that the pupils had regularly followed such and such classes. Their utility to employers of labour, or to the heads of Government or municipal authorities, was asserted by the Congress. The establishment of such certificates would probably lead to the establishment of some sort of examination, for it would doubtless be argued that a simple "testamur" of school attendance was not so valuable and precise as the officially recorded result of a regular examination. The ultimate effect would be the production of a code for evening schools with many alternative syllabuses, but some fear a stereotyped code.

\* This view has the sympathies of the administration.

## (iii.) Lectures: Recreative or Educational.

*Lectures.*—The recreative side is by no means neglected in the extension of the school work. The instance has been cited of the practice of some teachers to give readings in class, which, apart from interest to the pupils, often makes them desirous of finishing the book for themselves. From this reading aloud in class to the public conference is but a step, and from thence it is likewise an easy transition to the regular lecture with magic lantern slides. Here again a careful choice of subject is requisite. Just as with the library for scholars and adults it is necessary to select books that are really within the intelligence of the school *clientèle*, so in the country it is advisable to consult country tastes and ideas. A literary causerie, a discourse on *la morale*, a lecture on political economy, are condemned in advance. These are more suitable for the more serious class work of the school. But a lecture on agriculture, or grafting, or manures, or vine culture, if practical, is sure of success. The same is true of any conference on one of the subjects of the day, China or the Transvaal, or some social subject, such as alcoholism.

Mention has already been made of the facilities for obtaining slides from the *Musée Pédagogique*. In 1896–97 the Musée loaned out 8,363 collections; in 1899–1900 the total rose to 26,963. The conferences have increased with the same rapidity. In 1894–95 there were 10,379; in 1895–96, 61,476, of which about 47,000 were without lantern slides; in 1899–1900 the total came to 123,911, of which some 58,000 were with views. The attendance has risen from one thousand to three millions and a half.

The North-Western departments could not fail to be influenced by this prodigious outburst of energy. Even in Calvados in 1897–98 the number of *cours* rose nearly a quarter—from 674 to 850. Of Orne I could gather no statistics, but the academy inspector in his report gave an admirable exposé of the scope and value of these lectures, which will be quoted further on. In Sarthe (1899) there were no less than 1,643 conferences, and the average attendance was over one hundred for each; the year before they only totalled 947. In Indre-et-Loire (1897–99) the conferences rose from 640 to 688, but there was a decrease in the average attendance, from eighty-one to sixty-two. In Loir-et-Cher (1899) a much higher level was reached. There were altogether 1,281 conferences, followed by 17,371 persons.

A few of these lectures have been given by persons unconnected with the school—the local doctor, or a farmer, or a retired military man. But these “extra specials” have been comparatively rare. It is the teachers, and the teachers only, who have borne the burden of it. *Ce sont toujours les mêmes qui se font tuer*. This matter of getting outside help is not so easy as it looks, and some ill-disposed persons are quite capable, as an academy inspector told me, of utilising the opportunity of giving a lecture on some apparently innocent subject to turn their discourse more or less covertly to political account.

agic  
interns.

In many cases the teachers have raised money for magic lanterns by means of small lotteries in the village itself, as at Chauffour. In other cases, as at Loué, a *tombola* was started in the district round to buy a lantern. The success of lectures in this region is very great. The teachers have bumper audiences, amounting at times to 250 people. In Indre-et-Loire there is a departmental lantern, which the administration place at the teachers' disposal.

ides.

In addition to the views lent by the *Musée Pédagogique*, slides may be borrowed off the numerous societies for encouraging popular education, such as the National Society for popular lectures, the Havre Society for Education by Illustration, and the French Education League. A very effective method of supplying cheap views is followed by one of the numerous pedagogic journals, "Après l'École," which distributes with every one of its issues transparent views, which only require to be cut out and mounted to serve as slides.

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tures.

The scope and value of these illustrated lectures are well described by the academy inspector of Orne :—

A pretty large number of teachers have given lectures, most of which were accompanied with lantern slides. As was the case last year, these lectures have been very well attended. They render a very real service. The agricultural lectures in particular are always highly appreciated. The teachers who are in charge of them show the greatest pains in the accomplishment of their task. The end we propose is to enlighten the facts of daily life with elementary scientific notions, to destroy certain prejudices, to make known new methods of cultivation and their relation to old ones, to show the utility of association. In a word, to seek to improve the lot of the agriculturist. The results obtained are already appreciable.

proposed  
prove-  
ment.

There is, however, room for improvement in these lectures. At present the subjects chosen have often little or no connection. The lecturer passes from "China" to "Peru," or after a lecture on literature he takes up such a subject as foot-and-mouth disease. As M. Doliveux says, the result on his listeners is rather to make them regard these lectures as a source of distraction than of instruction. A methodic programme is wanted, in which several teachers might co-operate, each taking a part and lecturing in turn in each other's villages.

mmary.  
lucational  
lue.

This recreative work, so cheap and so attractive, is even in its present unorganised state a valuable educational agency. By his mere choice of subject, by his manner and style of putting his lecture, the teacher finds himself occupying a sort of lay pulpit, from which he can give expression and currency to those ideas he thinks most worthy of circulation. Yet while there is a place, and a large place, for methodic courses of lectures, it would not probably be wise to abandon entirely the isolated recreative lecture. To the educationist it should represent a valuable means for attracting to the school itself those for whom at the outset the more serious evening classes do not offer of themselves sufficient inducements. These "lay sermons" stand for the exoteric teaching of the school, and one of their most precious sides is, in a pedagogical sense, the number of converts they may draw, through being given in open meetings, to the educational fold.

Their direct recreative value is still more patent. Every village cannot realise Lord Salisbury's impossible wish of possessing a circus, but it can at least have a magic lantern, and with a teacher who understands his audience the list of interesting and topical subjects is practically inexhaustible. These weekly or fortnightly lectures on winter nights must go far to redeem the dull monotony of the country in winter. They cannot fail to draw the villagers more together. Local patriotism is never wanting in the French village, but there is still a certain amount of *méfiance* among the ordinary peasants which such reunions would help to disperse. Again, there is the counter action of these lectures on the good name and influence of the school in making it popular with and respected by the parents in permitting them to become better acquainted with the teacher, and come, to a certain extent, under his influence. Among the three and a half millions odd who, through these lectures, have learnt to know the teacher better, there must be many thousands who have also learnt to rate him higher, not only as a teacher but a citizen. And so in some cases the village schoolmaster bids fair to become the "lay rector" of the parish.

Recreative value.

Social value

CHAPTER XI.—THE RURAL PROBLEM.

(1) IS THE SCHOOL TO BLAME ?

The French rural problem is no easy one, but, as far as my experience goes, and I talked to some 140 persons, many of them unconnected with the school, there seemed to be no general tendency to impute to primary education the ills the countryside is heir to. I was particularly anxious to find out if the teaching was considered too literary. Undoubtedly the old programmes were exposed to this criticism, but most persons seemed to think that if the promise of the new agricultural syllabuses were fulfilled, there would be little cause for complaint. In fact, the only criticism I heard under this heading was at the two agricultural congresses I attended later on at Paris. One or two speakers at these criticised the work and teaching of the rural school, but most of their objections seemed rather to refer to the rural school as it was ten years ago, and where their demands on the school and what it should do were not exaggerated, they were met, as M. René Leblanc pointed out, by the new regulations for agricultural teaching. Nor did I hear the school accused of being the cause of the rural exodus in the shape of making the children discontented with their lot, or of stuffing their heads with a deal of rubbish they would do better without. Some teachers, no doubt, are apt to magnify the importance of the *certificat* and *brevet*. On the other hand, I came across a remarkable passage in an address by M. Deries, the Academy Inspector of Manche, in which he lays to the credit of certain

Is the school an adverse factor?

Programme too literary

Discontent the pupils?

Subversive  
tendencies?

teachers their efforts to retain in the country those children whose parents advise and almost command them to go out into the world and seek their fortune. The inspector goes on to state that intelligence is just as badly wanted in the country as elsewhere, and teachers should strictly avoid making themselves accomplices of the parents' often foolish vanity to see their children enter the already overcrowded liberal professions.\* I did, however, encounter several persons who fell foul of the teaching and tone of the school. Most of these, it must be confessed, showed their bias by describing it as the *école sans Dieu*.† To such persons the State school represents one of the principal engines for undermining the respect for authority. But this phenomenon is not confined to any one country, it is universal, and is sometimes at bottom only a symptom that the "old order changeth." As M. Gréard has said, "L'autorité n'est plus le principe souverain qui règle aujourd'hui les rapports sociaux." Often the cause is directly traceable to the sad decrease in parental authority, of which M. Martin, Academy Inspector of the Ardennes, complains. But social and home influences were alike ignored by these adversaries of the *école laïque*. Judicious cross-examination only made them, like Molière's Marquis in the *Revue de l'Ecole des Femmes*, reiterate the charge. The school was detestable because it was detestable, and that was the long and short of the matter. Yet they might have bettered their case by pointing to sundry "false notions of liberty and equality" which exist to a certain extent in the country, and against which "it is the duty of the school to warn" its pupils, according to the inspector of Béthune, 1895. But even then to saddle the teachers with the direct propagation of these doctrines of anarchical freedom and dead level equality would be quite a different matter.

A favourable  
verdict.

So much for the adverse evidence I collected, and now for the other side of the shield. Of course, in places where *laïcisation* has recently taken place, the school may not be very popular. But as has already been pointed out, the religious difficulty is on the decline, and even in the more catholic districts an attack on the *école laïque* would be generally *mal vu*. In fact, to use a phrase of one of the primary inspectors I met, the school to-day is well acclimatised. This applies equally to the teachers who represent

\* This is not a cheap matter. M. P. Déghilage, in his book on the depopulation of country districts, puts the following speech to a parent into the mouth of a teacher:—"It is two thousand pounds you must spend, if your jackanapes is twelve years old, should you wish to make a doctor or a lawyer of him."

† This charge has already been discussed. A quotation from M. Payot, Academy Inspector of Ardèche (1896), is also to the point:—"Tous les reproches que l'on adresse à nos écoles au point de vue de l'enseignement moral ne s'adressent en réalité qu'au caractère laïque de nos écoles. On essaie de faire croire que laïciser c'est 'déchristianiser.' C'est une erreur absolue. Il y a mille ans que la France se sécularise. Saint Louis, comme on l'a fait remarquer, en laïcisant la justice jusqu'alors confiée à l'église fut le premier des laïciseurs."

the school in France more fully than their English colleagues, who are too often regarded as the hired\* servants of the Board or the school managers. Of course there are cases in which the teacher has become involved with the villagers in personal and political differences, of which the latter are generally a cloak for the former. But the few teachers I came across who had been in this predicament did not seem to have imperilled their position or that of the school, while the great majority have certainly done much to make themselves and the school looked on as part and parcel of the village life. The general evidence in favour of the school was so overwhelming I very often did not make a special note of it, but the following are some of my impressions (verbatim or shortened). "Peasants not against the programme" (inspector). "School as a rule popular with the peasants" (secretary to Academy inspector). "School well regarded by the peasants" (normal school director). "Rural schools in sympathy with the district, and teachers respected" (head of cheese factory). "Parents who have been at the school send their children more regularly than the illiterate" (teacher at Carpiquet). "The peasants, and above all the small farmers, approve of the teaching; industrial population, less so" (teacher Saint-Martin de-la-Lieue). "There are many good teachers, but there are some who only teach a few of the children" (peasant farmer). "Teacher says he is on good terms with the peasants" (C.). I travelled with an inspector and noted he was on excellent terms with the numerous peasants we met; the conversation was almost exclusively agricultural. A peasant farmer, a peasant proprietor and a corn merchant spoke equally well of the schools. I had also an interesting conversation at Montlivaut with a peasant, who seems thoroughly satisfied with the schools. To these instances may be added the several occasions on which I visited the *champs d'expérience* with the teacher, and talked with the peasants we met. The good feeling that exists between school and commune is further exemplified by the ready way in which the latter have, when properly approached, come forward to subsidise the evening classes. These, again, should prove a most valuable agent in consolidating the already well-established relations between the school and the villagers.

It seems therefore that one may very fairly put the school on one side in any examination into the harmful factors in the economy of rural France. Whether it has any appreciable effect as an influence for good may best be considered after the problem itself has been diagnosed.

#### (ii.) STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The five departments which fell to my lot to visit would be looked on as distinctly rural if they were in England. Each contains The problem stated.

\* Of course, their status is happily much improved since the days when Matthew Arnold likened their relationship to the rector as equivalent to that of the latter's gardener. But for the petty tyranny that sometimes goes on under small boards and voluntary managers, see Report M. G.



at most a single town that can be regarded as anything above that of a market town of fair dimensions, although scattered up and down several of these departments, especially along some of the valleys, are a certain number of small factories, which are not, however, sufficiently numerous to give the country an industrial aspect. The main industry of all these departments is agriculture, whether it be butter or cheese making, corn raising, grazing cattle rearing, horse breeding, cider making, or vine culture. On the line of hills that form the watershed between the affluents of the Seine, or the Seine estuary, and the Loire, lie large patches of forests, in which the inhabitants are often engaged in clog making. Agriculture being therefore the chief occupation of by far the larger number of inhabitants, it is clear that any inquiry into the present state of the population would take the form of questions as to the general condition of agriculture, as affected by land tenure, taxation, wages, existing modes of cultivation, and the supply of labour, with a few stray investigations of the actual condition of industrial work and workers wherever they were encountered. These questions would naturally involve further ones, *e.g.*, whether there is a rural exodus, and, if so, to what extent? Are Paris and the apparently higher wages of Paris the reasons for this? Or is the present unrest in part due to conscription? Does this rural exodus produce a diminution in population? And if the diminution exists, is it accelerated by other factors, such as a decrease in the birth rate? Is this decrease merely due to natural causes, or may it be set down to the higher standard of comfort in vogue, or the ravages of alcoholism? And, lastly, granted that certain evils abound, a waning prosperity in agriculture, a desertion of the country, a dulness and dreariness in country life, a decrease in the natality, an excessive love of comfort, a sudden growth in alcoholism, the final question presents itself, What has the school done to lessen these evils, and what can the school do in the future?

Industry.

To take the less important factor first. One of the biggest linen manufactories of France is situated at Lisieux. It employs 1,200 workmen. Another large one exists at Mézidon, with 300 workmen. There are also several woollen and cretonne manufacturers in and about Lisieux. Along the course of the rivers one meets small cotton mills, which employ a certain number of hands. The factories near Lisieux suffered a good deal five or six years ago, but have been doing better lately, owing to the adoption of improved machinery. In a few villages where I came across an artisan alongside of an agricultural population, the contrast was most marked. I was uniformly told that destitution was widespread among the mill hands, while the peasants were nearly always in well-to-do circumstances. The hours of the workmen seem also extremely long. At St. Paterne (Sarthe) the work-people, men and women, are obliged to rise at 4.30 winter and summer, as the mills at Alençon open at 5.30. They do not return till six or seven, and have only half an hour at nine for breakfast and an hour at two for dinner. As for the owners, I heard of several

mills that had been closed, as at OUILLY, or were in a parlous state, as in the neighbourhood of Alençon. At Vimoutiers I was shown a fine hall (now only used for corn), that recalled in its size and solitude one of those deserted marts in the Low Countries which were once busy centres of trade. The building in question had served as a mart for *toiles* for all the hand weavers round, but now there are only two weavers left. The same tale was told me by a friend of mine at Lisieux. Formerly on a small estate, now occupied by a single farmer, there lived six households, who each cultivated a small patch of ground, and worked, especially in the winter, at a hand loom, and when the cloth was finished, the peasant took it himself to market. These have now all disappeared, and a similar fate has overtaken the village industries in the neighbourhood of Argentan. The small factory is languishing in its turn. The windmills are abandoned except for grinding barley for the cattle. The water-mills are going the same way. Only the saw-mills hold their own. Another small industry, bootmaking in OUILLY is not what it was twenty years ago. On the other hand, where industries are grouped round an industrial centre like Flers, they appear to be prosperous. The workmen earn 3 francs 25 centimes to 3 francs 50 centimes a day, the women 1 franc 50 centimes to 2 francs. Living, as many of them do, in the villages outside the town, they spend their spare time in gardening and a little agriculture. It is sad to find that the celebrated point-lace of Alençon is also dying out. The cause is said to be, not a falling off in the workmanship, but the prohibitive cost of production, which renders it difficult to find a market. A square yard of it costs several thousand francs, and passes through thirty-two different hands. The only thing really prosperous in the place was a carriage builder's establishment. I was unable from lack of time to inquire into the industries and manufactures of the other departments under observation, nor do these scanty notes represent in any way the total number of industries in Calvados and Orne; but if, as far as they go, they afford any criterion, they certainly bear out the views of anyone who believes in the concentration of industries as a necessary, though by no means a final, step in its evolution, that the severe competition of foreign trusts and amalgamations must ultimately crush out the little manufacturers, even when the latter are sheltered by a protective tariff. The future, therefore, of those small industries in rural France, not enjoying exceptional local advantages or manufacturing special articles which do not figure among the principal items of the world's production, such as cotton or woollen goods, seems either gradual extinction or concentration around local centres which possess the best means of communication and transit. As for the prospects of village industries, they seem even darker. There are no technical funds available in France for attempting to improve the arts and crafts in rural districts. The *travaux manuels* in the schools are practically of little importance; it is only in the higher primary

schools that good work is being done, and here again the pupils are prepared for the big workshop and not for rural employment. The only aid in the long run will be through the evening continuation schools, and by the time these are thoroughly equipped for manual work, it will be rather a question in most districts of reviving than improving these bye products of rural economy.

- Agriculture.** The peasants who remember the palmy days of agriculture under the Empire will tell you that agriculture is quite a decaying industry, or, at least, a shadow of its former self. This, of course, is true to a limited extent. With the standard of comfort everywhere rising, were the pecuniary yield from the land but equal in amount to what it was thirty years ago, it is plain that the inhabitants of the country would to-day be comparatively poorer off than at that epoch. But
- Fall in land values.** the break in prices in agricultural produce which took place after 1876 has further intensified the contrast. In every department into which I went there seemed to have been a heavy fall in the value of land, which perhaps reached its lowest point in some of the districts devastated by the phylloxera. This fall does not seem to have been everywhere the same. The professor of agriculture at Alençon estimated it at a third, but on a small estate of thirty-five hectares near Lisieux, I was told the rent, which was formerly 3,500 francs, is now reduced to 2,000. Out of this 400 francs are spent on repairs, and 800 go to satisfy the tax collector. These figures are certainly heavy, and I was informed of a worse case in the neighbourhood in which a peasant who paid 120 francs in taxes for a house and about an acre of orchard, allowed the State to seize his property for arrears of taxes. He now holds the same property at a yearly tenancy of 60 francs. Against this must be set the assertion of a departmental professor of agriculture that the *impôts* are not excessive. An inspector also informed me that the land tax has been relieved at the expense of the house tax. In fact, it rarely exceeds one-fifth of the rent, according to another witness.
- Taxes.**
- The cadastre.** In some cases the *cadastre* on which the tax is based seems to want revision. Thus, in certain parts of Burgundy the grand *crus* which were once produced on the hill sides are grown to-day in the valleys. The hill sides are now denuded of vineyards, and are merely laid down in grass, yet they have none the less to pay on the original assessment, which is naturally very heavy. Not a few proprietors have been ruined. In Orne I likewise heard of proprietors whose assessment is not to-day in accord with the comparative value of their holdings. It is possible to get the assessment altered, but the process is long and costly.
- Tenure.** On the other hand, the system of tenure seems to be far simpler than with us. Mr. Bodley has already written largely on the *ingérence* of lawyers in all forms of business in England, and the complicated machinery they have created more or less for their own benefit. In France, the country of small holdings, where owners are therefore numerous, the transfer of land is, I am told, neither tedious nor expensive, and registration is a very simple matter.
- Transfer.**

It is interesting to note that despite the long period during which the metric system has been compulsory in France, the common means of measurement in the country are still according to the ancient manner of computation. Thus around Lisieux the land, which is mainly in pasture, is reckoned at so much a *vache*. On estate mentioned above, which is estimated to support ten cows, the *vache*, which was formerly taken at 350 francs, now only produces 200. In Orne the farmers sometimes count by *jours* (equals 40 ares, or about an acre), sometimes by acres of 84 ares, or a trifle over two English acres. In Sarthe there is a measure called a *hommée pré* (which equals 33 ares), or rather more than a man can dig in a day. It looks as if we in England shall reach the end of the twentieth century before the mystic 30¼ square yards which forms the square rod, pole, or perch, will have fallen into desuetude.

As regards the size of holdings, they still belong overwhelmingly to the class which we regard as small.\* Calvados is not a country of big farms, and in the arrondissement of Vire the holdings are very small. In Orne the majority of farms run from 25 to 37 ares. Farms under 25 ares are called "bordages," or "closeries," which reminds one of the Norfolk "closes." Out of 100 farms, there are on an average three from 100 to 200 acres, twenty-five between 25 and 75 ares, and seventy-two under 25 ares. In Sarthe the number of proprietors runs into tens of thousands, and many of the day labourers have their little patch. Large estates seem to be more numerous along the banks of the Loire, and especially in the châteaux country, which may be looked on as the "Dukeries" of France. But at present there is little sign of the small holders being crushed out by the agricultural depression, as were the Norfolk statesmen in the eighteenth century. On the contrary, at least in Sarthe, the earth hunger is as keen as ever. When any big estate comes on the market it is bought up by a speculator or syndicate, and cut up into small lots, that are at once snapped up by the peasants. The movement towards the formation of large farms seems to have no counterpart in the regions of France under observation. It was in Sarthe, again, that I was told that many farmers, especially in the neighbourhood of Marolles, had bought their farms, which shows that agriculture is not yet played out.

In Calvados, the principal district devoted to the raising of crops is the plain of Caen, every inch of which is carefully cultivated. Corn, of course, is the chief item, though its production is below the requirements of the department. Here at one time one of the most important crops was colza, but the industry has been practically ruined by the competition of American cotton oils. The cultivation of the beetroot is, however, largely increasing. In the pays d'Auge a large part of the land which was once arable has

\* According to M. Tisserand, there were in France, in 1894, 6,913,500 cultivators and 3,460,000 proprietors.

been laid down in grass, the peasant only cultivating sufficient for his own needs. The same alteration in cultivation has taken place in the district of Argentan, in Orne, owing to foreign competition. Still, in the last five years the actual production of cereals has increased owing to the use of *engrais*. Around Alençon I was told the same story of wheat going out of cultivation. *Le blé ne rapporte plus* was a common complaint. The cultivation of the beetroot for fodder has, however, given good results. In this neighbourhood most of the crops are now cut with the scythe, the sickle is little used, and here and there peasants have purchased reapers. The most advanced agriculture that I came across was in the Beauce district, a huge plain covered with cornfields, that extends into the north of Loir-et-Cher, and which is often called the granary of France. The corn crop in Sarthe, although the area has been reduced, supplies more than is necessary for its immediate wants; some of it even finds its way to England. In many parts of the department the yield of wheat has doubled owing to a judicious use of *engrais* (being now in the Beaumont district from about twenty-eight to twenty-two bushels an acre\*). I have already spoken of the barley of Loué, as well as of the bad habit of the peasants in the district of sowing two successive corn crops. The *métail*, a mixed crop of wheat and barley, of which the peasants make their bread, has also been mentioned, as well as the *melarde* with which they feed their cattle. About 155,000 quarters of the former were raised in Sarthe in 1895. The potato is largely grown in the same department. A peasant proprietor informed me he had been the first to introduce on a large scale its cultivation into his neighbourhood, with the result that he now supplies the *caserne* at Mamers. The departmental professor of agriculture stated that Sarthe may be regarded as the potato garden of France. In 1895 the crop amounted to 3,141,078 *quintaux* (about 309,466 tons). In Sarthe also a great amount of lucerne and clover are grown for hay. These artificial grasses prove a serious rival to the natural pastures, which are often mown and made into hay that is sold to the cavalry garrisons or sent to Paris. The same practice largely obtains in the marshes and meadows along the banks of the Loire. This production of dry fodder shows signs of being overdone. In the present year (1900) prices no doubt were high, as there seems to be little or no grass anywhere. But the departmental professor in Sarthe thinks that in the near future a certain amount of the present land under pasture will go back again into regular cultivation. Indre-et-Loire possesses an excellent model in high farming in the agricultural colony of Mettray, a reformatory largely built

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\* Compared with this, in 1900 Great Britain had a yield of thirty bushels per acre, Russia of nine. The shrinkage of the wheat area in England is severe, being only little more than half what it was twenty-five years ago—Mr. Clare-Sewell Read, "Eastern Daily Press," December 21st, 1900.

and maintained by private charity, which employs a strong contingent of its numerous inmates, who amount to over 400, in working on an estate of about 1,300 acres, half of which is hired land. The estate, thanks to the abundance of hands and a liberal use of manure, has far the best crops in the neighbourhood. The farm superintendent who drove me round the place told me last year he obtained over forty-four bushels an acre in wheat and over sixty-one bushels an acre in oats; which compares very favourably with the yield elsewhere. A good deal of maize is grown in the colony and kept in silos for the cows, who are always tied up. They also go in largely for lucerne, some of which is kept as long as five years. The colony's pastures are always mown, as they are too damp to put cattle on. As far as one can judge in a general way, a good deal of corn land has gone out of cultivation, especially in the districts where dairy work and cattle breeding are profitable. But even in these districts the limit appears to have been reached, while in others, where the peasants do not consume their own hay, it has probably been overdone. One great drawback to better farming is the lack, as the head superintendent said to me at Mettray, of keeping a sufficient head of stock. This, however, may be obviated by the use of artificial manures, which is increasing. People are beginning to see that the ground is like a bank—you must put something in to get something out. Under these circumstances it is possible that in some districts the area under corn will increase, if other untoward factors such as the lack of labour do not become too prominent.

On those grass lands which are not mown and sold for hay, the farmers go in for dairying, cattle breeding, grazing and horse-breeding. In many of these pastoral districts, especially in Calvados and Orne, the meadows are covered with apple trees. This allows the peasant to have two strings to his bow. In a wet year there is plenty of grass and probably a "shy" apple crop; in a dry year, like the present, the herbage is poor, but the apple trees are literally bowed under with blossoms. Many of these valleys are covered with hedges to prevent the cattle straying, which gives them quite an English look. These enclosures, at least in the pays d'Auge, have the name *cour*, which is derived directly from the low latin *cortem*, as may be seen in such local names as Avricourt. The fault of the farmers seems to be that they cannot make up their minds whether to definitely take up the breeding of cattle or dairy work. Hence they sometimes fall between two stools. This is also the district in which Camembert is made. The cheese takes its name from a small village two and a half miles from Vimoutiers, in Orne. The Canton of Vimoutiers exports a million cheeses, but Livarot and Pont-Évêque, in Calvados, are also equally important centres; the value of the high-class cheeses produced in Calvados alone amounts to about £320,000 a year. Some years ago the Queen's dairy people came over to study the making, but the real secret, as a large cheese merchant said to me, lies in the richness of the pastures.

Dairy farming and cattle breeding.

izing.

The chief grazing grounds of France are in Orne, which is one of the mainstays of the Paris meat market. Prices, however, have declined a good deal of late years. They were once as high as fifteen to eighteen sous a pound, and are now at eleven to thirteen at the *abattoir*. Many of the cattle are not bred in this department, but are sent there to be grazed, whence they are dispatched to Paris, and even to England. The English race of Durhams is much used as a cross for breeding purposes. The foot-and-mouth disease (*la fièvre aphteuse*) seems unfortunately to be pretty widespread. I came across it in the vallée d' Auge, and again in Orne and Sarthe. The measures taken for its prevention do not seem to be so severe as with us. The farmer who discovers it on his place is at once obliged to inform the mayor, who proclaims the commune as infected and calls in the veterinary. The prefect can, if he likes, prohibit fairs and fat cattle sales. This is not infrequently done in self defence by the neighbouring departments, but the selection of the commune as the quarantine area, in the first place, seems somewhat small. The disease appeared also to be prevalent in Indre-et-Loire; as the superintendent of the farm at Mettray told me, he disinfected the road every time the cattle had to pass from one side of it to the other. The cows on the latter place were either Holland or Brittany. The latter, however, always ran to fat on the rich fodder of the colony. The best sheep I saw were also at the colony, where there is a race of Berri sheep crossed with English Southdowns. There were likewise a goodly number of pigs kept. To judge from what I saw and heard, those who seem to be engaged in butter and cheese making, or in breeding and grazing, seem to be fairly prosperous everywhere, except where the *fièvre aphteuse* is prevalent.

rse  
eding.

One of the chief centres of horse breeding in France is Orne, in which there are three principal races—the *percheron*, or draught horse; the *cheval breton*, a horse of a bigger type; and the *cheval de Merlerault*, a cross between the Norman and English breeds. Every year there are two horse fairs in the department, one at Alençon and the other at Le Mêle. There is also a fair at Saint André de Mortagne, which is the largest in France for brood mares. The stud farm of Le Pin, with its celebrated cavalry school, is also situated in the department, which is one of the most important for raising horses for the remount. The Government gives premiums for *demi-sangs* but not for *percherons*, which apparently is considered an omission. The peasants do not break in these "half-breds" themselves, but bring them to an *école de dressage* at Alençon. I had a conversation with a farmer who breeds horses of the *percheron* type, and carried off last year all the first prizes at Mamers. He seemed to think breeding a profitable pursuit, and this opinion was borne out by that of the departmental professor for Orne, M. Langlais.

for indus-  
s. Fowls,  
s.

Calvados, of course, is noted for its large trade in fowls and eggs. No less than 20,000,000 francs worth of the latter pass every year through the port of Honfleur, their destination being England.

Le Mans, in Sarthe, is also a great centre for the poultry trade, as well as La Flèche; 250,000 head of poultry and 100,000 geese are sent annually from this region to Paris, which also produces some 10,000,000 eggs. A large consignment of fowls from the same district finds its way at Christmas into Leadenhall Market. At the "colonie Mettray" I came across two large poultry farms which have an enormous output of fowls and eggs. In many cases the poultry farm is looked on as the woman's work, and the vast majority of peasant families do not neglect this useful means of supplementing their income.

I came across market gardening in one or two villages, notably at Montlivaut, in Loir-et-Cher, which, with a population of only 680, exports wines, asparagus, French beans, and potatoes to the tune of £8,000 a year. Bee culture exists in certain parts, notably in the Sologne, which occupies the south of Loir-et-Cher, and abounds in marshes and ponds. It corresponds roughly to our Broadland, and once contained over a thousand sheets of water, though many of these have now been drained; it possessed, in 1895, 6,608 hives, producing 46,953 kilos of honey and 12,698 of wax. Sarthe is also a great country for bees, containing no less than 13,000 hives, which in 1895 furnished 76,052 kilos of honey and 16,925 of wax.

Calvados and Orne are two of the great cider-making departments. In fact, Calvados is the second cider-producing department in France, producing about 2,000,000 hectolitres—equal to 44,000,000 gallons. Much of the grass land in these departments is planted with apple trees, and some of the arable land as well. In Orne, where the trees number about 3,000,000, they are often planted along the roadside or in the hedgerows. The cultivation of the apple seems to be extending, and in many places I saw quite recent plantations. The present year, 1900, was an exceptional one for apples; the late frosts, which generally do much damage, did not put in an appearance. A tree which had not a fine show of blossom was a rarity, and many orchards, notably those near Trun, were a marvel to see. The cider varies naturally a good deal according to the localities. That of the pays d'Auge is perhaps the strongest, but the Parisians prefer the lighter kinds, which are produced in Orne. It is from the pays d'Auge cider that the *eau de vie de marc* is generally distilled, often by the peasants themselves. The orchards continue into Sarthe, where the vine culture begins, and even further into Indre-et-Loire. The Germans appear to be directing their attention to cider, as in 1899 they came into the market and bought up 200,000 hectolitres of apples to take away to make into cider. The promise of the spring has resulted in a bumper crop of apples, which are also of excellent quality. Agriculture may be in a distressful condition, but the apple growers and cider makers will not have cause to complain this year (1900).

The first vines I came across were in Sarthe. Its production in wine amounted to 61,473 hectolitres in 1895. Although the phylloxera



at one time caused immense damage in this department, destroying in one year over 2,000 hectares out of 9,000, the peasants were not ruined, as in some districts, because they had several strings to their bow in the shape of other kinds of cultivation. Now that replanting with American vines and re-grafting of the former *crus* on the new stock is a thorough success, the country has everywhere largely regained its former prosperity. In Indret-Loire, where the vine is one of the staple products of the department (721,000 hectolitres in 1895), the case was far more desperate. Here again, however, the corner has been turned and the wine-growers are everywhere retrieving their position. The valley of the Loire itself is too exposed to frosts, owing to its dampness, to allow of successful culture, but the hills that line either bank are everywhere being replanted. At Metray there were no less than 60 hectares under cultivation, which produced a very handsome return last year. A cultivator at Noizay seemed well satisfied with his vines, and said it was the only thing that paid. In Loir-et-Cher, which is also largely a vine-growing department (624,250 hectolitres in 1895) the country was at one time devastated by the phylloxera. A regular emigration set in, and the peasants forsook the rural districts *en masse*. Thus, at Saint-Denis la Victoire during the phylloxera scare many of the young able-bodied men left the village, with the result that the population has fallen from above 500 to 458, and of this population there are only nineteen boys of school age in the place. Now, however, the worst is over, and in many villages I stopped at I heard of nothing but progress. Replantation is going on in all directions, and the present year, which has provided such a bumper year for cider, should also turn out a record one for the vine (1900).

wood  
ers.

The majority of the inhabitants, who are not engaged in agricultural or industry proper, are employed in such various employments as brickmaking, coalwinning, quarrying, etc. ; \* a certain proportion likewise find occupation in the numerous forests which lie more or less on the watershed between the Seine and the Loire. Several of these forests are very considerable in extent. In Calvados they occupy one-twelfth of the department, in Orne one-seventh, in Sarthe one-seventh, and in Indre-et-Loire one-sixth, and in Loir-et-Cher one-fifth. In the forest of Perseigne, between Alençon and Mamers, the *bûcherons* work by the piece, and gain about 4 francs a day. The makers of *sabots* gain from

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\* Along the coast of Calvados there is a good deal of fishing. It is worth noting in connection with this that technical education in the shape of an *enseignement maritime* has been started for children in some seaside places. They are taught the meaning of the different flags and their use in signalling, the compass, the phases of the moon, the *rose de vents*, or the different points the wind blows from, the various rigs, and the names of the principal sails, ropes, etc., with lessons on reading charts, assistance to the drowned, and practical work in reefing and knot-making (for further details see an exhaustive article on the subject by M. Coutant (Inspecteur Général) in the *Revue Pédagogique*, June, 1901).

2 francs 50 centimes to 4 francs a day. Through the kindness of Mme. Leffroy, the wife of the teacher at Neufchâtel, which lies on the edge of the forest, I came into possession of a sketch by her husband and herself, which had been prepared in view of the Exhibition. It gives an interesting account of this minor industry and furnishes some very useful data about the budget of a family of *sabotiers*. The father and mother and two sons earn together 2,270 francs a year, or over £90. Apparently these people are not badly off, yet it is from their ranks that the emigration to the towns seems to be most pronounced.

Much has been done of late in France to encourage and assist agriculture. The rôle of the departmental professors of agriculture and of the special professors has already been explained. Allusion has also been made to the agricultural laboratories which enable the agricultural professors to do so much in the way of analysing soils, and suggesting the proper manures, as well as analysing those which the peasants suspect to be not up to sample, not to mention the research work which also goes on in them. Each departmental professor, to be fully equipped, should have one of these arsenals of science at his disposal. The small proprietor is further favoured by the system of protection, which keeps the price of wheat up to a certain level, while in many departments, notably in Orne and Sarthe, a large number of light railways and tramways have been constructed, which have not only proved invaluable for bringing isolated country districts into touch with the big markets such as Paris, but have also, at least in the Sarthe, proved a profitable source of investment to local capitalists. That, for instance, from Le Mans to Loué and Saint-Denis-d'Orques, brings in 7 or 8 per cent., and the shares are practically unprocurable. In the same department, only last year, two new steam tramways were built, which, after a certain number of years, may become the department's property. It is only fair, however, to add that these undertakings are not always so remunerative. In Indre-et-Loire I was told the department had to make up a considerable difference to complete the dividend it had guaranteed. But in these days, when cheap means of transit are even more important than tariffs, a country cannot do too much to improve its internal means of communication, and this system of putting down light railways or tramways under the guarantee of the county council, if exercised with caution, might do much for out of the way districts in England. Only a light railway must mean really a light railway, and not, as has sometimes been the case with us, a line that a Great Northern express can safely run over at a pinch.\* The Loué line, for instance,

\* I have to thank M. Cassarini, the departmental professor of agriculture of Sarthe, for the following particulars. The cost of a narrow-gauge railway comes to about 40,000 francs a kilometre—about £2,560 per mile; this includes the rolling stock. The preliminary expenses for a line of about 50 kilometres, including the cost of survey, getting leave to construct, etc., may come to about £2,400. The land can be com-

often runs along the main road. There is no pretence at fencing. Its stations are of the simplest order, and a single woman is station-master, booking-clerk, porter, and signalman rolled in one.

mices agri-  
35.

The third main encouragement that agriculturists find in France are the *comices agricoles* and the *syndicats*.\* Some of these, I was told, were formed for political purposes,† but if politics serve the cause of agriculture, there seems to be little cause for complaint. All the good that such societies do is a positive gain. The *comices agricoles* devote their attention to agricultural shows or competitions for the best-kept farms or the finest crops among the cultivators. The *syndicats* are principally formed for making purchases on the co-operative principle. Every department possesses at least one *comice*; many of the *arrondissements* have also their own, and sometimes the cantons have separate societies as well.‡ In Sarthe alone there are no less than twenty-eight, which gave away last year over 30,000 francs in prizes. Mention has already been made of the encouragement given by these associations to the primary schools by the institution of competitions for teachers and pupils, as well as of school exhibitions.

dicats.  
ec sorts.

As for the *syndicats agricoles*, they may be divided into three categories ||: Those for the purchase of *engrais* and implements on co-operative lines; those for the purchase and mutual use of pedigree bulls and rams, to improve the breed of their live stock; and, thirdly, the mutual societies for insurance against the cattle plague or loss by hail. The *syndicats*, according to the agricultural professor of the *arrondissement* of Mamers, are growing at a great rate, more especially those for the purchase of *engrais*. There is keen rivalry among the various *syndicats*, each trying to supply its members at the cheapest price. This opinion was also confirmed

pulsorily acquired by arbitration before an expropriation jury. If the line is called "line of local interest," the sanction of the two chambers is needed; if it is called a tramway, as most of these railroads are called, it merely requires a decree. The speed is limited, when the side of the road is appropriated by the line, to 15½ miles an hour; across the fields it is not limited, but the companies in Sarthe limit it to 22 miles an hour. In England, as far as I can ascertain, the cost of construction is higher.

\*The number of these syndicates for all France is about 2,500, containing over 800,000 members.

† See also Elie Coulet, "Le mouvement syndicat et co-opératif dans l'agriculture française." This, however, is denied by M. le Comte de Rocquigny in "Les syndicats agricoles et leur œuvre."

‡ These small local shows are not unknown in England. The Norfolk Agricultural Competitions are subsidised by the County Council, organised in Union or County Council districts, and run by voluntary secretaries. One of the best known, in the Freebridge Union, has rendered "yeoman" service to agriculture.

|| According to M. le Comte de Rocquigny, they are also formed in other departments for the reconstruction and defence of vineyards, for the co-operation of consumption and production, for agricultural banking, for other cases of assurances than those enumerated above, for old-age pensions of various kinds, and for labour bureaux.

elsewhere. Some of the *syndicats* are of immense size,\* that of the *Syndicat d'Agriculteurs de la Sarthe* has 10,000 members. The teachers in Orne have greatly aided the movement by founding small village *syndicats*, called "*Cercles Agricoles Locaux*" for practising co-operation on a minor scale.† According to M. Langlais, Departmental Professor at Alençon, the *modus operandi* of the second type of *syndicat* is as follows:—The associates club together to buy a pedigree bull, as often as not procuring it in Manche, which is a great grazing department. The animal costs from 350 to 600 francs. The expense is defrayed by the associates paying a levy, which varies between 2 and 5 francs, in some parts rising as high as 7 francs, this subscription giving them the right to the use of the bull.

Of the third type, the most common variety is that of the mutual societies which insure against the loss of cattle by disease. The following are the chief rules, taken from a regulation form much in use in Orne, and recommended by the *Syndicat des Agriculteurs* of the department. As soon as the Society is constituted, a commission visits the farm of each member and estimates the amount of stock his farm can contain in its bullock-sheds and cow-houses. If an animal is ill, the owner must at once inform three of his nearest associates. In case of loss the society pays 70 per cent., deduction being made for what the carcass may fetch. The society is affiliated to the *syndicat* of the department. Losses are paid by a proportional levy on the assessment of each adherent. Mutual  
assurance

Another form of the same type are the societies which insure against damage by hail, which are not so widely patronised as they ought to be. I came across two severe instances in which the damage thus done was exceedingly great, and in both cases the sufferers were wholly uninsured. At Chauffour (Sarthe) last year (1899) the growing crops of the commune were completely destroyed by hail. One proprietor alone lost 7,000 francs; others were nearly ruined. The State had to intervene and gave a subsidy of 1,320 francs; the department did the same, the proprietors forewent their rent, and so all managed to pull through. The other instance was at the *Colonie Mettray*. Here I could judge for myself of the damage done. The standing corn was cut and beaten down by the hail. Those of the vines which were thatched over with straw covers naturally escaped, but the others were literally stripped of every leaf they possessed, and many of the young shoots were snapped right off. The owners round, who, for lack of labour, could not adopt the straw fencings, may expect nothing from their vines for the next two years at least.

\* The "Bulletin du Syndicat des Agriculteurs de l'Orne" has a monthly circulation of 8,000.

† There are, roughly, four sorts of *syndicats*, represented in the first degree by the *Cercles Agricoles Locaux*, in the second by the departmental *syndicats*, in the third by the regional *syndicats*, and in the fourth by general *syndicats*, whose headquarters are in Paris.

considerate  
co-operation.

What is specially wanted in the districts I visited (and quite as much so in England) is co-operative selling among the farmers. These "syndicates," which render such services in the purchase of manures and implements, should also extend their operations to the merchandising of the produce of their members. The smaller the landholder, the greater the need of defence against the extortions of the middleman. The peasant with only 10 combs of wheat to sell has a smaller market than the farmer who offers a big sample. For lack of co-operation the cultivation of colza has been ruined in Calvados; for lack of co-operation some of the most famous butters in Normandy have lost the position they once held in the market, owing to the difficulty to the public of being sure of securing a butter of a certain quality. On the other hand, in Indre-et-Loire there exist co-operative societies for making and selling butter, with the result that the Touraine butter has already won for itself a name in the market. These people are only copying what has already been done in Finland, Denmark, and Holland, and what has just been started in Ireland. But the peasant proprietor in France, as far as I came across him, like the farmer in England, is generally independent. Economic ideas, like those on fashion, manners, or politics, usually filtrate down in a more or less general fashion through a whole nation before they are finally eliminated or absorbed, and the particular stage of economic development at which the French or English farmer seems to have arrived is that of ultra-individualism, which is one of the blessings that the school of *laissez faire* have bequeathed us, together with its legacy of so-called free competition. The strong man in such a business looks on his calling as a game of all against all, and therefore is firmly convinced that he will do best on his own bottom. An alliance with the weaker, in his eyes, is a source of weakness. He does not believe in the strength of numbers. He does not see that he would do better if he went in for co-operation because such a position would enable him to dictate terms to railway companies, effect many economies through handling the associates' merchandise in large parcels, and, above all, better control market prices, and at the same time see that the wares of the association are properly, in these days of advertisement, placed before the public eye, and the public attention drawn to them. But as long as co-operation appears to such people, not as the best way of making the best price of their produce, but as a means of getting rid of what is more or less unsaleable, the movement in its favour is likely to hang fire whenever it is proposed. I was indeed, so surprised to find so comparatively little co-operative selling in the parts I visited, that it seems not unlikely it may be more developed in other parts of France.\*

the labour  
question.

But what appeared, after all, the most serious impediment to rural prosperity is the growing deficiency in labour, which is, as with us, becoming every day more intense. One of the reasons

\* See Chapters VI. and XI. in "Les Syndicats Agricoles," already cited.

that so much land has been laid down in grass in certain *pays* is the difficulty of finding sufficient hands for tillage. This has specially been the case round Lisieux, where the ruin of the hand weaver led to a general exodus. I met with the same complaint in Orne, where a farmer told me he had to give up sowing roots for lack of obtaining labour. The deficiency varies naturally according to localities, but it must be serious enough in some districts for a special professor of agriculture to say to me, "Le manque des bras, c'est la plaie du pays!" I was also told by another departmental professor that certain parts of Aisne have gone out of cultivation for the same reasons. In connection with this an Englishman may wonder by what means the farmers secure a sufficiency of extra hands at harvest. The difficulty is partially solved by the influx of foreign labour†, and partially by the action of the Minister of War, who allows all conscripts who are sons of peasants to obtain leave of absence from their military duties in order to work in the harvest fields, for which they receive pay. Those soldiers who are not the sons of peasants can get permission from 5.30 till the hour the barracks shut to go and help the peasants in the neighbourhood. To see that they arrive at their destination, they are generally sent with a *sous-officier* in charge. The men look on the matter as a sort of outing, and the peasants are highly content.

As regards the women, I was told in some districts the female servant difficulty is beginning to make itself felt. The following wages (which are rather high and include board) of servants at one of the *écoles normales* may be of interest. The cook gets £20 a year, the *lingère* £14 and a little over, the scullery maid a little under £10. "Generals" in the towns get a pound a month.

This question of the lack of labour brings us, in fact, to the capital question of the country, namely, the question of depopulation. According to the official figures issued for the year in November the number of births for the whole country was only 847,627, or 10,000 under the average, and the deaths amounted to 816,233, or an excess of 31,398 above the average. The increase for the year is only about 30,000. Again, according to the last census, the thirty-one departments in which an increase is noted contain either the big towns, or are to be found in Brittany. In nearly all the rural departments there is a serious decline. This seems at any rate the case in the departments I visited. Thus Calvados, which in 1801 had 452,000 inhabitants, had only 428,945 in 1891, and 417,176 in 1896. Orne in 1891 had lost 41,351 since 1801, and 38,139 since 1876. In 1896 there was a further diminution of 15,225. Sarthe in 1896 had gained 44,256 since 1801, but

† M. P. Déghilage states that this immigration of harvest labourers is practised on a large scale. In the east it is the Swiss and the labourers from Luxemburg; in the Beauce, the Bretons; in the north, and even down to Champagne and the Ile de France, the Belgians. (La Dépopulation des Campagnes.)

in comparison with 1860 it had diminished 40,536, and the rate of decrease seems almost as rapid as in Orne. Indre-et-Loire has gained 20,042, but other statistics show that the population is on the decline (births, 1894, 5,862; deaths, 6,647). Loir-et-Cher has gained 61,240 since 1801, but even here there are appearances that the population is stationary if not declining. Still it is evident, that the rate of decrease varies greatly; if considerable in Calvados and Orne (where, I am told, the loss is from 15,000 to 17,000 every census, one arrondissement alone losing 3,000), it is probably less in Indre-et-Loire and Loir-et-Cher. I took note of the population of a good many of the villages I visited. In one or two it was on the increase, in several it was practically stationary, but in the majority of cases there was a decrease, the proportions of which were at times alarming. At one village near Lisieux the number of inhabitants has fallen from 150 to 84. The *cure*, who had only 400 francs, with 200 francs *indemnité*, with practically no fees for births, deaths, or marriages, had been unable to make ends meet, and so had left. The church was closed, and the inhabitants linked for ecclesiastical purposes to another parish. But local prejudices are strong, and as they cannot have a church of their own they will not go elsewhere. Men's sentimental attachment to their parish and to its *genius loci* is rooted in the associations of a very ancient past.

The causes of this:  
1 Emigration.

What are the causes of this depopulation? They seem to be two—emigration and the low birth-rate. The emigration itself varies. In Calvados, which is mainly a rich department, the Secretary to the Academy Inspector assured me that there was no rural exodus; the people generally were too comfortable to move. His opinion was confirmed by a cheese manufacturer of the Pays d'Auge, who denied there was an exodus; if anything, there was an influx from the poorer neighbourhoods in his district. All the people were well off; even the labourers could indulge in little luxuries. Sometimes the emigration is only temporary, as that of the masons who inhabit Carpiquet (Calvados), who had gone to work at the exhibition, and would return after its demolition. Still, there must be some who go and never come back, for the director of the religious school at Alençon told me it was estimated there were 200,000 Normans at Paris. The effect of the phylloxera outbreak on the rural exodus in Indre-et-Loire and Loir-et-Cher has already been mentioned.

A point where the tide is slackening.

But the general opinion seemed to be in many places that the exodus is slackening, that at least the sons of the peasant proprietors no longer leave the countryside in such large numbers. This was brought home to me in numerous instances. No doubt the want of hands, the difficulty of letting one's land, may cause a certain number of parents to keep their sons on the land. But the peasants themselves told me the same story; one whose hospitality I enjoyed declared to me that Paris had not the same attraction as formerly. A peasant's son could become a lawyer's clerk (the glamour of the

black coat!), but what did that bring in? If one's son was in such a position at Paris, it was always necessary to keep sending him money. The cultivators round him (and he cited several names) now keep their sons at home.

It seems pretty certain, therefore, in districts where the land is fairly productive, that those who possess a stake in the country in the shape of a holding remain, and it is principally the landless men who leave the villages. What is the reason of this emigration?

In the first line comes perhaps the question of higher wages which attract men in all countries to labour centres. I took the trouble to ascertain, in the various districts I visited, the wages of the ordinary labourer in the country districts. In the Bessin, as the Bayeux district is called, they range from 1 franc 50 centimes a day (probably with food and drink). In the plain of Caen the harvest wage is six francs a day or *à forfait*. In the arrondissement of Pont l'Évêque the ordinary pay is 1 franc 50 centimes with food and drink; the harvester is paid 5 francs a day. In the Pays d'Auge the rate per diem is at 3 francs, or 2 francs with food and drink, round Vimoutiers 3 francs without food; in the neighbourhood of Alençon 2 francs 50 in winter and a little higher in summer; at Mamers 1 franc 50 centimes with food and drink, or 2 francs without. One point on which I am doubtful is whether employment in the country can be obtained all the year round; but then is the unskilled labourer in Paris always sure of regular work? His pay according to a friend of mine, M. J. Manchon, who made careful inquiries, is 5 francs a day. This corresponds with the average of M. P. Déghilage, who says 4, 5, or 6 francs a day. A workman's lodging at Belleville, under the eaves, costs about 100 francs; but it is almost unendurable in summer, and deadly cold in winter. M. P. Déghilage says in the Cité Jeanne d'Arc five or six people are crowded into a single room, which costs 3 francs 50 centimes a week; this works out at 182 francs a year. A cottage in the country with a garden costs 60 to 80 francs, at least I saw several at that figure. Food again is dearer in Paris, owing to the *octroi*; firing is likewise more expensive. Besides, every kind of vegetable food has to be purchased, whereas the cottager has nearly always a small garden and perhaps one or two fruit trees. It is indeed a moot point whether the Parisian workman is better off than his fellow in the country. A great authority on the subject, M. Deschanel, asserts that "a workman who in the country earns two francs a day and his food has relatively more than one who earns 5 francs in the town." But the mere difference in apparent wages is probably quite sufficient to account for the pecuniary attractions of Paris, especially if one takes into account the tales of fortunes made in Paris which are current in the villages. One never talks of the failures. Among these lower-class emigrants it is only fair to state that a large percentage go to Paris with a view to adopting a definite, if humble, calling among the hewers of wood and drawers of water of the great metropolis. Thus the new-

Causes of  
emigration  
(a) Higher  
wages.



comers from Orne, who belong mainly to the country districts, become either servants or *rôtisseurs*, or hawkers, or sell butter and vegetables. Many, when they have made their little pile, come back to their native village, but their children, as a rule, remain at Paris. So the loss to the country is the same.\*

Other centres  
of attraction.

But Paris is not the only centre of attraction. In some districts Paris has ceased to draw, and the emigration is rather to the urban centres in the department. Again, in the *château* districts, many of the young men desert the village to take service under the owners of the *châteaux*. To combat this drain on the rural population, the only sound policy is to do as one peasant proprietor said to me, to pay the labour well. The best paid men are worth more in the long run than the badly paid. But how many farmers in either country are ready to take this hint?

(b) Other  
causes of  
attraction.

Unfortunately, however, the problem is not merely economic. There is also the question of the greater attraction of town life. Lord Salisbury's humorous remedy of a circus in every village might equally gravely be proposed for enlivening the country life in France. Again, there is the attraction of greater independence and freedom from observation. In the French or English village everyone is under the eye of his neighbour and the police, and the morals of the village very often largely depend on the virulence of language with which the village gossips are dowered. Those who find these inquisitorial methods too unpleasant are prompted to seek the comparative freedom from observation which prevails in the towns.

(c) Conscrip-  
tion.

But one of the chief factors in accelerating the emigration to the towns is the prevailing system of conscription. "Half the conscripts never come back to cultivate the soil, once their time is up." —(M. P. Déghilage.) The *caserne*, or rather its surroundings, has undoubtedly the effect of initiating the peasant into the coarser attractions of the town. On his return to the country, he misses the factitious excitement he enjoyed when with the regiment, and finds country life too dull to be endured. It is clear then that the recreative side of the school continuation work is most important. This is not the place to discuss the pros and cons of conscription, but one fact may be cited to show the immense burden it is, not only to the country, but also to individuals, and especially to those who live in the country. During the three years' service of his son, a peasant proprietor is obliged to work hard, and take a labourer into his pay, at a cost of 1,000 francs, to take the place of his son, while he is further obliged to send the latter 500 francs to keep him. This means that the three years' service costs him something like £60 a year, and explains a terrible remark I heard of, made by the father of a son who had been rejected from the service for some physical defect. "After all, he will not be a soldier, but he will always be able to drink and work!" An inspector suggested that the evil influence

\* La dépopulation des Campagnes, Paris: F. Nathan, 1900.

of the conscription in tempting the people into the towns would be largely obviated if, instead of being mainly regional, with the exception of Paris and Lyons, whose recruits are sent all over the country, the conscripts were sent to those parts of France which are furthest removed from their own department. They would then be completely *dépaysés*, and their one desire would be to get back to their native village as soon as their term of service was over, whereas at present they are merely sent to the *chef-lieu* of their own or a neighbouring department, in which they naturally find themselves at home.

The second chief factor of the rural depopulation is the low percentage of births in France, which for the whole country is only twenty-two per 1,000, against about thirty-five for England and Germany\* (P. Déghilage). In many departments it is actually below the death rate. Thus in Calvados (1893) the births were 8,924 and the deaths 9,951; in Orne (1893) 6,140 and 8,476; in Sarthe (1897) 8,500 and 8,983; Indre-et-Loire (1894) 5,862 and 6,647; and in Loire-et-Cher (1895), in which alone there was a slight increase, 5,541 and 5,404. Here again conscription exercises a certain influence. In unsettling the young it renders them less inclined to marry. The code of morals which obtains in the regiment is not exactly propitious to matrimony. Again, the young soldier after his three years' service has still his month's training every year. During this period, if he is married and has a family, they have to be somehow clothed and fed, although the father is practically out of work during the period. Such a prospect is not calculated to induce early marriages.

But a more important reason is the love of comfort (*bien-être*). Except in Brittany and some of the poorer departments in the South (Hérault), families of three children are an exception in rural districts, and the only child is almost the rule. A large family spells for the parents a return towards *la misère*, while for the children it means the splitting up of the family substance into equal parts. A witty Frenchman, in speaking of our system of primogeniture, has said that it restricts the creation of fools to one per family. The automatic partition of property, which was dictated by certain ideas of abstract justice, has certainly done an infinitude of harm to France. It deprives many children of the stimulus to self-exertion, it has helped to set up the false ideal of the *petit rentier*, it has encouraged the unhealthy preference that has declared itself among the younger generation in favour of acquiring some wretchedly paid but certain post under State employ, to the following of more lucrative careers in trade or industry at the personal risk of those who adopt them, and above all it has proved a formidable check on the increase of the population, which is perhaps the greatest ill it has occasioned.

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\* This refers to 1881-1891. The birth rate for England and Wales, 1891-1901, shows a reduction of 2.67.

(2) Low birth rate.

Causes: (1) The *bien-être*.

(2) System of inheritance.

## (3) Alcoholism.

Another serious cause of depopulation, which was most manifest in the districts I visited, was the growth of alcoholism. As M. Baudrillard says in his "Histoire d'une Bouteille," "the depopulation of the country districts is one of the aspects, and that not the least sad, of the question of alcoholism."

Fifty years ago France was one of, if not the most temperate of the countries of the world. To-day it stands at the head of all the countries in the world as the greatest consumer of alcohol under its various forms. According to the statistics given by M. Baudrillard,\* France consumes annually 14 litres of pure alcohol at 100° per head, against 11 for Switzerland, 10·50 for Belgium, 10·22 for Denmark and Italy, 9·33 for Germany, and 9·23 for England, the three lowest on the list being Sweden, 4·39, Norway 3·31, and Canada 2·03; that is, the consumption in France is half as much again as in England or Germany, and nearly seven times as much as in Canada.

## The causes.

The reasons for this alarming change are several. One, which sounds paradoxical, is the failure of the wine crop during the several years that followed on the invasion of the phylloxera. In 1873 the consumption of wine was 199 litres per head, in 1885 it only amounted to 75 litres.† This proved the opportunity for the distillers of alcohol from beetroot, molasses, and potatoes, as well as later on for the manufacturers of absinthe and other so-called *aperitifs*, to flood the empty market with their productions, many of which are little better than active poisons. Between 1875 and 1897 the consumption of spirits in France has practically doubled (2·82 litres pure alcohol per head to 4·54),\* while the consumption of absinthe, which stood at 85,000 hectolitres in 1885, was double seven years later, in 1892, and quadruple four years later, in 1896.\* A second reason is the growing practice of every wine or cider grower to have his own private distillery, where he can manufacture at his ease all the *eau de vie* he desires, either from wine or cider. These *bouilleurs de cru* total at least 700,000,‡ and their number is growing. Unfortunately no Government seems strong enough to dare to put it down. It has none the less encouraged the habit of constant drinking, which may be regarded as another cause. In some parts of France the peasants take coffee four or five times a day and always put a strong dose of brandy into the coffee, so strong that at times it is rather brandy with coffee than coffee with brandy. Through the kindness of the teacher's wife, Madame Leffroy, at Neufchâtel (Orne) I am able to give the following typical budget of a *sabotier* and his family of three persons, who earn in all over £90 a year.

\* M. Baudrillard's "Histoire d'une Bouteille." Paris: Legrain, 1900.

† Legrain and Pérès, "l'Enseignement anti-alcoolique à l'Ecole. F. Nathan, Paris, 1899.

‡ The Parliamentary return on alcoholic beverages furnished by the Board of Trade (12th August, 1901) puts their number at 925,910, of whom 552,537 carried on operations in 1900.

Clothes, Rent, etc.		Food.		Drink.	
	Frcs.		Frcs.		Frcs.
		Bread - - -	430	Fruit to make cider - -	100
Clothes - - -	350	Milk - - -	50		
Rent - - -	80	Butter - - -	60	Cabaret, fête days, etc.	100
Taxes, assurances,		Grocery - - -	30		
repairs - - -	25	Fruit - - -	100		200
Light - - -	50.	Fish(salt her-			
Benefit society -	12	ring) - - -	10		
Debt paid off -	100	Poultry - - -	80	Coffee and eau de vie -	300
Pocket money to		Meat - - -	90		
his boys - - -	50	Other articles			
Miscellaneous -	30	of food - - -	100		
Savings bank -	123				
	<hr/>		<hr/>	Total - - - - -	<hr/>
	820		950		500

It will be noticed in the budget of this otherwise frugal family about one-fifth (deduction made for the coffee) is spent in drink.

The constant habit of "nipping" is so prevalent at Rouen that in a workshop of 150 men the master declared he only knew of five he dare send into the town to effect repairs.\* The others were certain to go on the spree. Constant drinking naturally leads to heavy drinking. "In Calvados, at Flers and Falaise, the workmen drink as much as a litre of cider brandy a day, and they drink it in big glasses, as we do water."\* It actually takes the place of food. At Rouen, the dock labourers earn 3 francs a day. "They spend 4 to 8 sous on food; the rest goes in infernal liquors."\* Even among the workmen the morning breakfast consists of slices of bread served in a soup tureen containing a litre or half a litre of spirit; the coffee even is left out.\* The same soup is not infrequently served as well for the evening meal. And this is the fare on which the children are often brought up.\*

Fourthly, the *cantine* at the regiment has no doubt been the cause of encouraging the drinking habit in the young conscripts, especially as the favourite beverages were until recently absinthe and other deleterious liquors. The evil has been fully recognised by those in authority, and lately an order was issued by General Gallifet forbidding the sale of all kinds of spirits in the regimental *cantines*, which is certainly a most useful reform. And, fifthly, another reason of excessive drinking is the inordinate number of *cabarets* which abound, there being no licensing committee to limit their numbers. In 1875 there was 1 to every 109 inhabitants in France, in 1885 there was 1 to every 94 (omitting Paris). In the Seine Inférieure there is, however, 1 for every 66, while at Alençon the percentage is still higher, there being 290 *débitants*, or 1 *débitant* to every 51 inhabitants, or to every 17 men. These figures are only surpassed by the department of the Nord, which has one *débitant* to every 46 inhabitants. The other figures connected with Alençon were equally disquieting.

\* All the above facts are taken from an article in the "Temps," quoted by Legrain and Pères.

In 1889 the number of litres consumed of alcohol at 50 per cent. was 16·74, and in 1889 21·4 per head yearly. The contribution of each inhabitant of Alençon to the *régie* passed from 16 francs 52 cents. to 18 francs 32 cents., or, if adult males only are reckoned, from 49 francs 56 cents. to 54 francs 96 cents. per head per annum. The profits of the trade are best seen from the following figures:—

	Cost price.	Sale price (in petits verres).
Absinthe per litre	- 3·75 (including excise)	- 7·50
Workman's brandy (The exact title.)	- 1·30 (including excise)	- 2·00

Happily the evil seems to decrease as the wine districts are approached. On the alcoholic\* map of France, Calvados figures among the most affected, with 9 to 14 litres (pure alcohol) per head. Orne is in the second class with 6 to 9 litres, Sarthe, Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher, the fourth, with 2 to 4, while the departments to the south-east consume actually less than 2 litres per head.

**Effects.**

The consequences of this excessive drinking on the vitality of the nation are already showing themselves in the low birth-rate and the increasing defects in the physique of the new generation. The drinking, is unhappily, not confined to the male sex. Thirty years ago the proportion of habitual drunkards in Lille was 25 per cent. male and 12 per cent. among the women.\* “Little by little,” says Jules Simon, “they become fond of it, more fond than the men.” In certain cantons, it is by hundreds that one can cite the female drinkers who absorb one-fifth to one-third of a litre daily.\*\* Absinthe intoxication among women, according to Lancereaux, is, without exaggeration, ‘as frequent as among men. The result is, according to one of my informants in Orne, that the women rarely have children after thirty. Of those who are born many are rickety and have feeble constitutions. In the Northern departments the number of recruits unfit for military service has become six-fold between 1874 and 1888. The same statement has been made of Normandy.\* According to M. Rotureau,† “the arrondissement of Domfront, which is that of the department of Orne in which the abuse of alcohol is the most habitual, is also that in which the height is the most reduced, to such an extent that in some cantons the recruitment of young conscripts is becoming almost impossible.” Alcoholism is also, according to Lancereaux,‡ the cause of half the deaths from consumption in the country. But perhaps the saddest comment of all is the departmental asylum in Orne, in which out of 573 inmates 60

\* Baudrillard. “Histoire d'une Bouteille.”

† MM. Legrain et Pérès, l'Enseignement anti-alcoolique à l'Ecole.

‡ Alcoholism is the chief source from which asylums are supplied; from 60 per cent. to 80 per cent. of epileptics are due to alcoholism. (M. Duclaux, Directeur de l'Institut Pasteur.)

per cent. of the males and 70 per cent. of the women are "alcoholics."\*

There is no doubt that the older peasants are a far more The temperate set than the young or middle aged of to-day. Among peasants. the seniors of the past generation it is still not uncommon to find a peasant who drinks only water, while those of the seniors who smoke are the exception rather than the rule. Still, one cannot lay down a hard and fast rule about the younger generation. There were at least three or four different races in the five departments under observation, and each, when looked at more closely, showed considerable difference from the others. Calvados is, of course, Norman, so is Orne for the most part. The people, especially in Orne, are rather less enterprising, and the teachers in the schools complain that the children, though far from stupid, are quite content to remain receptive and originate nothing. I heard the same judgment passed on the inhabitants in the neighbourhood of Vimoutiers. They were fond of good cheer, thought much of this world's goods, but were wanting in initiative. I fancy the richness of the country and the *bien-être* may exercise on many a somewhat deadening effect. Certainly, according to more than one witness the *pâturage* tends to encourage laziness. It is only he who tills the soil who earns his bread with the sweat of his brow. In Sarthe one comes across quite another race, who belong to the ancient county of Maine. Here, again, officials who had been in the East and South of France, where the means of existence are not so easy to obtain and the people more active, complained of a certain *mollesse* about the children. A very notable point about Sarthe is its extraordinary thrift, to which allusion has already been made. The following figures of the principal banking centres seem worthy of citation. Le Mans (forty-three branches), 34,900,000 francs deposits; Mamers (eighteen branches), 23,900,000 francs; La Flèche (twelve branches), 11,700,000 francs; St. Calais (six branches), 6,600,000 francs; Château du Loir, 2,800,000 francs; Sablé-sur-Sarthe, 1,900,000 francs; Le Grand Lucé, 1,000,000 francs. In some districts there is a depositor to every two and a-half inhabitants. This extreme economy has sometimes its inconvenient side, as the peasants are more inclined to put their money into the bank than into the land in the shape of artificial manures. Another minor fault with them is their mania for attending markets, of which there are far too many. He would

\* Since the above was written a great step has been made to tackle the problem, by the raising of the octroi in Paris on alcohol and distilled drinks to a much higher figure, and the admission, at a nominal rate, into the capital of the so-called fermented drinks, such as wine, cider, and beer. This happy change is likely to be aided by the magnificent wine and cider crop, the former of which has turned out the best for many years. Teetotalism is not likely to gain any serious foothold in France, where probably half the agricultural population are interested in producing wine or cider. "Nous demandons la tempérance et non l'abstinence, nous voulons la sobriété et non le renoncement."—M. P. Beurdeley, article on "l'enseignement anti-alcoolique," *Revue Pédagogique*, September, 1901.

be a public benefactor who suppressed half the markets at present existing. In Indre-et-Loire one comes across again quite a different race. The countries where wine is the staple drink seem to possess inhabitants of a more lively and sanguine temperament than those who drink cider or beer. In build and stature the Tourangeau appears very different from the inhabitants of the other two departments—bluff, witty, *narquois*, *un peu fondeur*, not to mention other qualities he is in many ways much the same as Rabelais painted him, at the Renaissance. He has, also, some of the solidity of Balzac about him, and in comparison with the phlegmatic Norman is rather a *passionné*. Such are a few stray notes on the inhabitants of the country I gleaned from those most competent to speak on the matter. The peasant may somewhat lack energy. It is a fault one can always reproach the country with, but for me who conversed with no inconsiderable number of them, it was a perpetual pleasure to admire their simple yet striking common sense. Always a trifle *méfiant*s at the beginning of the conversation, they purposely hold their hand and pretend to know nothing till they see you are not intent on making fun of them, and then they surprise you with their shrewdness. They seem the least likely persons in France to be taken in.

### (3.) THE PROBLEM AND THE SCHOOL.

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problem.

The above very imperfect sketch of the difficulties of the country and the peasants who inhabit it will not have been attempted in vain if it is regarded as a sort of background to the school itself to set off the latter in its proper relief, and so allow us to deduce what are, and should be, the precise relations between the country and the school, and what is the school's true place in the rural economy. For it should be evident, now that the country problems have been stated, albeit in a bald and superficial fashion, that many of these economic and social difficulties are quite beyond the competence of the school alone to solve, and all that the school can do is to aid in the solution of some of them.

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Taking them in the order in which we have treated the problem, if the local small industries are to be helped, something must be done in the shape of practical work either in the schools or in the evening continuation schools. In agricultural neighbourhoods, where the majority of peasants are also proprietors, instruction in scientific notions applied to agriculture is clearly the solution of the problem, dealing largely with the popularisation of artificial manures, and the teaching of such practical work as grafting. The rôle of the normal schools *vis-à-vis* the country will be to turn out *élèves-maîtres* capable of serving as valuable lieutenants to the departmental or special professors of agriculture. The spirit of saving so widespread among the people should be transferred from an individualistic to a social basis by substituting everywhere the mutual insurance societies among the scholars, and these societies, together with the associations of former pupils, should further develop the spirit of co-operation, which, as we have seen, must be extended from co-operation in

purchase to co-operation in the sale of produce. To combat the emigration to the towns the teacher can cultivate that love of the countryside and of the native village which is nowhere stronger than in France. The recreative evening lectures will do something to redeem the long winter evenings in the country from the charge of dulness. If one cannot have a circus in every village, one can have at least a magic lantern, while to combat alcoholism, apart from the teaching in school and the conferences, there is the work of forming temperance societies among the children, which has indeed been begun in France, though it has not attained the magnitude of the movement in England. Such is what one can rightly demand from the school in its duty towards its neighbours.

But this description of the school work will have been thrown away if it has not been seen that the school is something more than a mere microcosm of the locality. Apart from its local obligations stand its higher duties towards the nation and toward humanity. It strives, as much as it can, within the brief season of the school life, to give the child in a shortened and intelligible manner the experience of the race, because he will one day be a man, and the experience of the nation because he will one day be a citizen (See Appendix V.). These, we must never forget, are, after all, the main objects of the school, and because time presses and we wish to give the child not merely hearsay knowledge, or charge his memory with a mass of loose and uncorrelated facts, next to forming his character and awakening his intelligence we aim, above all, at equipping him with the tools of learning—reading and writing and cyphering—that afterwards, as Dr. Harris well points out in his monograph on Primary Education in the United States, he may labour for himself in the field of knowledge, and even if he neglects to continue his education in a formal way in the evening schools, he may at least keep it up and add to it by reading the papers and possibly an occasional book, for the newspaper has become nothing more or less than the popular encyclopædia of the day on topics that all the world wants to talk about. So singing is a good thing, manual work is highly desirable, agricultural education is well-nigh indispensable, but we must not neglect the general education of the child, even in the rural school, by handing him over to the tender mercy of the specialist,\* which is often only the word “faddist” writ large.

This general education the French primary schools seem so far to have provided and safeguarded with no small meed of success. Where Guizot planted, Duruy watered, while its present flourishing condition is largely due to Jules Ferry and his able henchman, M. Ferdinand Buisson. One may perhaps regret that the Third Republic

\* “The specialist is necessary—necessary up to a certain point—in education, as in everything else. But in nothing is it so dangerous as it is in education to be guided by the judgment of the specialist alone. The judgment of the specialist needs to be criticised, corrected, and supplemented by the experience of all who have direct knowledge of the problems of life for which education professes to prepare us; and the methods of the specialist need to be frankly discussed by those who have watched

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has believed it necessary to break so thoroughly with the system as it received it. One may still more deeply regret that the historical development of France has resulted in so sharp a division between rival groups of principles. Certainly it seems unfortunate that the republic has found itself unable to combine the old with the new, for such a sweeping measure as the laicisation of the schools must have meant the deprivation to the State of a vast amount of trained knowledge and solid worth, which are not always the easiest things to replace. Yet, if success is any criterion, one cannot well withhold one's admiration for these root and branch reformers who, in less than twenty years, have remodelled the curricula from top to bottom, profoundly modified the ancient methods of teaching, bodily raised, lifted, and shifted the whole structure of popular education on to an entirely new set of foundations, covered the country with a complete network of free schools, and reconstituted the *cadres* of their educational army with a set of teachers possessed with traditions of devotion and *esprit de corps* that many an older institution might envy. For the teaching has been refounded on the better side of the principles of the French Revolution, and embodies some of its noblest aspirations. The open door has been made a reality in education for the masses, without money and without price, and only improved measures are necessary to compel them all to come in, and a race of teachers has been raised up, not hirelings eager only for their daily bread, but true "shepherds of the people," who labour not alone for the welfare of the school but of the district it serves. It is the very strength and solidity of the system as a whole that permits one to speak so unreservedly of any small defect in its component parts. There is always an abundance of make-weight in the shape of its merits to counterbalance any criticism one may feel it incumbent to indulge in. Nor is it indeed certain that the criticisms which a passing stranger may make have always so wide an application as he imagines. At any rate, his strictures, apart from the reference they may have to his own country, if they have any utility, are meant to be those of a friendly observer, whose admiration of the system as a whole makes him ambitious to be if possible a co-operator, after a humble fashion, in a work which should be not only the pride of France, but of humanity.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PROBLEM OF RURAL EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

The analysis of the rural problem in France should go far to show that the rural school in England cannot be expected any more than the French rural school to provide a panacea for all the ills of the country-side. And so, though it does not directly

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the practical results of those methods as illustrated by the skill, the character, and the good sense of the people in whose training those methods have been applied."—M. Sadler in "How far can we Learn Anything of Practical Value from the Study of Foreign Systems of Education?"

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concern our educational authorities to diagnose, much less to prescribe, for the present unsatisfactory condition of things in many of the rural parts of England, it seems none the less clear that it is highly advisable to try and obtain a general view of the present position of affairs before venturing to state where and how the school can lend a helping hand in the matter.

Attention has already been drawn to the fact that the rural problem in England is radically different from what it is in France. Owing to the preponderance of large farms in England the vast majority of the children who attend the village schools are the children of the labourers, whose future career, as a rule, is quite distinct from that of the sons of the French peasants. Economically the problem seems likewise different in the two countries. In France the major part of the soil is farmed directly by its owners, except in the districts where the *métayer* system of cultivation prevails. In England a large proportion of the land has, apart from the tithe, to support three categories of persons—the landlord, the tenant, and the labourer, and that with no margin against bad years such as Protection in a measure affords. If the present crisis in agriculture continues, it may end, as some people think, in the squeezing out of the landlords, as the least essential economically of the three. Such an eventuality would be scarcely a gain if the only tie between the remaining parties were that of a cash nexus. Of course, there is the alternative of the landlord turning round and farming his own land, and this does not seem to be altogether improbable, except in the case of very large estates. Under present conditions large farms, unfortunately, seem more likely to pay than small holdings, except where the latter are exceptionally situated. The improvements in French farming, as far as education is concerned, must largely come, for the present at least, through the primary or higher primary school. In England the sons of the farming class go to secondary schools. The rural problem is, therefore, quite as much a secondary as a primary education problem.\* We must not only educate Hodge but his master.

It seems generally agreed that the chief defect of the modern English farmer is that he has yet to realise the value of co-operative association, not only for the purchase of cake and "artificial" (a matter in which he might take a leaf out of the French cultivator's book), but also for the marketing of his produce, and for obtaining in relation to this more favourable rates from the railway companies.

Owing to the agricultural labour market having been in many districts for years overstocked, the farmer was formerly placed, as regards the labour market, in a singularly independent

\* One who is living and working in the midst of the problem writes: "The farmer wants to be humanized as the squire. He wants to add to his soil apprenticeship enough book-learning to keep accounts, to supervise machinery, to check imposition in manure and seed, to work, if a small man, co-operation, to put out piece-work, to inspire confidence in his men."

position. Until a few years back it was more or less a favour on his part to take on a man. Now, unluckily for him, the whirligig of time has brought its revenge, and labour is often woefully scarce. It is difficult for the farmer to change at once his somewhat imperious manners in dealing with the men. It is only natural for the labourer, on finding the tide setting in in his favour, to prove somewhat restless, not to say restive. But the fact remains that some farmers must learn that the men of to-day must be led rather than driven. Rightly or wrongly, the feeling that some of them have engendered in their subordinates is not far removed from downright hatred.

As for the men, the best of them have too often migrated to the towns. Higher wages and greater freedom have been the main incentives. Those who are left are frequently the least enterprising, the least strong, and the least desirable; skilled labour is getting scarcer and scarcer, as the old generation die out. What is wanted in the present race is more skill of hand and eye, a greater keenness to get on, and less of the spirit of shirk.

rôle of  
school.

How can the school help? By making the education given in its class-rooms a better preparation for the life the majority of rural children have before them; not by cutting down its so-called literary and intellectual side, but by bringing it more into sympathy and accord with rural life. The recent circular on the drawing-up of time-tables gives all the local option that is desirable in the matter. In this way the curriculum can be given, as in France; an agricultural tinge without injuring its main features. The pictures on the walls, the books the pupils use, the subject matter of the teacher's lessons, can be chiefly concerned with the country and with agriculture. In connection with this a great point should be made of Nature study, and the "school journey" should figure prominently on the programme.

Manual training for boys, with cooking and laundry work for girls, should be promoted everywhere. School gardens, more of the Boscombe\* than the French type, should be started, and this side of the school work might be encouraged by prizes given by the agricultural societies. Love of the country should be inculcated, the noble side of honest toil, and the advantages of self-help should be the dominant notes of the instruction given. Evening continuation schools should be more widely established, and rendered as practical as possible.

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But this involves further desirable changes. Practical agriculture should be taught in the training colleges, or at least an abundant supply of holiday courses on the subject arranged,

\* See Vol. II. of Special Reports (Cd. 8943), "The School Gardens at Boscombe British School," by T. G. Rooper, H.M.I.; and for fuller details on curricula for country schools see Leaflet No. 7 of the Agricultural Education Committee, by Rus; Leaflet 15, by Mr. J. C. Medd; Leaflet 20, by Mr. H. Lee Warner; Leaflet 18, by T. G. R.; Leaflet 19 (on evening schools), by Mr. H. Macan. There is also an instructive paper on the teaching of gardening by peripatetic professors by the same writer in the "Journal of the Society of Arts," March 16th, 1900.

such as the Cambridge County Council and other county councils have established, with a diploma for successful candidates.\* The position of the country teachers should be improved, especially in regard to fixity of tenure, and it might be advisable to earmark grants for salaries. Perhaps, in place of the millions that the State has voted to the relief of local taxation it would have been better for it to have assumed the chief cost of education, or at least have definitely devoted the money granted in relief of the rates to education. Again, if practicable, it would be a good thing to differentiate town and country schools. Why should the teachers complain? In secondary education a man has generally to definitely decide whether he will teach classics, mathematics, science, or modern languages, and direct his studies accordingly. The secondary schools are without doubt the better for this differentiation. If salaries in country schools were higher, there would be no economic cause for complaint.

Seeing that often four-fifths and even more of the maintenance in some of the rural denominational schools comes out of the public purse, in the shape of a Government grant, it seems rather false economy to refuse to make up out of the public funds whatever may be the narrow margin between the present grant and the requirements of efficiency on the ground of principle, and thereby hinder the children in the voluntary schools from attaining their full development. This extra grant would be one of the best investments for the State to make, especially if it carried with it the right of the locality to be represented on the board of management of these schools. Provided that the religious instruction is duly safeguarded, the clergy have already given many indications that they will not object to but rather welcome local control. Of course, the great obstacles to instituting one single comprehensive local authority in the country are the small isolated, independent areas of the school boards, which have prevented them from doing the good work that the large boards in the towns have done.† Were the county area, with the county council as the paramount educational authority, made to absorb these isolated areas, we should obtain the same homogeneity of not only primary but primary and secondary education as in France, without however separating the two grades so completely as in that country. This would enormously help to "focus" the educational wants of each locality, and make the locality itself more ready to supply them.

It has throughout, of course, been assumed that the rural school, as the outcome of rural life, should do its utmost to prepare for and promote the future welfare of the children. It is only necessary to mention, in order to dismiss, as wicked and impossible, the theory that the school, in the selfish interests of the few, should be so transformed and deformed as to turn out in this the twen-

(b) Administrative.

The dependence of the school on the locality.

\* See also Mr. C. S. Roundell's speech in "Nature Study in Elementary Schools" (*The Rugby Advertiser* Office, 1901).

† See Sir John Gorst's speech at the Fishmongers' Hall, January, 1901.

tieth century a race of serfs and helots of the *ascripti glebæ* type, whose function is to provide a more abundant supply of cheap labour. But all these suggestions for improving the rural school depend for their ultimate success and justification on the conditions of life which await its *alumni*. The school, however perfect, can only give at the most the aptitudes and aspirations for a country life. If the pupils on leaving the school do not find a fair field at home for these aptitudes and aspirations the best of them will leave the villages, just as the best of the present generation have done, and the agricultural bias given to the school will be simply thrown away. One may therefore, perhaps, be once more permitted to go outside the school, though not beyond its lawful sphere of influence, to ask what are the present conditions and prospects of the country-bred lad, and how they may be bettered.

The status  
of the farm  
labourer.

At the present time, and it is no good blinking at what is a patent fact, the agricultural labourer's status has somehow or another become to be regarded as one of the most menial in the social scale. This is not the place to inquire whether, as some people assert, the board school has helped to spread the cult of the black coat and top hat of the small clerk or draper's assistant, in holding them up before the pupils' eyes as the emblems and insignia of gentility, to the detriment and depreciation of other equally worthy callings. It is much to be suspected that the social atmosphere in which we live has been in these matters by far the potent factor. But when a father with a family of eight children, living in the slums of London, and earning wages below those of many a "teamer," who is far better housed and fed, refuses to let his two eldest sons come into the country to have a year's trial at agricultural work,\* on the ground that such work is "only fit for children out of reformatories," it is evident we have got something deeper than a mere school problem to solve, although, if our country teachers' position were improved, we might have the teachers as strongly in favour of the countryside as in France.

Need of local  
co-operation  
with the  
school.

Assuming that this is a fair sample of the present state of affairs, it seems clear that, if the seed sown in the school is to bear fruit, something must be done by everyone concerned in the welfare of the country to help the labourer to better himself and his position in every possible way. The truth is that village life wants quickening and reorganising. The old feudal ties are passing away, but, fortunately, there are other possible bases for loyalty and mutual good feeling. First, there is the *rôle* of the landlord. He can do much to render country life attractive by keeping his

The landlord.

\* It is worth considering whether it would not be possible for enterprising farmers to take one or two lads of fourteen and fifteen out of the town on a year's trial. There is much to be done on a farm which is really a boy's work, and even if the lad wished to return at the end of the year the benefit to his physique and so to his wage-earning capacity would be very great. I have to thank my brother, Mr. J. Neville Brereton, for this and other suggestions and criticisms on the agricultural side of my report.

cottage property, as indeed many do, in at least thoroughly habitable repair. The value of cottage property is not to be estimated by the rent it pays, but by the accommodation it gives. Good cottages are as necessary to a well-managed estate as good bullock boxes. If the landlord wishes to bind the labourer anew to the soil, he must give him at least a stake in it. He must afford him a chance, if possible, of getting on and making money. In fact, what is wanted is the mending of several rungs in the agricultural ladder, so that a man may be able to rise from the plough. Far from refusing to cut up a field or two in allotments, a wise landlord will go out of his way to encourage the people in the place to take them up.

Is it not desirable that many of the farmers should study to improve their relations with the men, and endeavour to pay higher wages in order to retain the labour? The difficulties are great, but one is impelled to think not insuperable. Perhaps, by encouraging his men to do as much piecework as possible, he may assist them to become as efficient as their forefathers were. His wage bill will be higher, but he will probably find the sweat of the labourer's brow the best manure his farm can have. On the other hand, he may help to promote cordial relations by reviving the old farm festivities of harvest and Christmas frolics, and presenting prizes for the best ploughing and hoeing done on his place.

Again, in spite of difficulties, social and financial, might not many of the village clergy do somewhat more to imitate the methods and resourceful activity of their brother clergy in the great towns? The clergy, as someone has justly said, and this naturally includes the Nonconformists, form the greatest agency for social work in England. Let each village clergyman then help to establish a reading-room, in which lectures can be given, as in France, or utilise the school building for the same purpose. Even if he does not take part in games he can lend an interested support to the village sports. A field can nearly always be found for cricket. A pretty custom, which we have well-nigh lost in England, but which still obtains in France, is that of each village having its fête day. This might well be revived.

The village schoolmaster would no doubt admirably second the social efforts of the clergyman. It is not to be gainsayed that his burden of so-called extraneous tasks\* is sometimes unfair

\* The two sides of the question are very well summarised in the following extracts:—

One of the most unfair features in the occupancy of the post of teacher in the village school is the fact that it is frequently made a condition of appointment to and tenancy in the mastership of the school that certain extraneous tasks shall be performed. These tasks are mainly those connected with the church choir and the Sunday-school. And not only is the present position often unjust to the occupant of the mastership of the school, but it is most fruitful in provoking troubles in connection with the tenure of his office. Now, we do not say that the village school master should not play the village organ or train the village choir. But we do say that he should be permitted to please himself about the matter.

and excessive, but when one sees the fervour with which the French teacher accepts these outside duties, one simply refuses to believe that the English teacher is likely to prove for one moment any whit less patriotic and public minded, if the call is made to him in a proper fashion.

of  
icies.

Then again, something may be done by reviving and promoting village industries, which, if they are skilled trades, can not only exist but flourish in spite of the stress of outside competition, and it is difficult to see why the co-operative system of trading should not be possible in some cases among the villagers, why it should not lead them to found their own shops, as the operatives have done in the factory districts. In connection with this it would be useful to start village banks, whenever it is practicable. When all is said and done, the country problem, in so far as it concerns the status and economic position of the working-classes, is not so acute as the problem in the town. There is no doubt a good deal of stagnation, but this is a pool which it should not be beyond the power of the angel of mutual goodwill to stir up and endue with healing virtues. There is at least no submerged tenth, which seems in the towns to baffle all the efforts of private initiative to deal with and elevate it.

elusion.

These few paragraphs are not meant to be in any way exhaustive. They are only the rough headings of chapters which might easily be expanded to double and treble the size of the report itself. Yet in giving setting and proportion to the question of rural education it is to be hoped they will not be found out of place. The rural problem, in fact, has a threefold aspect—economic, social, and educational—and, peradventure, though highly important, the educational factor is the least important of the three.

CLAUDESLEY BRERETON.

December, 1900; revised December, 1901.

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Further, we think it highly improper to make ability and willingness to perform these duties one of the conditions of appointment to the head teachership of a public elementary village school."—"The Neglect of Village Education," by T. J. Macnamara, LL.D., M.P.

"The rural elementary school teacher seems to me at this moment the spoilt child of education. His interests are watchfully guarded in Parliament and outside by the National Union of Teachers, and its organs in the Press. He is harassed by fewer examinations, his holidays are more numerous, and his working hours, so far as his prescribed hours are concerned, are more restricted than in any other department of the profession of teaching. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him in request for other useful occupations, with advantage to himself as well as to others, in country parishes. But even here there are ill-advisers, who would fain debar him, under the plea of resisting so-called 'extraneous' duties, from enlarging his sphere of usefulness. When one compares his work, and emoluments, and mental outfit with those of the governess, the master, or mistress of any boarding school, or the country curate, on which side, from a purely mercenary point of view, does the balance lie of adequate remuneration, of leisure, and of independence?"—Rev. J. Lee Warner, formerly fellow and tutor of University College, Oxford, in the "School Guardian," March 11th, 1899.

## APPENDIX I.

SHORTAGE OF MALE RECRUITS FOR THE TEACHING  
PROFESSION.

The question of the falling-off in the number of male recruits for the teaching profession is discussed in a masterly way by M. Forfer, the Academy Inspector at Laon, in an article quoted *in extenso* in the *Revue Pédagogique* of October 15th, 1901. The chief points in the article may be summarised as follows:—

More male teachers are wanted. Why not then increase the number of places in the normal school for intending teachers? Because there are barely enough candidates for the present places. What are the reasons for this falling-off of candidates for a profession which down to 1887 was so popular? (1) The imposition of a year's military service in 1889. (2) The requirement that all intending candidates should have the "*brevet*." (3) The difficulty which country children find in getting the necessary preparation; the country schoolmaster is hard enough worked already. The brightest country children now go to the higher primary school, but the best of them on leaving it take up some more lucrative calling than that of the schoolmaster. (4) As a rule only the weaker pupils in these schools take up teaching. (5) The poor pay that the *stagiaire* starts on; though the capable *stagiaire* gets speedy promotion. Yet the *stagiaires* who deserve such promotion are not very numerous. (6) The teachers, by their complaints, turn many away from the profession. Yet they freely put their own sons into it. Out of 58 pupil-teachers in the Laon Training College, 20 are the sons or brothers of teachers.

The remedy therefore, he argues, is to give the teachers a direct interest in the question of recruiting for the profession, and he proposes that the County Councils should be asked for a grant with which to remunerate schoolmasters who prepare candidates for the examination. Another proposal is to found a sort of preparatory normal school alongside of the Training College—a kind of educational seminary or nursery for future teachers.

## APPENDIX II.

THE PERSONAL INFLUENCE OF THE TEACHER IN SECURING  
A GOOD ATTENDANCE.

The part which may be played by the teacher in improving the attendance at school is touched upon by the Minister in a circular to the Prefects (Nov., 1901). After calling on the latter to report on cases in which the present law is not enforced, and stating that the "Government considers it a duty to put an end to a state of things which is likely to compromise the results of the educational work of the Republic," the Minister proceeds to enlarge upon the immense importance of the personal influence and action of the teachers in the matter. He adds that "in his proposals for promotion or reward in favour of male and female teachers the Academy Inspector should especially take into account the efforts they have made in this direction."



## APPENDIX III.

## MINISTERIAL CIRCULAR ON THE SIMPLIFICATION OF FRENCH SYNTAX.

On the actual situation of the question a friend writing on the 7th of October, 1901, says:—"The spelling reform is still pending between the Academy and the Ministry. My opinion is that the regulations will be of no avail against current usage. In the schools of the city of Paris, with a few exceptions, one does not believe one is bound by the circular of March. The spirit of the reform is adopted *everywhere*. The famous curiosities in spelling ('chinoiseries orthographiques') have had their day. Nevertheless there is no authority as yet for establishing this reform. What is most clear and definite is that at present in the schools of Paris the teacher passes very rapidly over the old rules that are in the way of being abolished. One no longer spends time over them. The question will certainly come up again at the end of the year. Till then one hesitates, and waits for a definite 'yes or no.' But the out-and-out opposition are beaten."

## APPENDIX IV.

## SELECTION OF SCHOOL BOOKS.

This selection is limited to a list drawn up every year by a committee largely composed of members of the conseil départemental and presided over by the academy inspector, which in itself is a résumé of the different lists of suggested books which have been sent in by the cantonal assemblies of teachers who thus have the first and last word in the matter.

## APPENDIX V.

## MINISTERIAL CIRCULAR AS TO THE AIM OF REPUBLICAN SCHOOLS.

"The Republican school is not an institution apart, living a life of its own, and confining itself to the conscientious apprenticeship of reading and writing, of spelling and arithmetic. It is the first, I mean at once the most humble and most important, of social institutions, the one which prepares, in order to take our place, the younger generations animated with the patriotic and republican spirit. It is a sort of national workshop, in which is being forged the France of to-morrow, and from which will issue the great mass of citizens, workers, and soldiers, who thirty years hence will hold in their hands the destinies of the country. Thus nothing which goes on in the school is indifferent to the country. And this is what gives you the right as well as the duty to take a direct interest in it." (Circular addressed by M. Poincaré to the cantonal del-gates, July 10th, 1895.)

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# RURAL EDUCATION

## IN

### FRANCE.

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## RURAL EDUCATION IN FRANCE.

The following Report is based upon an inquiry undertaken at the request of the Board of Education into the condition of primary education in the rural districts of the departments of the Seine Inférieure, Eure, Eure et Loir, Loiret and Cher, with special reference to the character and effects of the agricultural instruction in the village schools, and the training of teachers to qualify them to give such instruction. These subjects have been previously dealt with at length in the Report on "Agricultural Education in France" <sup>1</sup>(<sup>1</sup>) prepared by Mr. H. M. Jenkins, F.G.S., for the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction (1884), and in the Report on "French Agricultural Schools" <sup>2</sup>(<sup>2</sup>) by Major Craigie, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Agriculture, in 1888.\* <sup>3</sup>(<sup>3</sup>) The recent Report on "Agricultural Education in France" <sup>3</sup>(<sup>3</sup>) by Mr. H. Austin Lee, C.B., Commercial Attaché to the British Embassy at Paris deals mainly with Secondary and Higher Schools, with only incidental references to the primary schools. When the Reports by Mr. Jenkins and Major Craigie were issued, it was hardly possible to estimate the results of the reforms in rural education inaugurated in 1879, and considerable changes in the laws affecting education have been introduced within the last few years. The process of reconstruction, moreover, which has commenced in our own system of rural education, adds a special interest to the examination of French methods at the present moment. France differs so widely from England in its social, economic, and agricultural conditions, that it by no means follows that a system which may have succeeded in the one country will equally meet the needs of the other. Still the experience gained in France during the past twenty years cannot fail to be of service. The problems to be solved there were very similar to those with which we are confronted to-day. The instruction in the village schools was wholly unsuitable to the requirements of rural life, the attendance was very unsatisfactory, there was

<sup>1</sup>C. 3981-1.<sup>2</sup>C. 5609.<sup>3</sup>C. 9045-33.

\* Reference may be made here to the joint Report on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools in France, of Mr. A. N. Bonaparte Wyse and Mr. E. J. Hughes-Dowling, to the Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools under the Board of National Education in Ireland (Appendices to the Reports of the Commissioners, 1898 [C. 8925]); to Mr. T. P. Gill's Report on Agricultural Organisation and State Aid to Agriculture in France, in the Report of the Recess Committee on the Establishment of a Department of Agriculture and Industries for Ireland, with Appendices, 1896 (Dublin, Browne & Nolan; London, T. Fisher-Unwin) (out of print); and to the Report to the Foreign Office on Agricultural Education in France, by Mr. H. Austin Lee (Miscellaneous Series, No. 505, Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Foreign Office, June, 1899 [C. 9045-33]).

an almost entire absence of instruction for those who had left school, and the migration to urban districts was everywhere increasing.

The departments named afford a convenient field for inquiry. Their general agricultural character is not dissimilar from that of England, except in the valley of the Loire, where the vine is largely cultivated. At the same time, the different methods of cultivation, the variety of the crops grown, and the various forms of land tenure make it possible to study the effect of the instruction given in the rural schools under very varying conditions. The area to be covered, however, is so vast, comprising some 31,837 square kilomètres, and including some 4,000 schools, that many years' patient study would be necessary before any final opinion could be formed. The particular quality of each school depends, as in England, mainly upon the capacity of the individual teacher, and the enterprise of the local authority. This Report, therefore, does not profess to be more than a summary of personal impressions. Generalisations from limited experience are always apt to be erroneous, and possibly another visitor to the same departments might arrive at very different conclusions.

#### ORGANIZATION OF PRIMARY INSTRUCTION.

By the law of October 30, 1886, primary schools comprise:—

- (1.) Infant schools and classes.
- (2.) Primary elementary schools.
- (3.) Higher primary schools, or higher standards attached to primary elementary schools, and called "*cours complémentaires*."
- (4.) Technical or professional schools.

Primary instruction of every grade is free, and is compulsory for all children from six to thirteen years of age, unless they have obtained the "*certificat d'études primaires*," for which they are eligible at the age of eleven.

The chief local authority in each department is the Departmental Council, consisting of the Préfet (President), the Inspecteur d'Académie (Vice-President), four members of the Conseil Général (or County Council) elected by their colleagues, the director of the male and directress of the female Training Colleges, two male and two female teachers elected respectively by their fellow-teachers, and two Inspectors of Primary Education nominated by the Minister of Public Instruction. The presence of elementary teachers upon the Departmental Council is noteworthy. The members receive no pay for their services, but an allowance for travelling expenses is made to those Inspectors of Primary Education and Teachers who do not reside at the capital of a department. The Council, subject to the approval of the Minister of Public Instruction, determines the number, character and position of public primary schools of every grade, as well as the number of teachers to be engaged in them. Its

other duties are to see to the application of the programmes, methods, and rules promulgated by the Central Council at Paris, to organise the medical inspection of the schools, to issue rules as to their internal management, to determine what schools require an assistant teacher, and to suspend or dismiss teachers, who have the right, however, of appearing before the Council and of appealing to the Minister. Members of the Departmental Council hold office for three years. Other people interested in education are co-opted as advisory members of the Council, but have no voting power. In each Canton one or more delegates are appointed by the Council to visit and supervise the public and private schools of the Canton, and each delegate has particular schools definitely placed under his care. Each delegate holds office for three years and is expected to furnish the Departmental Council with full reports on the condition and needs of primary education within his district.

Every Commune should be provided with at least one public primary school, but the Departmental Council may, subject to the approval of the Minister of Public Instruction, allow two or more Communes to be united for the establishment and maintenance of one school. When a single Commune, or the Communes which have been united, have 500 or more inhabitants, there ought to be at least one public primary school for girls. This rule, however, is only gradually being enforced. In the Seine Inférieure, for instance, there are 10 Communes with a population exceeding 500, where there is no public primary school for girls, in Eure et Loir 15, in Loiret 8, and in Cher 13.

The expenses of primary education are distributed in the following manner:—

The State pays the salaries of the teachers and inspectors, and the cost of maintaining students at the Training Colleges.

The Departments pay the rent and cost of repairing their Training Colleges, the expenses connected with the Academy Inspector's offices, and an allowance of not less than 300 francs per annum to each of the Primary Inspectors, independently of their regular salary.

The Communes pay the rent, if any, of the school buildings, the cost of repairing them, a lodging allowance to teachers, where there is no school-house, the expense of lighting and heating the schools, of supplying and renewing school furniture, registers, and books, and the wages of caretakers, &c.

In every Commune there is a School Committee (*Commission Scolaire*), composed of the Mayor, or his nominee, as President; of one or more Cantonal delegates, according to the number of Cantons included in the Commune, nominated by the Inspector of the Academy; and of members elected by the Municipal Councils in the proportion of one-third of their total number. The Inspector of Primary Instruction for the district is an *ex-officio* member. The Committee should meet at least once every three months, and any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without reasonable excuse loses his seat. The duties of the Committee are to draw up

annually before the commencement of the school year a list of all children from 6 to 13 years of age, to enforce the attendance laws and inflict penalties for disobedience to them, and to establish a School Fund (*caisse d'école*). This fund is intended to assist poor children to attend school, by providing them with warm food in winter, clothes and boots, and for the purchase of school material. The members of the Committee have no right of entry into the schools, they may not interfere with the character or methods of instruction, nor have they any control over the schools or the teachers.

<sup>1</sup> C. 8925, App. B. III. [Appendices of the Reports of the Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools under the Board of National Education in Ireland, 1898.]

Without a knowledge of these particulars, some of which may be read in greater detail in the "Joint Report on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools in France,"<sup>1</sup> by Mr. A. N. Bonaparte Wyse, M.A., and Mr. E. J. Hughes Dowling, M.A., it is impossible to understand how largely the condition of rural education depends upon the activity of the municipal authorities, or to see how far the elaborate machinery devised in Paris attains its object.

#### *Écoles Maternelles.*

These infant schools, which receive children from the age of two to six, are found mostly in towns, where they afford a convenient asylum to which mothers who are at work may send their children. The school hours are from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. from March 1 to November 1, and for the rest of the year from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Children may remain at them all day, and most of them are provided with a kitchen (*cantine*), where the mid-day meal can be cooked. A large proportion of them are maintained by various Religious Orders, and where this is the case, the appointments are invariably excellent. Unfortunately, when they are the property of the municipal authorities, they are often in a state of considerable neglect. Writing upon this point in his last Report, M. Pouillot, Inspecteur d'Académie for Cher, remarks:—"The condition of the teaching material in the majority of infant schools in this Department is poor, and it will only be possible to improve it gradually, relying chiefly on the goodwill, initiative, and ability of the teachers; for the municipal councils, instead of regarding their schools as establishments of primary education, where infants of both sexes may receive in common the care which their physical, intellectual, and moral development calls for, are too much inclined to look upon them simply as nurseries." The two schools of this description which I visited left nothing to be desired. One was at the village of Chaumont on the Loire, kept by the Ursuline Sisters, and the other (for boys only) was attached to the National Professional School for Practical Engineering at Vierzon (Cher). In both instances the rooms were large, bright and airy, the children clean and healthy, and the arrangements for feeding them admirable. Each child had a diminutive table, chair, tablecloth, and serviette. Some children bring their own food and have it warmed at the school, others pay about 1½d. for their meal, while

food is given to the poor ones. At Brou and Nogent-le-Rotrou (Eure et Loir) the kitchens at the *écoles maternelles* are said to have been of the greatest assistance to poor families during the winter.

### *Écoles Primaires.*

All primary schools have three divisions :—

1. Cours élémentaire (7–9 years of age).
2. Cours moyen (9–11 years of age).
3. Cours supérieur (11–13 years of age).

The upper division is rarely to be met with in village schools; the examination for the *certificat d'études primaires* is upon the work of the middle division, and, as M. Ferrand, Inspecteur d'Académie for Loiret, said to me, "the rural school does not look beyond that." If any rural children remain at school after obtaining the certificate, for the most part they repeat their previous lessons in a rather more advanced stage. The three divisions may be split up into classes, according to the number of pupils, but in M. Ferrand's opinion the less this is done in rural schools the better. Very many of them have only a single teacher, and the multiplication of classes entails the employment of the older boys as monitors, which invariably causes the school to suffer. It is, however, a difficult matter for the teacher to arrange his work satisfactorily, especially when the children are in the habit of returning to school at different times of the year. Schools are open for five days in the week, the usual holiday being Thursday, and the hours are from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. It rests with the Prefect and Departmental Council to fix the date of the long vacation, which lasts for six weeks, and they are recommended by a Circular of June 13, 1894, to fix it when agricultural or industrial operations are most likely to keep the children away from school. Practically the curriculum is the same for all schools (boys and girls), subject to slight modification by the Departmental Council, and it comprises: moral and civic instruction, reading and writing, the French language, arithmetic and the metric system, history and geography especially of France, object lessons, elementary science and its application to agriculture, drawing, singing, manual occupations, military drill for boys, and needlework for girls. There are no optional subjects, the whole scheme is obligatory, and the natural result of so elaborate a programme is that much is necessarily omitted in the rural schools or very imperfectly taught.

Subjoined is the Time-table (*emploi du temps*) for schools of one class with a head and an assistant teacher, adopted by the Departmental Council of Eure et Loir, and courteously supplied to me by M. Dauzat, Inspecteur d'Académie.

EMPLOI DU TEMPS POUR LES ÉCOLES A UNE SEULE CLASSE.

MATIN.

COURS.	De 7 h. 50 à 8 h.	De 8 h. à 8 h. 30.		De 8 h. 30 à 9 h. 20.			De 9 h. 20 à 9 h. 35.	De 9 h. 35 à 10 h. 20.			De 10 h. 20 à 11 h.	
		Morale (3 Leçons). Instruction civique (2 Leçons).		Arithmétique (3 Leçons). Système Métrique et Géométrie (2 Leçons).				Lecture (3 Leçons). Récitation (2 Leçons).	Dessin (2 Leçons). Travail manuel (2 Leçons). Chant (1 Leçon).			
Supérieur et Moyen	Inspection de propreté. — Entrée. — Appel.	20'	10'	20'	30'		Récréation.	10'	25'	10'	40'	
Elémentaire		Leçon commune	10' Devoir Copie d'un Résumé	20' Leçon. M	20' Leçon. M	10' Exercices d'ap- plicat. A		Coup d'œil sur la Leçon.	Leçon commune aux 2 cours. M	Lecture ou Vo- cabulaire. A		Exercices simultanés pour les trois cours.
		Préparatoire										



**SOIR.**

COURS.	De 2 h 50 à 1 h.	De 1 h. à 2 h.		De 2 h. à 2 h. 25		De 2 h. 25 à 2 h. 40.	De 2 h. 40 à 3 h. 30.		De 3 h. 30 à 4 h.		
		Langue Française.		Écriture (4 Leçons). Gymnastique (1 Leçon).			Histoire (3 Leçons). Géographie (2 Leçons).		Sciences Physiques et Naturelles (3 Leçons). Agriculture (2 Leçons).		
Supérieur et Moyen	Inspection de propreté. — Entrée. — Appel.	30' Dictée ou correction de rédaction. — Leçon de gramm <sup>re</sup> ou de vocabulaire. M		30' Devoir.		25'	25'	25'	20'	10'	
Élémentaire		40' Devoir. Exercices. A		20' Dictée ou correc. de réd. — Leçon de gram. ou de voc. M		Exercices simultanés pour les 3 cours.  M	Récitation.	Leçon. M	Devoir.	Leçon commune aux 2 cours. M	Résumé Copie d'un Résumé
Préparatoire		30' Lecture. A	10' Leçon de gram. ou rédict. M	Exercices. A				Étude ou Devoir.	Leçon commune aux 2 cours. M		

Every child on first entering the school should receive what is called a *cahier de devoirs mensuels*. This is a copy-book, in which the child in class, and without assistance, must write the first lesson of every month or fortnight throughout its school life. Its object was thus defined in the Official Circular of January 13, 1895:—"Une chose importe, et c'est la seule: qu'il existe dans toute école et pour tout enfant sans exception un cahier gardé avec soin, qui, d'une manière, ou d'une autre, et par un nombre suffisant de spécimens empruntés aux diverses époques de sa scolarité, puisse fournir au bout de quelques années une preuve irrécusable de la régularité de ses études, la trace de sa propre assiduité ou de ses absences, et, par conséquent, la meilleure des réponses de l'instituteur aux familles qui peuvent demander compte à l'école de ce que leurs enfants y ont fait et en ont emporté." Many teachers are in the habit of appending a note to the exercise with observations on the child's conduct, &c., and sending the book every month to the parents, who sign and return it. When this is done it affords an excellent way of stimulating the interest of the parents in the school, but one teacher honestly informed me that it was not his custom to do so, for he did not know what the parents might take it into their heads to write in the book.

The *cahier de roulement* is a copy-book which passes from hand to hand, and in which a different scholar each day writes the lessons of the day. It enables the Inspectors to tell at a glance whether the programmes are followed, and also indicates to some extent the degree of equality in the attainments of children in the same class.

Mixed schools (*écoles mixtes*) are almost always under a male teacher—out of 345 mixed schools in the Seine Inférieure only four are under a mistress—and the sewing lessons are given by an outside teacher. In these schools the children are separated according to their sexes, but there is no partition between them. Occasionally they have separate playgrounds.

In general the school buildings are good, and the class rooms light and well ventilated. Here and there one comes across buildings that need repair or enlargement, but the subventions from the State have been more liberal of late years, and "*on va bâtir*" is the usual reply to any criticism. In some of the more isolated villages there is considerable room for improvement, and, in the expressive language of one of the inspectors, "*le bien ne va qu'un pas boiteux*." Still it must be admitted that as a whole the school buildings are superior to those in the rural districts of England, and the teachers' houses are distinctly better. In no instance did I hear the slightest complaint from any teacher as to the quality of his house; in fact one teacher enthusiastically declared that they were really "palaces." They certainly are well built, roomy, and attractive in appearance. Attached to almost all of them is a fair-sized garden, which is the exclusive property of the teacher. In the department of Cher, for example, all but 46 of the 589 public schools have gardens. Generally they are well cultivated, and are frequently

used for instruction in practical horticulture, or bee-keeping, or for simple experiments and demonstrations in the science lessons bearing upon agriculture. Internally the condition of the schools is not so favourable. The expense of repairing them and providing school material must be borne by the Municipal Council. Strictly speaking the walls should be whitewashed every year, but it is not uncommon to find that they have been untouched for years. On the whole the school furniture, though simple, is adequate. Throughout the department of Eure-et-Loir it appears to be in a satisfactory condition. Elsewhere the municipalities rely too much upon State aid, which is of rare occurrence, for the repair or improvement of the furniture. The great defect is often the uniformity in the size of the desks for all scholars. The heads of little children just reach the top of the desk, and, as one of the inspectors pathetically remarked, "bien inspirés ceux qui dorment!" Geographical maps and history tables are particularly good, but diagrams for agricultural or horticultural instruction are generally inferior to those which may be procured in England. In fact one of the most successful rural teachers, whom I met, wrote, after my return to England, asking if I could obtain for him some of the English diagrams, of which he had seen specimens and heard so much. The text-books, though well compiled, are rather too voluminous and range over too wide a field. With a curriculum so crowded as that of the French primary schools, it is essential that the teacher devote his attention solely to the most important points. Again and again the Inspectors protest against the endless multiplication of text-books, and the mechanical teaching which follows from using a lesson prepared in Paris for some "abstract boy." "Mais vraiment croit-on de bonne foi que ces devoirs-omnibus destinés à toutes les classes sans discernement . . . puissent se substituer aux maîtres? Font-ils autre chose que les 'tailleurs à confection'? Sous prétexte de faire des habits qui aillent à tout le monde, ils prennent, comme on dit, mesure sur 'une guérite.' Il y a pour l'instituteur un noble emploi à faire de son temps et de son intelligence: il semble que ce soit de penser par lui-même, d'enseigner non pas pour 'l'élève abstrait,' mais pour les élèves qu'il a devant lui, qu'il connaît, et qu'il aime, de dire ce qui convient à eux et non pas à d'autres, de faire enfin ce que font nos bons maîtres qui savent rester 'eux-mêmes!'" In schools with a single teacher there is a tendency sometimes to concentrate all the effort upon the elder pupils to the neglect of the young ones, and occasionally one sees the "cours élémentaire" occupied in making interminable copies of verbs or unintelligible texts, simply with the object of keeping the children quiet.

Of the discipline and behaviour of the pupils in every grade and type of school it would be difficult to speak too highly. Alike in the towns and in the villages, in the playground and in the class room, courtesy is the invariable rule. The children answer brightly and intelligently, they like to show their work, and their interest in the experimental and practical lessons is

very marked. Students in the higher schools and colleges are just as courteous. There is the same disposition everywhere to assist a stranger, to answer all his questions and to tell him what he wants to know. Even in the class-rooms for older girls, as at the école ménagère at Rouen, there is no trace of "mauvaise honte" or giggling, and all the girls, except the one addressed, proceed quietly with their work. Of course the same features might be observed in English schools, but it is to be feared that in many of our village schools the appearance of a foreigner speaking indifferent English, and asking innumerable questions might attract unpleasant attention. My inquiry led me over a wide area, and in no instance did I experience the slightest rudeness or foolish shyness. Boys or girls at play would run off at once to fetch any one whom one wanted, whilst the rest went on with their games. These characteristics of French childhood I attribute largely to the personal influence of the teachers. Their relations with their pupils are invariably of the happiest description, and a spirit of lightheartedness and good fellowship seems to pervade every school. Much has been written of late about the supposed ill-feeling towards this country. I can only say that, whether visiting such an establishment as the National Agricultural College at Grignon or the humblest village school, I did not detect the shadow of a shade of it either amongst teachers or pupils.

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

A glance at the official reports discloses a very unsatisfactory state of things at the majority of rural schools. In some parts of the country the communes are so large, and the hamlet schools so few, that attendance in the winter is almost impossible. Bad weather, dirty roads, and colds keep the children at home then. In summer they are wanted to work in the fields, to gather apples or beet, and to look after the cattle. The general desertion begins about the middle of June, and lasts for four months, three-quarters of those upon the register being absent "The attendance does not seem to get any better," writes M. Ferrand. "It is hopeless to contend against the necessity which compels poor people to utilise their children during the four months in which they can hire them out. One might as well every year omit this paragraph of the report as 'already read.'" He goes on to say that in some communes of Berry a very unexpected reason for non-attendance is given: "The older brothers and sisters are jealous of the young ones, and insist on their parents keeping them from school." M. Marie Cardine, Inspector of the Academy for the Seine Inférieure, asks in despair "whether it is true that people do not value that for which they pay nothing, which is absolutely free, and ought we to acknowledge that the old masters are right, who tell us that if fees to some extent were charged the attendance would be far better?" In his department the Primary Inspector for Dieppe recently inquired into the causes which kept some

830 children in the rural districts near Dieppe out of school, with the following result:—

	Boys.	Girls.
Taking care of younger children - - -	20	68
Work at home or in service - - -	186	108
Want of clothes, dirtiness, scurf - - -	51	30
Wandering about - - - - -	25	6
Habitual and daily begging - - - - -	25	15
Disinclination, neglect - - - - -	116	116
Miscellaneous - - - - -	30	34
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	453	377
	<hr/>	<hr/>

No attempt is made to enforce the law of March 28, 1882. It remains a dead letter. The school committees, whose duty it is to put the law in motion, shrink from summoning those, upon whose suffrages they depend for their office, to appear before the magistrate. In the opinion of some, no improvement is to be looked for until the constitution of these committees has been altered. It is questionable, however, whether any change in their composition would effect the desired result in view of the widespread sympathy with the struggling poor. In many districts wages are so low that the labourers find it hard to live, and few are willing to deprive them of their children's earnings. As one of the Inspectors has said, "it is all very well to talk of the parents sacrificing the futures of their children to needs that are often trifling. The needs may appear trifling, but they are often inexorable. *Primo vivere, deinde philosophari*: food is the first necessity, without it the very power of receiving instruction is gone." Originally the school fund (*caisse d'école*) was intended to meet the case of the indigent.

The Ministerial Circular of May 12, 1867, expressly states that "it is not enough, in some cases, to open the doors of the school without charge: experience shows that many children, who may be admitted free, do not attend, or, if they attend at all, attend so irregularly that they derive no real benefit. That is due to many causes which the school fund may remove. The need which parents have for the services of their children—cannot the school fund give them some assistance, on condition that they send the children regularly to school? The children have no proper clothes—cannot the school fund distribute some? Can it not give some reward to those who attend most regularly? award prizes beyond those for which the Municipal Council allows a certain sum, or double their value?" Unfortunately the school fund exists only in name in most of the rural districts. It was originated with the idea of stimulating private initiative and of interesting all classes in the welfare of the schools, but the private initiative has been found wanting. In the whole department of Loiret there are only about twelve School Funds doing effective work, and one at least is supposed to exist in each of the 349 communes. On the other hand, in Eure-et-Loir their condition

is more satisfactory, and last winter in a certain number of districts soups and hot food were given to all or some of the children, and in some cases clothes were distributed as well. To meet the difficulty of getting the children to school during the harvest seasons, M. Pouillot, Inspector of the Academy for Cher, has suggested a rearrangement of the time-table. He proposes to shorten the mid-day interval, and that the elder children should attend from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., thus leaving them at liberty to work before and after school, especially those engaged with the cattle. The younger ones are to be taught before 10 and after 3. This would throw an additional burden upon the teachers, and it is not proposed apparently that they should receive any additional salary.

The school committees may, subject to the approval of the Departmental Council, permit children, engaged in industry and old enough to be apprenticed, to be absent from school either in the morning or the afternoon; the same permission may also be accorded to children engaged in agriculture, outside their own families.<sup>1</sup> The Departmental Council also may, after consultation with the Municipal Council and upon the proposal of the Inspector of the Academy, establish half-time schools (*écoles de demi-temps*) in any commune or part of a commune.<sup>2</sup> In such a case the director of the school is to divide the children into two groups, one for the morning from 8 to 11, and the other for the afternoon from 1 to 4. Parents, however, may, if they like, send their children to both classes. So far as I could gather, no advantage appears to have been taken of this provision in the districts which I visited. M. Ferrand informed me that, although the suggestion had been embodied in the Departmental rules for Loiret, and although he had tried to organise half-time schools in La Sologne, nothing had really been done. His general account of what usually happens was as follows:—In agricultural communes, where the population is poor and there is much pasture land (especially in La Sologne and Berry), the children are hired out for four months, either in their own communes or elsewhere. From the age of 10 they are employed to look after the geese or the cattle. In this way a quarter and sometimes a third of the children in the two upper divisions are absent from school from the beginning of May. This desertion causes other children to play truant, and finally in some schools half the children cease to attend, unless there is a strong master. The children, however, that remain are enough to occupy the teacher, and so the school is not closed. The teacher consequently does not ask for a half-time school, and is satisfied with a diminished audience. Sometimes to oblige the parents he opens the school for new pupils in the summer, receiving little children below school age, and thus enabling the parents to work all day in the fields. This disorganises the classes, but M. Ferrand cannot see at present how it is to be avoided.

Irregularity of attendance to some extent seems to be inevitable in the rural districts. It rests with the teacher himself, more than with anyone else, to overcome it. "As is the

Law of  
arch 28,  
82, Art. 15.

Model  
School Rule,  
n. 18, 1887,  
rt. 7.

teacher so is the school" is a maxim of universal application. "Ce n'est pas seulement avec sa tête, c'est avec son cœur que l'on enseigne." A good teacher has a remarkable power of attracting children. This is clearly shown by the wide difference in the average attendance in adjoining communes, where the economic conditions are identical. A striking instance of a teacher's personal influence was brought to my notice. In a certain village boys and girls alike used to desert the school before the summer; more than two-thirds of them were absent from the beginning of May. The teacher was changed. The new master knew how to attract children. In July, after the First Communion (which is the usual signal for leaving school), after the examination for the *certificat d'études primaires*, in the very middle of the harvest, the boys' school is full; the girls' school is as much deserted as formerly. There can be no doubt, too, that where the instruction is of a useful practical character the attendance is always better. At the village of Bois-le-Roy (Eure), for instance, where there is a small school with thirty-five pupils, and where excellent horticultural instruction is given in the school garden, it is rare for any child to be absent except through illness. The same results are to be observed throughout the neighbourhood of Pithiviers (Loiret), where special attention has been paid to agricultural education.

It is not easy to determine the average age of the children in primary schools. The statistics only give the numbers of those under 6, between 6 and 13, and above 13 years of age. The figures present some rather startling features. In Loiret, for example, the number of children under 6 years of age suddenly fell from 8,585 in 1896 to 6,504 in 1897, showing the rapid rate at which the population was diminishing. The Department in fact lost some 6,214 inhabitants within five years. Since 1897 the number of children under six years of age has increased to 7,151. The following table gives the last statistics published for three departments:—

CHER :		1898.	1897.
Under 6	- - -	6,094	5,829 + 265
From 6-13	- - -	42,152	42,263 - 101
Above 13	- - -	2,517	2,549 - 32
EURE-ET-LOIR :			
Under 6	- - -	9,495	9,387 + 108
From 6-13	- - -	32,637	32,801 - 164
Above 13	- - -	1,572	1,496 + 76
LOIRET :			
Under 6	- - -	7,151	6,735 + 416
From 6-13	- - -	44,051	44,083 - 32
Above 13	- - -	2,054	2,030 + 24

But without having any definite statistics upon the point, it may safely be said that the number of children from 11 to 13 in the rural elementary schools is very small, and it is exceptional to find any above 12 years of age. Some people have attributed this to the fact that children are eligible at the age of eleven for the *certificat d'études primaires* and so have become

exempt from attendance. If, however, one asks a child of 12 or so in the fields why he is not at school, he never replies that it is because he has the certificate. He knows perfectly well that if he does not choose to go to school, there is no authority which will compel him to. The general situation has been thus graphically described by one of the Inspectors: "Jetez les yeux sur nos élèves. Ils nous quittent à 12 ans, à 11 ans parfois. Parmi ceux qui vont partir si tôt, beaucoup sont venus deux ans seulement (les deux années du catéchisme) à l'école du bourg qui est trop loin de leurs hameaux. J'ai vu, à Beaulieu, des enfants de 12 ans dans la division enfantine: ils allaient quitter l'école au lendemain de leur première communion et ne savaient pas lire. Qu'ils viennent deux ans, ou 4 ou 6, beaucoup ne fréquentent guère. Il n'est aucun enfant, peut-être qui n'ait perdu l'une ou l'autre de ses années d'études pour maladie, rougeole, scarlatine, gros rhume, &c.: ils viennent à cinq ans, quand ils viennent: ils ne travaillent guère avant 6 ou 7, et ils partent à 11! La rentrée dans les campagnes n'est jamais complète avant novembre. En décembre et janvier, la rigueur de la saison multiplie les absences, en mai, on déserte pour aller aux champs. Dans notre Berry on peut admettre qu'une bonne moitié des enfants ne viennent pas à l'école plus de 6 mois, les bonnes années. Sur un cours moyen de 20 élèves, l'instituteur aura peine à en présenter 6 au certificat d'études. Et que savent les autres quand ils nous quittent?" In Cher out of 104,800 electors upon the register, about 28,900, or more than a quarter, are illiterate, and in the communal assemblies there are still 450 municipal councillors who cannot sign their names. There is one council in which nine members have never received any education at all.

#### CERTIFICAT D'ÉTUDES PRIMAIRES.

The examination, which is held at the end of each school year is conducted by a Cantonal Commission, appointed by the Rectors, on the nomination of the Inspector of the Academy. Of this commission the Primary Inspector for the district is *ex-officio* president. In the examination of girls some ladies must always be upon the commission. The examination is partly written and partly *viva-voce*: in the latter portion it is public. Candidates must be at least 11 years of age, as previously stated, and the examination is based upon the work of the middle division. To gain a certificate not less than half of the total marks must be obtained, and a cypher in any subject is fatal. The written examination comprises: (a) Dictation; (b) two questions in Arithmetic and the Metric System; (c) a short Composition on either Moral or Civic Instruction, History and Geography, or Elementary Science and its applications; (d) Drawing for boys in urban schools, and one or two questions on Agriculture for those in rural schools. The oral examination comprises: (a) Reading, and Recitation of Poetry; (b) questions on History and Geography. Girls are



also examined in Needlework, and since this subject became obligatory, the sewing lessons have improved considerably. Urban and rural schools are distinguished according to the professions generally followed by a majority of the parents of the children attending the schools.<sup>1</sup> Children, however, in the urban schools may be examined in agriculture, and those in the rural schools in drawing, if their parents desire it, both of these subjects being compulsory in all schools. The proportion of successful candidates ranges from 77 per cent. in Cher. to 84 per cent. in Loiret. This in itself is satisfactory. The idea, moreover, of the certificate is excellent, as evidence of the completion of an adequate elementary education, and parents like their children to have it, but the standard of the examination is too low, and it affords a poor test of a child's knowledge. Teachers too are tempted to "cram" their pupils for it, notwithstanding all the remonstrances of the Inspectors. At the same time the character of the examination until 1897, when agriculture was added to the list of obligatory subjects, naturally operated against agricultural instruction in the rural schools.

<sup>1</sup> Minister  
Circular,  
Jan. 12, 11

#### SCHOOL MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, SAVINGS BANKS, SOCIETIES, ETC.

In some of the rural schools excellent museums may be found, and this was especially the case at the village of Olivet (Loiret), to which reference will subsequently be made. The following very valuable suggestions as to what should be included in the museum of a rural school are taken from the Report of the Conference on "L'Outillage Scolaire" held at Chartres in 1896. "The school museum will include an agricultural section, containing:—The constituent elements of the soil—sand, chalk, clay and humus. The secondary elements, such as magnesium and oxide of iron. The substances used to improve the soil, e.g. chemical manures. Specimens of the principal plants cultivated, or capable of being introduced into the district. Each plant, or portion of a plant, should be accompanied by its seeds; dried fruits or other products. A collection of plants useful and injurious to agriculture. A collection of insects. An album with pictures of agricultural implements, different kinds of trees, the best varieties of fruits, and the chief tribes of domestic animals. An agronomical chart, showing the nature of the different soils in the Commune, their properties, and the results of the analyses of the soils in the neighbourhood." An intelligent teacher would find such a museum of the utmost assistance in the agricultural or horticultural instruction, but too many teachers are apt to regard museums simply as ornaments to the school.

About a third of the rural schools have libraries, which are open to the adults as well as the children. They are popular, and the books are extensively read. A steady increase in the number of libraries is to be noted but progress is slow and will remain so until private initiative helps the schools more and the School Fund becomes more of a reality.

Opinions differ as to the value of School Savings Banks. They flourish in the neighbourhood of Châteaudun (Eure-et-Loir), where great pains have been taken to promote thrift amongst the children. In Cher they have almost disappeared, and M. Pouillot thinks that, since there is now a savings bank in almost every village, teachers need not be troubled with the duty of keeping delicate and intricate accounts.

Many schools have useful little societies for the protection of birds and animals. These serve to familiarise the children with their habits, and to teach kindness to dumb creatures. Small prizes are usually given to the most active members of each society.

Old student's clubs (associations d'anciens élèves) are frequently formed. Interest in the school is thus maintained amongst those who have left it, and the clubs provide many opportunities for pleasant gatherings. In the summer fêtes are organised, where the funds admit of it, and in the winter concerts and reading parties are held. The men have shooting competitions, or topographical walks, &c. The women sometimes arrange a course of domestic economy or cooking. As a rule the clubs are initiated by the teachers, and they seem to be a valuable adjunct to the schools.

#### SCHOOL STAFF.

All teachers are divided into probationers (*stagiaires*) and certificated teachers (*titulaires*). No one can be admitted as a certificated teacher without having served for at least two years as a probationer in a public or private school, and without having obtained the "*certificat d'aptitude pédagogique*," for which they are not eligible until 21 years of age. The time passed at the training colleges counts, in the case of male students, from their 18th year, and in the case of female students from their 19th, as part of their service as probationers. The Inspector of the Academy appoints the probationers, and the Prefect appoints the certificated teachers, under the authority of the Minister of Public Instruction and upon the nomination of the Inspector of the Academy. Head teachers of a school with more than two classes are entitled Directors.

After appointment teachers are liable to five degrees of punishment for misconduct:—

1. Reprimand, pronounced by the Inspector of the Academy.
2. Censure, also pronounced by the Inspector of the Academy, after consultation with the Departmental Council. This censure may be inserted in the Official Bulletin.
3. Dismissal, pronounced by the Prefect, on the motion of the Inspector of the Academy, after consultation with the Departmental Council. In this case the teacher has the right of appearing before the Council, of procuring copies of the evidence against him, and of appealing within 20 days to the Minister.

4. Suspension for a period not exceeding five years.

5. Total suspension.

In both these cases judgment is pronounced by the Departmental Council, before whom the teacher has to appear. He may employ counsel to defend him, is entitled to inspect the evidence, and may within 20 days lodge an appeal before the Superior Council of Public Instruction.

Teachers, exclusive of probationers, are divided into five classes, and there is a fixed percentage of teachers in each class, to each of which there is a fixed salary.

Class.	Salary of Masters.	Salary of Mistresses.	Percentage in each Class.
Probationers - - -	£36	£36	15
5th Class - - -	£40	£40	25
4th Class - - -	£48	£48	25
3rd Class - - -	£60	£56	20
2nd Class - - -	£72	£60	10
1st Class - - -	£80	£64	5

Teachers in charge of a school with more than two classes have an additional salary of £8, and those in charge of schools with more than four classes of £16. Teachers of complementary classes (*cours complémentaires*) have £8 in addition to the salary of the class to which they belong. Sewing mistresses in mixed schools under a master have a maximum salary of £3 6s. 4d. All teachers have houses rent free, or, if there is no house, an allowance instead, determined by the Prefect. Fixed lodging allowances, ranging from £4 to £32, and in Paris to £80, and proportionate to the population, are also paid to the directors of schools with two or more classes, and to the teachers of complementary classes. All other certificated teachers receive an allowance at half, and probationers at a quarter of the above rates. In each department there is a definite number of teachers belonging to each class, and promotion from one class to another goes by seniority and teaching capacity. On the 14th of July in every year various distinctions are conferred upon masters and mistresses by the Minister of Public Instruction upon the recommendation of the Departmental Council, or in the case of the highest reward upon that of a special committee composed of the Inspector of the Academy, the Primary Inspectors, the Director and Directress of the Training Colleges, and two nominees of the Departmental Council. Certificated teachers of five years' standing are eligible for "honourable mention": those who have been honourably mentioned within the previous two years may receive a bronze medal, and a silver medal may be given to those who have had a bronze medal within the previous two years. Those who have obtained a silver medal have a good service pension of £4 per annum, and are entitled to wear a violet ribbon with yellow strings on their

left breasts. Teachers of 25 years' standing, and in possession at least of the bronze medal, may become "honorary teachers," which entitles them to attend and take part in the Pedagogic Conferences of the canton in which they reside. This system of promotion and reward unquestionably acts as a stimulus to the teachers; good work is sure of official recognition.

At the age of 55 and after 25 years of active service the teacher may claim a pension. The time spent at the Training College after the age of 20 counts as active service. Inability to continue teaching from ill-health dispenses with the condition as to age. The pension, which cannot be less than £25 per annum for masters, and £20 per annum for mistresses, is half of the highest salary earned during any period of six years, not necessarily the last six years. The retired teacher also receives one-twentieth of any additional salary which he may have had for local and incidental services, but the total pension must not exceed the amount of salary which he would have received directly from the State had he continued in active service. To prevent inconvenience to the teacher from the non-payment of the pension immediately after he has become entitled to and has applied for it, he is to be retained in office at his full salary until the pension is paid.<sup>1</sup> If a teacher prefer to continue teaching after 55 years of age, his pension is increased by one-fiftieth of the amount of his salary for each year of additional service. The widows of retired teachers receive a third of the pension to which their husbands would have been entitled, and this third must never be less than £4. The children of teachers, when both parents are dead, annually receive an amount equal to the pension which the mother would have had until the youngest of them attains the age of 21.

<sup>1</sup> Decree of  
May 27, 18

<sup>f</sup>  
397.

Salaries being attached to the person of the teacher and not to any particular school, rural teachers are paid upon the same scale as those in the towns. A teacher may, in fact, be the head of a large school and be in the fifth class, with a salary of £40, while another may be head of a small rural school, and be in the first class, with a salary of £80. It is the habit of officials all over the world to complain of their pay, as M. Ferrand truly observed. Undoubtedly the salaries to commence with are too low. On the average a teacher does not receive one of £60 until he is about 32 years of age, or of £72 until he is about 45. In M. Marie Cardine's opinion, the rural teacher could not live, were it not that he also acted as secretary to the Mairie, for which he gets from £8 to £16 a year. Most teachers in charge of a school have a supplementary salary of some kind. Besides the above secretaryship, a rural teacher can act as secretary for the local Savings Bank, and as secretary to the Relief Association (*Bureau de Bienfaisance*), for which services there is of course some remuneration. Occasionally he organises a society for insurance against the loss of stock, and this will bring him in £2 or so. He may also add to his income by doing a little land surveying and by drawing up agreements. During the last few years salaries have been gradually raised, and there is likely to

be further improvement. Although I closely questioned many teachers, I failed to discover any great sense of grievance. The status of the rural teacher in France is in many respects superior to what it is in England. He is certainly better housed as a rule. The fact that he has an assured and official position gives him a feeling of independence. He realises that his future depends mainly upon himself. He is free from the irritation of local interference in the management of his school, and he can appeal against any judgment which he believes to be unjust. I have heard that political considerations now and then cause the Sub-Prefects to treat a teacher with unfairness, but this is a matter of rare occurrence. Such being the general situation, teachers have not felt the need of any powerful organisation for the protection and advancement of their interests. So far as my experience goes, they are devoted to their profession, eager to discuss all that bears upon the theory of education, and anxious to introduce improved methods of instruction. Since they are paid as teachers solely by the State, one possible cause of friction between their neighbours and themselves is removed. Their relations with the farmers and the parents are most friendly. The agricultural and horticultural instruction which they have received at the Training Colleges contributes to this and puts them in touch with their rural surroundings. With tact, and care not to pose as a savant or a professor, the teacher may easily, thanks to his training, obtain considerable influence over the whole population of his commune.

#### THE AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION.

Under the old law of 1850 agriculture might form part of the curriculum of primary schools, and Mr. Jenkins in his Report (<sup>1</sup>C. 3981—1 pp. 151-156) gives some examples of the extent to which agricultural instruction was given in the Seine Inférieure, the Eure-et-Loir, and the Haute-Marne. These efforts depended solely upon local initiative, and upon the encouragement of local agricultural societies and agricultural committees. As showing the character of what was done Mr. Jenkins quotes the following passage from Mr. Gibson-Richardson's "The Corn and Cattle-producing Districts of France" (pp. 55-58):—

"In the horticultural portion of the show at Chartres, in June, 1877, were exhibited the copy-books of children from some of the schools in the department of Eure-et-Loir. They contained descriptions of the various methods of budding and grafting fruit trees, of the various kinds of wheat grown in the district, the insects, noxious and otherwise, the different grasses, &c., the whole illustrated by the drawings of the pupils, very clearly written and drawn. The pupils varied in age between ten and thirteen, and if these books are anything like a fair representation of the state of rural education in France, it must be far above that of England, and it was not a few books that were exhibited, but a large table was covered with them. At the agricultural meeting

in Paris, in February, 1877, the plan of a parish in Burgundy was exhibited, drawn up by the schoolmaster, in which the nature of the soil on the little plot round the household of each pupil was explained, and the pupils were taught the most suitable methods of cultivating that particular plot of ground.

“The most complete account we have of this kind of education is given by the Vicomte Charles de Hédonville, who describes the system pursued in the canton of St. Dizier, in the department of the Haute-Marne, and which has been at work since 1873. The Conseil Général de la Haute-Marne published in 1872 an elementary book on agriculture, called “An Agricultural Catechism suitable for the schools in the Haute-Marne.” After the holidays, in the month of October, the Educational Committee informs the schoolmasters what lessons in the catechism are to be prepared during the winter for examination in the spring; generally ten are selected, forming about fifty pages of printed matter. These lessons are to be prepared by the pupils of the two upper forms: writing the lessons from dictation, and working out the arithmetical problems connected with the lessons, are done during the ordinary school hours; the special study of the agricultural portion of the work is taken out of the ordinary school hours, or on the half holidays. It is not found that this extra work interferes with the ordinary school tasks, as the pupils of the schools in St. Dizier satisfy the inspectors fully, as well as do those of the schools where the agricultural education is not attended to so much, or not at all.

“The degree of success attending this teaching varies, of course, with the skill and knowledge of the masters. Some teach the boys to distinguish between the useful and the useless plants in the neighbourhood; they form collections of those cultivated, the grasses most serviceable, the weeds, the medicinal herbs, and those that are poisonous; these are collected in bunches, duly labelled, and kept in a case, and are renewed yearly as a succession of new pupils follow those who leave. Some have specimens of the various soils and subsoils; seeds of the crops; hemp and flax in their different stages of growth and preparation; sugar-beet preserved in spirit, with its different stages of progress, from the raw beet to its outcome in sugar, &c. Few villages have elaborated a system so perfect as that of St. Dizier, but most through France are working in the same direction, and as two or three years make all the difference in the education of children, that very short period may wholly change the educational condition of the French peasantry.

“When the examinations are completed rewards are given, both to the masters who have been most successful and to the pupils who have passed best. In the latter case, there is a savings bank book, with 10 francs to the credit of the boy. They began at St. Dizier with promising two prizes to the masters and ten to the boys, but the zeal of the masters and the success of the boys have been so great that this spring (1877) they have given five prizes to masters and sixteen to boys.”

Major Craigie also in his Report (1) refers to the local success<sup>1</sup> C. 5600 achieved in the department of Calvados, quoted by the Marquis de Dampierre in his Report to the National Assembly in 1875, on the formation of an "Institut Agronomique." It appears that, even before 1875, in four years the number of primary schools competing for rewards offered at Caen alone for agricultural knowledge had been raised from 16 to 77, and the number of pupils from 76 to 477. p. 11.

From the above it is evident that voluntary action on the part of agriculturists themselves largely contributed to the legislation of 1879. That legislation embodied the recommendations of the special commission on agricultural instruction in 1866, and as these recommendations cover some of the questions now under consideration in England, it may be well to quote them at length:—

1. To introduce at once a course of agriculture and horticulture suited to the department in those normal (*i.e.* training) colleges where it has hitherto been impracticable, and to introduce regularly such teaching in all places, where circumstances will permit of the same.

2. To create in each department a post of professor of agriculture, who will be charged with agricultural teaching in the normal school, the lyceum or the college, with lectures which may be given to schoolmasters and cultivators; to bestow on the holder of this appointment a suitable salary chargeable to the vote for the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Public Instruction; to select the professors of agriculture from among the candidates who may from henceforth be considered qualified; and in order to secure them in the future, to choose from amongst the best third year's pupils of the normal school those who have a special aptitude for teaching, and to send them for two or three years to a school of agriculture.

3. To stir up and encourage the addition of a garden to such normal schools and to rural primary schools as do not at present possess one, in order to exercise the children in the practice of horticulture; to undertake agricultural excursions once every week, with a special object of study corresponding with the school work of the session.

4. To modify the regulations of the communal primary schools in such a way that in each commune it may be possible, by the fixture of the hours of lessons in the classes, and by the date of the holidays to fit in the class studies with the work in the fields.

5. To advise the prefects to select, as far as possible, teachers possessing a special knowledge of agriculture for those districts where such knowledge may be more particularly applicable.

6. To recommend to the teachers in rural communes to give, by the choice of their dictations, their reading lessons, and their sums, an agricultural direction to the teaching, and from time to time in the classes for adults to give lectures on agriculture accompanied by explanations and advice after the lessons in writing, arithmetic, and spelling.

7. To draw up a general programme of agricultural instruction in each department adapted to its agricultural conditions.

8. To cause the normal schools to be inspected annually by inspectors-general of agriculture, as well as some of the rural schools in each department.

9. To institute and to encourage annual competitions among the pupils both of the primary schools and of the adult classes, and, independently of the ordinary questions of class teaching, to give them at the same time questions on agriculture; to try and assure to the teachers for this latter object, in addition to the usual honorary rewards, a remuneration dependent upon the number of pupils admitted to the competition, and upon the number of prizes obtained by them."

The law of June 15, 1879, under which chairs of agriculture had to be established in every department, provided that agricultural instruction should be obligatory in all primary schools three years after its complete organisation in the training colleges.

In its Report for 1881 the Société des Agriculteurs de France, which has spared no effort to promote and encourage agricultural education of every grade, published some valuable remarks on the means of instruction at the command of primary teachers:— "Teachers in general have a garden attached to the school, some of them have an experimental plot as well; that is good, but it is not sufficient. If the teacher is really to give the children who are entrusted to him an *agricultural education*, and, as he teaches, explain the application of the elementary ideas of agriculture to local circumstances, he must be familiar with those circumstances, he must understand the different properties of the soil, the physical peculiarities of the land, &c.; further, to make the explanations intelligible and clear, a plan of the different properties of the soil and its conformation must be before the eyes of the teacher and his pupils in the class. It will be useful, then, for the teacher always to have at his disposal in class, besides the pictures of weights and measures, trees, birds, useful and harmful insects, the specimens in the school museum, the collection of the dried plants of the commune, an *agronomic-agrologic* chart of the commune. With such charts the teacher who cannot often arrange agricultural walks might at all seasons and at any hour give his lesson as it were upon the land itself."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comptes rendus des Travaux de la Société des Agriculteurs de France, Tome xii., Annuaire de 1881, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Enseignement Agricole, ed. iii., p. 15.

Most of the departmental councils drew up programmes for agricultural instruction in accordance with the directions in Article 10 of the Law of June 15, 1879, but they were all too ambitious, practically covering the whole field of agriculture. As M. René Le Blanc justly remarks in his admirable book on agricultural education:<sup>2</sup> "As one reads these vast programmes one naturally asks what is one to teach in the higher schools if the whole of the theory and practice of agriculture is to be taught, as they suggest, in the elementary school." In their anxiety to omit nothing which it would be profitable for the



future cultivator of the soil to know, the framers of these programmes committed a fatal mistake. Teachers were bewildered. They were at that time rarely qualified to give any agricultural instruction at all, and the natural result was that but little progress was made. The exclusion of agriculture, except as an optional subject after December 21, 1891, from the examination for the *certificat d'études primaires*, left the teachers without any special reason for teaching it. M. René Le Blanc always rightly maintained that if teachers are to be induced to qualify themselves for, and to take up new subjects, there must be some sanction for them: a fact which should not be overlooked in England.

The whole question was next considered at an International Congress in Paris in 1889, when the following resolution was passed:—"Agricultural education at the primary elementary school, by means of frequent lessons, exercises, readings, and above all, by means of the school museum, the garden, and school walks, will rest essentially upon the cultivation of vegetables." In 1896 the well-known circular upon "The teaching of elementary ideas of agriculture in rural schools" was issued. It is too long for insertion here, and may be read in full in the Report of the Irish Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools.<sup>1</sup> It emphasises the necessity of basing such instruction in agriculture as can be given in the elementary school upon "observation of the everyday facts of rural life, and upon a system of simple experiments appropriate to the resources of the school." "The work of the elementary school should be confined to preparing the child for an intelligent apprenticeship to the trade by which he is to live, to giving him a taste for his future occupation; with this end in view, the teacher should never forget that the best way to make a workman like his work is to make him understand it." In short, the underlying principle of the whole scheme is that "*le travail n'est attrayant et fructueux que si l'intelligence y prend une part aussi grande au moins que la force ou l'adresse manuelle.*" The following indicates the nature of the lessons admissible in carrying out the official programme during each half year in rural schools:—

<sup>1</sup> C. 8925,  
1898, p. 289

#### *Elementary Course.*

(Seven to nine years of age.)

Object lessons. As far as agriculture is concerned, the only thing necessary is that the objects of the garden should be called into requisition in the same way as those of the class room.

#### *Middle Course.*

(Nine to eleven years of age.)

The duration of the middle course is at least two years for each pupil. In the first year, that is, at nine years old, the child is incapable of acquiring more than very rudimentary

ideas of science, or of their application to agricultural matters. It is only after the introductory instruction, or, in other words, only in the second year and with children of at least ten years of age, that the teacher can begin to deal with ideas of agriculture properly so called; and even then, in accordance with official directions, he should proceed by way of reading lessons, object lessons, and school walks.

The division of the instruction into two years presents no difficulties in the case of schools which have several classes, but in rural districts, where in most schools there is only one teacher, the lessons in science and in agriculture will necessarily be common to the whole class. The lessons must, therefore, include whatever is appropriate to each group of pupils, and must be in the form of a concentrated whole, from which each group will take that portion which is best suited to its mental capacity and development.

### First Year of the Middle Course.

#### First Half-Year.

It would be difficult to give "an idea of the principal functions of life"—to give any satisfactory description of respiration, for instance, to children ignorant of the properties of air, not even knowing whether a gas is a material thing or not; as a preliminary, therefore, "the three states of matter" should be examined into.

The elementary principles of natural and physical science can be made to form the basis of parallel lessons that will mutually complete each other.

With regard to natural history, animals are to be treated of first; the consideration of man will follow when the ideas relating to air and to combustion have been well fixed in the children's minds by experiments.

I. *The Three States of Matter.*—Some simple demonstrations are indispensable to induce observation and comparison of these three states. Plunge a wine-glass, or a funnel with the opening downwards, into some water; then let the air escape, when the bubbles will be seen or the pressure felt; or secure the air blown or breathed into a vessel of water; transfer it to another vessel and measure it approximately. These are necessary experiments and can be performed anywhere without expense. Similarly with the following:—Produce steam, condense it—in other words, distil water, and observe the change that takes place; or prepare a little oxygen and produce combustion, increase the vigour of this by a draught, identifying the products; or demonstrate atmospheric pressure or the elasticity of air. Anything beyond this can be done later on.

II. *Animals.*—The teacher should stimulate the curiosity of the children by conversing familiarly with them, and telling them about the animals which they see every day. He should select the most striking features in the history of each. The

dog and the horse will furnish matter for several explanatory and descriptive reading lessons, and for some little written exercises, done, if necessary, with the help of pictures. The various species of the dog should be compared; the horse should be compared with the donkey, the cat with the lion and tiger, &c.; the habits of farmyard fowl, the periodic flight of the swallows and other migratory birds; the history of the metamorphoses of the frog; those of the cockchafer, as well as the damage it does; the silkworm, and the bee, and their products, &c.—all these should form a basis for most interesting reading lessons and conversations.

III. *Man*.—A short description of the human body should follow these lessons on animals. This might be begun before the experimental lessons described above are finished, but it is only when these lessons are completed that the functions of nourishment and respiration should be dealt with. Beyond this the instruction should not go, but some advice on matters of health might be added.

### Second Half-Year.

This being the summer season, the pupils can be brought into contact with the actual objects required for the experiments or demonstrations. Sometimes the children or the teacher can bring them into the class-room; sometimes both teacher and children can go out to observe the objects. *In rural districts an object-lesson should in no case be given without having the object itself before the children's eyes.*

I. *Plants*.—It will naturally be well at first to draw the pupils' attention to an active phenomenon—that of germination, which is easy to produce and easy to follow in its different phases, especially in spring-time. A bean, or a grain of corn, an acorn, or a horse-chestnut, put into damp moss or sand, will produce convenient specimens; or by making the experiment, as is usually done, in growing plants in water—the seed being supported by a cork floating on the water—it will be quite easy to see the development of the little roots and of their essential organs, the rootcap and the absorbing hairs.

It is from nature also that the branch, the leaf, and above all the flower, are to be studied. In the latter case, for instance, the first thing to do is to put a specimen of the flower chosen into the hands of each of the children; then under the general guidance of the teacher, each child should, either with a pen-knife or else an ordinary pin, separate the flower into its parts—calyx, corolla, stamen, and pistil.

A few well-chosen examples will suffice to give an idea of the families of plants which are more particularly interesting on account of their good or bad qualities, *i.e.*, useful and noxious plants.

II. *First Ideas of Agriculture*.—Such ideas, to be useful to children who have not yet reached ten years of age, must be very

limited; they should aim at attracting the child and serving him for a starting-point, with a view to prepare him to use his faculties of observation and to familiarise him with the phraseology that will be used in the more systematic lessons of the following years.

### Second Year of the Middle Course.

The instruction should be given on the same lines as in the first year; the programme to be completed as follows:—

I. *Elementary Ideas of Science.*—The study of combustion should be extended to that of carbonic acid gas, the presence of which in limestone should be demonstrated. Some chalk and a few drops of a mineral acid are all that is necessary for making the following experiments or demonstrations:—The changing of chalk into quicklime (the school stove will provide sufficient heat), showing the loss of weight by comparing it with a piece of chalk of similar proportions to the one first used; the action of water on quicklime; the properties of slaked lime, white-wash, lime-water; the production of carbonic acid gas; the re-formation of chalk; the separation of a given quantity of soil into clay, on the one hand, and silica and limestone on the other. By means of a little hydrochloric acid, which will dissolve the limestone, the silica can be isolated; the lime can then be reprecipitated by means of a solution of carbonate of soda. This easily explained experiment requires only a little care to be well carried out.

II. *Elementary Ideas of Agriculture.*—Investigation, particularly during school walks, of the principal kinds of soil.

The teacher should devote himself to making the children observe that plants, as well as animals, require nourishment in order to live; and to prove this, some plants should be grown in pots and in some corner of the school garden. The following experiment will serve as a starting-point:—Sow some seeds of rapid growth, early beans for instance, some in good soil with a sufficient quantity of suitable manure added, some in sterile material, such as exhausted soil, sand, or gravel, or even glass broken into pieces about the size of gravel. The need for manure will thus be demonstrated; its composition will be dealt with later on.

The first ideas relating to ordinary agricultural implements and operations should be acquired, to begin with, during country walks; they are to be developed in the more systematic lessons indicated in the programme for the Higher Course.

The Higher Course, properly so called, is seldom organised in rural schools. As a rule the more advanced or older children constitute a sort of upper division of the Middle Course; but, however that may be, the following rule will serve for guidance:—Children of 12 or 13 should receive more advanced agricultural instruction than is comprised in the programme for the Middle Course. Teachers should therefore add to the foregoing, for

their older pupils, as much as they can of the following programme. It will present no great difficulties, provided the pupils have been well grounded in fundamental scientific ideas by means of simple experiments carried out in the class-room, and provided they have been trained to observe from Nature.

*Higher Course.*

(11 to 13 years of age.)

The ideas of the physical and natural sciences given in this course are to be a recapitulation and extension of the Middle Course. As regards man and animals the extension will, of course, be towards knowledge relating to hygiene; and as regards plants, towards some ideas of vegetable physiology and some elements of chemistry. The following is an indication of the subject matter of the lessons for each half-year, the ideas of natural science and of physical science being given in the winter months, and concurrently, so as to afford mutual support and explanation.

First Half-Year.

I. *Animals.*—The principal distinctions by which animals are classified should be shown by examples taken as far as possible from the animals known in the country, preference being given to those which are either useful or the reverse. The domestic animals will naturally have the first place, and the teachers should seek to impress upon the children's minds the principles upon which are based the rules for the health and feeding of stock.

The study of the principal organs may be facilitated by the direct observation of a dead animal. Some teachers are able to preserve the digestive organs of small animals, or even a skeleton, and thereby to enrich the school museum.

II. *Man.*—The instruction in anatomy given to children should be such as to convince them of the necessity of observing the rules of hygiene. It should deal with digestion, circulation, respiration, and with the relation of the senses to the nervous system. Exaggeration is to be avoided, as also all empiric prescriptions, which should not be confounded with hygiene, far less with the science of medicine.

III. *Elementary Ideas of Physical Science.*—These are to be impressed upon the children's minds by means of simple and inexpensive experiments. This part of the programme is to be carried out chiefly in towns and industrial centres. In the country, such instruction may be limited to demonstrations, which bring out clearly the principal effects of heat, of light, of electricity, and of gravitation. The all-important matter here is to *stimulate the children's curiosity*, and to select the subjects of experiment and illustration from those phenomena which are most easy to produce or to observe.

IV. *Elementary Ideas of Chemistry.*—The experiments that can be made with extremely limited apparatus are very numerous. In selecting experiments those should be chosen which have a direct bearing on agriculture, the substances which nourish plants being considered as the most important. From wood ashes, potash can be extracted; a calcined bone can be changed into soluble phosphate by being treated with dilute hydrochloric acid; it can then be re-converted into soluble phosphate either by neutralising the acid used, by a base, or simply with carbonate of soda. Lime will detect the presence of ammonia in the compounds of ammonia, which are used as manures. The pupils will learn to distinguish the principal artificial manures of commerce, the nitrates from the compounds of ammonia and potash, the superphosphates from slag, &c. The really important thing is that *the scientific terms, which have become part of the current language of agriculture, should convey a clear and definite meaning to the children who are about to leave the rural school.*

Knowledge of the principal manures will be much facilitated by the use made of them in the summer half-year, in the various experimental cultivations.

V. *Minerals.*—Ideas regarding the soil, rocks, and kinds of land should be given partly by means of object lessons, the objects being taken from the school museum, and in connection with some of the chemical experiments, and partly by means of school-walks, the latter being the most important part of the instruction.

VI. *Agriculture and Horticulture.*—The actual school-room lessons should be begun before the spring time. They should bear upon matters essentially connected with local cultivation. Each lesson should deal as far as possible with the things which the children have already seen and examined. The teacher must therefore begin with the subjects that have been entered upon in the Middle Course, and which have been explained during reading lessons, walks, &c.

He should then continue throughout the summer months, co-ordinating the lessons with practical exercises, school-walks, &c. The subject-matter of the lesson on agriculture or horticulture, properly so called, should be identical with the object of the last walk, or of the next one, and with that of the practical exercise assigned for the same period.

#### Second Half-Year.

I. *Experimental Cultivation.*—Arrangements for this purpose should be planned and carried out in such a manner as to bring out clearly the following fundamental truths:—

(1.) Air should penetrate easily into the soil, because roots cannot dispense with oxygen; they breathe as leaves do, they should always find suitable nourishment, that is to say—manure should be thoroughly mixed with the soil wherever roots develop.

(2.) In all arable soil, four substances, *nitrogen, phosphoric acid, potash* and *lime* are sufficient to provide for the entire nourishment and full development of cultivated plants.

(3.) The cultivator need not try to furnish the soil with any substances other than those indicated above: these will prevent arable land from becoming exhausted, even if they are put into it in a purely mineral form; nevertheless, in a purely mineral form they may injuriously modify the physical properties of the soil. Organic matter, far from being useless, keeps land in a state favourable to the aeration and development of roots; moreover it operates advantageously on the nutritive properties which the soil contains. Accordingly in order to supply a soil most efficaciously with the four substances in due proportion, the first manure to be used is dung; it is to be supplemented by suitable chemical manures.

(4.) A manure is suitable to a soil if it puts into it that which the particular soil lacks for the nourishment of the plants to be grown. Thus the composition of a good manure depends not only upon the kind of cultivation that is required, but also on the nature of the land; it is not possible to make up a manure that will suit all soils even for the same species of plants. Formulas or precepts said to be infallible and universally applicable are no more to be trusted than remedies to cure all diseases.

(5.) To produce fruitful harvests, the soil, after being manured, must contain the four nutritive substances in a proportion that depends upon the species of plant to be grown. Modern agriculturists should know that *excess* of one of the four substances is always *useless* and *costly*, and, moreover, that *it may become injurious*, if any one of the other three is lacking in quantity. In other words, the *excess of one of the substances is as injurious as its insufficiency*, the development of the plant depending upon that element of which the smallest proportion is to be found in the soil.

The first experiments in these demonstrative cultivations, which are very elementary but fundamental, are to be made in pots, or, better still, in wooden boxes, the children themselves helping.

II. *The Experimental Plot.*—It is impossible to attach too much importance to the necessity for prudence in the organisation of experiments which are designed chiefly in order to show agriculturists how to set about obtaining from a given soil a more remunerative yield than that which is got by the ordinary methods.

Knowledge of the soil, therefore, is necessary before deciding upon the fertilising substances to be employed in experimental plots. Accordingly, teachers in carrying out these operations, would do wisely to follow the advice of a special professor, or of a practical expert. They should carefully avoid using excessive quantities of manure, and should take the ordinary custom of the district as the standard of comparison. Thus even the simplest

of experimental plots should always include the three following divisions :—

- (1.) Without manure.
- (2.) Only farmyard manure in the quantity usually applied in the district.
- (3.) The same quantity of farmyard manure, with the addition of artificial manures in a proportion determined by the nature of the soil, and that of the plant under cultivation.

In other plots, for the sake of supplementary information, the nature of the manures applied to the third section might be varied by leaving out one or more of the constituent elements.

It is as an assistant in the work of the Departmental profession of agriculture that the teacher works at the experimental plot; but it is in his own garden that he should carry out the most convincing experiments, by devoting himself to the propagation of the best kinds of vegetables and fruit.

The pupils should participate in the operations to an extent regulated by their age and their manual capabilities, as well as by their scientific knowledge. No hard and fast rule can be laid down. Sometimes most of the pupils will merely look on at the pruning, grafting, &c., of a fruit tree; sometimes the older pupils will themselves use the pruning knife. *The work must be rational, requiring the exercise of the intellectual faculties as well as the labour of the hands.*

III. *School-walks.*—These should be both preparatory and complementary to the class-room lessons on minerals, on rocks, on the principal kinds of soil in the neighbourhood, on useful or injurious insects and plants, on the essential operations of cultivation and the manipulation of agricultural implements, on the distribution of manures, on sowing, on crops, &c.

The important thing in observing or investigating agricultural operations is to bring out the application of the scientific ideas that have been acquired, or are about to be acquired, by means of the ordinary lessons. For instance, it is not enough to show how ploughing makes the land lighter; it should be carefully explained that the breaking up of the soil assists the development of the roots, enables the manures to reach them, and that the aeration that it causes ensures to the roots a sufficient supply of the oxygen, which they need. The same course should be followed in explaining most of the other agricultural operations.

No doubt the child, on leaving the elementary school, even after completing the normal period of school life, and having attended regularly, will have acquired no more than what, from the point of view of the science of agriculture, are merely elementary ideas; but if the study of it has been made attractive and interesting to him, he will continue it as far as he finds means to do so.

The introduction into popular libraries of well-chosen works on agriculture, and of publications specially suited to the cultivation of the districts, constitutes one of those means, but that will not be enough. It is necessary that the youth should not only



retain, but should complete and extend the knowledge he has gained as a child; and this he will do with a facility increasing with his years, if the intervals in his subsequent education are not unduly long. Too much, therefore, cannot be done to support and encourage the zeal of those teachers who re-open schools for their former pupils on some of the long winter evenings. Familiar chats, readings, well-selected practical exercises, an occasional meeting with experiments done or planned—all this serves to stimulate among young people an intellectual activity of real service to progress.

As with all other instruction, so with that in agriculture, the work of schools must remain incomplete unless provision be made for its continuation and development.

It cannot be said that the circular was well received by the majority of teachers. Some of them welcomed the suggestions with enthusiasm, but the greater part remained cold and suspicious. Not a few of the inspectors even misapprehended the whole purpose of the agricultural instruction. One of them, a most enlightened and advanced educationist, wrote:—"Je veux parler du rajeunissement de l'enseignement agricole. C'est la grande préoccupation du moment. Elle nous a envahis déjà bien des fois, mais elle renaît plus vivace. Aujourd'hui plus que jamais à l'école élémentaire, nous ferons des agriculteurs. Si seulement ils savaient tous lire!" The teachers complained that their time-tables were already crowded, and asked if they were to abandon morals, or the French language, or arithmetic. The school-walks would disorganise the classes, and they were afraid of failing with the experiments. The general attitude was one of which we have had experience. Under these circumstances progress was only slow, and M. René Le Blanc admitted that "l'enseignement agricole, dans le plus grand nombre des écoles élémentaires, où il existe, n'a été jusqu'ici qu'un enseignement de mots: il est temps qu'il devienne un enseignement de faits et de faits scientifiques." (1)

The Departmental Councils were again requested to revise their programmes by a Ministerial circular of May 12, 1898, and were warned against exaggeration. They were advised to seek the assistance of members of the teaching profession, and of others with practical knowledge of the subject.

What, then, is the present position?

Before visiting the rural districts I had the advantage of a long interview with M. Grosjean, Inspector-General of Agricultural Education. In his opinion the schemes are too ambitious as a rule, and the instruction too theoretical. Any attempt to teach agriculture, as such, in an elementary school is doomed to failure, but horticulture to some extent may be taught. The aim of the instruction should be educational rather than technical. The less the children use text-books the better, a view now generally held, and forcibly expressed by M. Léon Vassilière, successor to M. Tisserand, as Director of Agriculture: "c'est au maître qu'un bon livre d'agriculture est indispensable et non à l'enfant, auquel il est plus nuisible qu'utile." At the same time M. Grosjean

<sup>1</sup> L'enseignement Agricole. Ed. II. p. 30.

considered that excellent work is being done in many of the schools—some of which I had the opportunity of seeing—and he was convinced that the value of such instruction would be more and more appreciated in the rural districts. It was gratifying to find that he cordially approved of the views put forward upon the subject by the Agricultural Education Committee. From the Marquis de Vogué, President of the *Société des Agriculteurs de France*, from the Comte de Luçay, and other leading agriculturists, I learned that of agricultural education in its proper sense I should find but few traces in the village schools. This turned out to be perfectly correct, and the use of the term "agricultural" in connection with the instruction is to be deprecated. It has led to much misapprehension of what is really intended, and has caused people to attempt what the elementary school can never do. Disappointment has been the inevitable result. A more rational view, however, is now taken of the possibilities of the elementary school, and no one is doing more than the Marquis de Vogué in his own department of Cher to encourage teachers to provide the kind of instruction that is required.

It must be admitted that in the majority of rural schools the experimental and practical work has not yet assumed very large proportions. This is seldom due to any disinclination on the part of the teacher—I met none who were not anxious to do all that lay in their power—but many of them had left the training colleges before the agricultural and horticultural instruction was provided at them, and they are not qualified for these modern requirements. In some of the training colleges the training continues to be too theoretical to be of much service. When the teacher is qualified, the parsimony of the Municipal Council may block the way. A demonstration plot is not a necessity, but certain apparatus, the total cost of which does not amount to more than about twenty francs, is required for the simple experiments in science. Even this small sum is frequently refused. The secularisation, moreover, of the public schools has alienated many of those in the rural districts who are in a position to assist them by gifts of money and otherwise. These, however, are all accidental or local difficulties, and do not affect the value of the system in itself.

It may be well to give a few examples of the methods pursued at schools of different sizes under varying conditions. At the little village of Arnières (Cher) I found a mixed school of 98 pupils with a middle-aged teacher and one assistant. The teacher was evidently a good practical gardener, but with no particular scientific knowledge. His garden was well kept, and the boys work in it from time to time, receiving some instruction in budding and grafting, and also in bee-keeping. No attempt was made to carry out any of M. Le Blanc's experiments, the teacher giving the somewhat odd reason that he was afraid of an accident, in which case he might have to compensate the parents. Judging from the specimens of the boys' essays which I read, the in-

struction seemed to be based upon sound principles, and the tone of the school was excellent. There was a very flourishing association for the protection of birds, &c., and all satisfactory pupils on leaving join the *Société des Anciens Élèves*.

At Bois-Leroy (Eure) there is a small boys' school of 35 pupils under one teacher. There is no upper division, as it is forbidden to have one unless there are at least five boys who have obtained the *certificat d'études primaires*, and, as already explained, few children remain at school in the rural districts after getting the certificate. The lesson in agriculture only lasts from 4 to 4.30 p.m. on Fridays, but a good deal of practical work is done in the teacher's garden. A portion of it is reserved for the children where they grow various vegetables. Every year the elder ones make several grafts and have lessons in budding. Country walks are frequent to observe the agricultural operations of the season, and each child writes afterwards an account of what he has seen and been told. The result of all this is that hardly any child is ever absent, except through illness, and the school is immensely popular with the parents. During the last two years it has won four silver and three bronze medals. M. Le Blanc's experiments in pot-culture are said to have been of great assistance in stimulating the children to take an intelligent interest in the work. As is usual, the practical instruction is given after school hours, or on the holidays. The teachers do not seem to feel this any hardship, and say it is the pleasantest and most profitable time which they spend with their pupils. There is never any difficulty in getting the boys to be present; in fact, they complain bitterly if anything keeps them away.

One of the best schools which came under my notice was that at Olivet, about four miles from Orléans, to which M. Ferrand courteously accompanied me. The school staff consists of M. Lasseray, the Director, and two assistant masters. There are 140 scholars on the register, and here again the attendance is extremely regular. Frequently a whole week passes without there being any absence. There is no upper division, but some few boys remain for a year after getting the certificate. Theoretical instruction in agriculture is given twice a week to all the pupils, followed, in the case of the 40 boys in the first-class, by practical work in the school garden after school or on Thursday morning. This work consists in planting, pruning, and grafting. All the trees and vines grafted by the boys are their own property; they either take them to plant in their parents' gardens or give them to friends. Each boy of the first class makes a collection of the principal plants of the district, which are studied from various points of view. The school has a collection of some 700 varieties. In the museum there are 150 varieties of the chief insects of the country. These are not classified scientifically, but according to their usefulness, or the injury they do to vines, cereals, vegetables, fruit trees, forest trees, forage plants, &c. In March, April, May, June, July, and August visits are paid to horticultural establishments, farms, or to the departmental vine

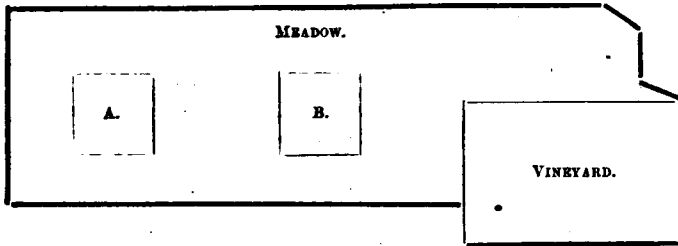
nursery. These excursions are made the occasion for collecting plants and insects, or for a lesson in land surveying. Such a teacher as M. Lasseray is no doubt exceptional, and he has won innumerable prizes for his agricultural instruction, including a silver medal and £12 from the Ministry of Public Instruction, a collection of books, and the order of "*Chevalier de mérite agricole*" from the Ministry of Agriculture, and a silver-gilt medal, together with £2 from the *Société des Agriculteurs de France*. He admits that the practical instruction in the majority of rural schools leaves much to be desired, but he is convinced that it can be made of the greatest value, not merely in initiating lads into their future calling and teaching them to understand and love the country, but also in inspiring those who will not cultivate the soil with a love for gardens, trees, and flowers, which will afford them a pleasanter and healthier attraction than the public-house. In his opinion, the training colleges, although they give admirable theoretical instruction, are still too weak on the practical side. The time of the students is too much occupied with other studies, and the practical work necessarily suffers.

Instruction of quite a different type is provided at Massay (Cher). This village is one of those which has suffered most severely from the phylloxera, a vineyard covering some 500 acres being entirely destroyed a few years ago. The school, with 122 pupils, has upper, middle, and elementary divisions. M. Aupetit, the head teacher, takes the upper division, in which there are usually about a dozen boys, and the second year of the middle division. Owing to the poverty of the district, the attendance falls off from early in May until the end of October, for children must earn what they can during the harvests. That the school itself is not unpopular is shown by the fact of its having an upper division. Attached to it is more land than usual. On one side there is a small field about two-fifths of an acre in area; on the other side the school garden of about 20 perches, a meadow of about 48, and a vineyard of about 28. This year the field is divided into four equal portions, and cultivated as follows:—

POTATOES.		SPRING BARLEY.	SPRING BARLEY.	POTATOES
Without manure.	Stable manure.	Without manure.	Superphosphate.	Fully manured.

This affords ample opportunity for demonstrations on the different phases of cultivation and the growth of plants, consequently M. Le Blanc's experiments are felt to be unnecessary, except in a little pot culture, for use in the science lessons on germination, leaves and flowers.

The other part of the land is divided as follows:—



A and B are kitchen gardens. This year A had a good dressing of farmyard manure, and B, which was similarly treated in 1899, has a dressing of chemical manure (superphosphate, nitrate of soda, and chloride of potash). The vineyard is planted half with vines on their own roots, and half with grafts. Last year it had a plentiful supply of stable manure, and this year a chemical manure composed of 50 per cent. nitrate of soda, 25 per cent. superphosphate, 12½ per cent. chloride of potash, and 12½ per cent. sulphate of ammonia. The children thus see theory verified by practice, and the elementary ideas which they acquire in this way should lay a solid foundation for future knowledge. These experiments have been of assistance in re-establishing the vine, and in showing that the American variety is not unsuited to the soil. Although M. Aupetit is enthusiastic about agriculture and horticulture, he very truly and modestly says that "if we humble primary teachers, exaggerate our rôle as agricultural instructors, we shall make a great mistake. We cannot make agricultural experts of children from ten to twelve years of age. We can only try to inspire them with the wish to know more, stimulate their curiosity, and impress upon them the truth that routine kills progress, while science assures it."

The International Congress of 1889 unanimously rejected the idea of technical agricultural instruction at the elementary school. Demonstration or experimental plots in their proper sense are not needed. The school garden is usually large enough to fulfil every purpose, and the teacher, who knows how to make his influence felt, rarely fails to get a little extra land where his instruction is seen to be a success.

#### *Cours Complémentaires.*

Higher standards, the course in which lasts for a year, and of which the director must possess the *brevet supérieur*, are rarely to be found in the rural districts. There are a few at small country towns. Loiret, for instance, has three, at Beaugency, Chateauneuf, and Meung, in which special attention is paid to agriculture. The programme is the same as that for the *écoles primaires supérieures*.

*First year.* General agriculture—soils, manures, etc. General cultivation—vine-culture. Forestry and bee-keeping; useful and noxious insects.

*Second year* : Animal life—poultry-keeping, etc. Book-keeping. Practical botany.

At Meung the higher standard has ten pupils, and the upper division of the elementary school fourteen; these two classes are held in the same room, and have certain lessons in common, particularly in agriculture. Instruction in this subject is given for an hour and a half twice a week by a special professor of agriculture from Orléans. The ordinary school staff consists of M. Bergeron, the headmaster, and three assistants. Annexed to the school is an experimental plot of 5,400 square mètres, of which the agricultural professor has charge.

When visiting Nogent-le-Rotrou (Eure-et-Loir) I had a very striking instance of the influence which a competent primary teacher may exercise upon the whole agriculture of his neighbourhood. M. Nalot is the director of the elementary school which has a higher standard. As I was talking to him in the class-room, and asking the children various questions, a farmer appeared and begged him at the earliest moment to go and advise him about some of his crops. This M. Nalot informed me was a frequent occurrence, and, as we were walking in the afternoon to one of his experimental plots about 2½ miles off, I could tell by the manner in which the farmers and labourers addressed him that he was a recognised authority and extremely popular. So impressed was I with the character of his work, that I wrote subsequently asking for a detailed account of his methods. The following extracts are taken from the very long letter, which he kindly wrote me upon the subject:—  
 “There are 228 scholars on the register, 12 of whom are in the higher standard, all of course provided with the *certificat d'études primaires*, and having spent at least a year in the upper division of the elementary school. Theoretical instruction in agriculture is given to all pupils from my own book”—(a copy of which M. Nalot courteously gave me, and which is well planned)—“and practical instruction to the first division of the middle course, the upper division, and especially to the higher standard. It includes pruning, layering, and grafting vines as well as all other trees capable of being grafted. This is done in the school garden, where the pupils also help in the cultivation of all the vegetables grown. Just now my boys of the higher standard and I have potted 80 varieties of chrysanthemums, for which we have composed an excellent manure in the following proportions:—24 grammes of nitrate of soda, 36 of chloride of potassium, and 61 of superphosphate. The quantity to be applied is from 80 to 100 grammes the square mètre. But as all the working people cannot procure this chemical manure, I have made another which we use as well as the first. Everybody can get it. It is made thus: put about a pint and a half of soot into a small bag, and some fresh cow dung into another bag of the same size, and place them both in a tub containing about 4½ gallons of water. Use this twice a day for watering the chrysanthemums, and they grow splendidly. All the boys take this recipe home and are proud of it. Those

in the higher standard, and the best workers of the upper division, accompany me every Friday to one of my experimental plots. This is a résumé of the work which they do under my direction: first survey the field and mark it out into six equal portions, as follows:—

Total area about 48 perches.

Standard plot without manure.	Completely manured, Nitrate of soda, Super-phosphate, Chloride of potassium.	No Nitrate.	No Super-phosphate.	No Chloride of potassium.	Farmyard manure.
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Then prepare the land and keep it clean. For instance, in the experimental plot which you visited, you remarked that there was a lot of charlock. The following Friday we prepared a solution of about 6½ lbs. of sulphate of copper to about 30 gallons of water and did some spraying. Two days after, on the Sunday, the cultivator of the plot came to tell me that there was not a trace of the charlock to be seen and that the oats had not suffered any injury. The lads were very curious and begged me to take them to see the results with their own eyes. A successful operation like that must have a good effect upon both children and cultivators in encouraging them to repeat it whenever the need arises. In the same field we had some experiments in barley growing with different manures. The results are calculated by the pupils as a lesson, and are then copied into their note-books. They will be published later in the Bulletin of the *Syndicat Agricole* of the department. In our walks to the experimental plots, the boys always make notes once a month of the state of the vegetation, and thus we form a complete diagram of its variations each year. Advantage too is taken of the walks for lessons, which are previously prepared by the master, on Botany or Insectology. This year we have experimental plots for oats at Maison-Neuve, which you saw, and for wheat at Bénissier: a field of oats at Souane, to test the effects of nitrate of soda, for the competition organized by the *Comice Agricole*. There is also another field of half-an-acre for a competition in barley growing. Besides these fields, which have been entrusted to me by friends amongst the farmers, other farmers, on my initiative, who have followed my instructions and witnessed the results, have started experimental plots on their properties, which enables them to get a practical analysis of their soils. I am glad to say their number increases every year. There are now seven altogether. I don't include horticulturists and amateur gardeners. There are so many of them who come to me, that just now, even before breakfast, I had to put my pen down and go to sulphate the vines of two neighbours who are interested in agricultural matters. As to the part which the teacher can play in agricultural education, and the effect upon the neighbourhood of what is taught at the primary school—in

my opinion, and I am quite sure of it—the primary teacher ought to be the chief person to popularise agricultural education in the rural districts. On all sides there is prejudice and routine to overcome. If the schoolmaster is to have the authority and prestige, which he ought to have, amongst all the cultivators, the amateurs, and the workmen with their tiny scraps of garden, he must concern himself with their common labours. He must not be ignorant of the needs and life of the people. It must not be possible to say of him, as it is of the Parisian or the Londoner, 'he eats bread, but he doesn't know how one gets it!' If the French, or English, or any other teacher, who is brought into such close relations with the majority of people, can give advice upon the various methods of cultivation, he will soon come to be consulted by everyone on other matters. Thus he may inspire a love for his country, which people will be loth to leave for the town, which promises so much but does not keep its promises. . . . In every school the master ought to have a few experiments in pot culture every year, and the pupils should take notes every month of the growth, &c., comparing the results with the treatment which each plant has received. If some special prizes are offered by the authorities or by some agricultural society, as an encouragement, there is no doubt of the popularity of the instruction, and the commune, which is willing to promote this kind of education, will afterwards be certain to reap the benefit of the expense which it has incurred. In such a matter as this you are sure to succeed, for you are far more practical in England than we are. As to the training colleges, the agricultural instruction given at present in the majority of them does not satisfy the requirements. To-day all the training colleges have, as agricultural professors, learned experts, and very distinguished men, like the one for this department, who was my master and in whom I have absolute confidence. But most of these professors, under the impression that they are addressing young people who have been studying science for a considerable time, think that they ought to give them a higher course of instruction corresponding to that which follows on the three divisions of the primary school. As theory this would be perfect, but unfortunately the practical work is not co-ordinated with it. In spite of the knowledge of the scientific laws, upon which all cultivation depends, there is a lack of practical experiments. An example will make you understand better how in my opinion this instruction ought to enter into the programme for future teachers. Up to the present time I have found the students who come here as assistants from the training colleges altogether ignorant of the principal elements of chemical manures. If they know them at all, they know nothing of their composition, or practical value in agriculture. My proposal is this. Take a training college with 15 students in each of the three years of the full course. The garden should be, and generally is large enough to be divided into 15 plots of 20 perches each. The plots should be assigned to groups of three students, and each group should cultivate its plot under



the direction of the professor of agriculture. But as there would not be work enough for all the students, some of them should be told off to destroy weeds, like charlock, with sulphata of iron or sulphate of copper, and compare the results. Others should be charged with the duty of destroying cryptogamic diseases which do so much harm every year to our vines and apple trees. If the college garden is too small, one could easily find cultivators in the country near, who would be only too glad to allow these experiments to be made on their land. In this way the young teachers when they go to a village school will be already familiar with the most important agricultural operations, and be able even to assist the cultivators. But let them beware of offering advice in the first instance! Little by little, if they do not pose as experts or professors but act with tact, their influence will grow; they will be beloved by their pupils; the cultivators of their own accord will seek their assistance and they may do much to improve the agriculture about them."

#### *Rewards to Teachers and Pupils.*

By a decree of January 30, 1891, the whole country is divided into four districts, in each of which in turn the competitions for the prizes offered by the Ministries of Public Instruction and Agriculture to the masters and mistresses of primary schools for instruction in agriculture and horticulture are held. The prizes are as follows:—

From the Ministry of Public Instruction:—

First prize—Medal and £12.

Other prizes—Medals and sums varying from £4 to £8.

From the Ministry of Agriculture:—

(To teachers recommended by the Ministry of Public Instruction and the examining body)—Silver gilt, silver and bronze medals.

No teacher can receive a medal and money prize from the Ministry of Public Instruction, who has not already received a medal from the Ministry of Agriculture. The first prize can only be won by the same teacher twice. The masters and mistresses in all primary and higher primary schools, whether directors or assistants, are eligible to compete. This year the competition is being held in the southern district; next year the district will be that in which the departments of Cher, Eure, and Seine Inférieure are situated. According to the Ministerial Circular of January 18, 1900, all intending candidates for 1901 must send in their names before August 1, 1900. As soon as the names have been handed in, the Departmental Professors of Agriculture visit the schools to inspect the gardens and demonstration plots. The number of prizes awarded depends solely upon merit, and is not proportionate to the number of candidates. All particulars have to be sent to the Ministry of Public Instruction by September 1, 1901.

Subjoined is a copy of a form of application as filled in by the teacher at the village school of Vigean (Cantal) for the competition of 1896, together with a plan of his garden and demonstration plot:—

Ministry of  
Public  
Instruction  
and  
Fine Arts.

Primary  
Instruction.

FRENCH REPUBLIC.

SPECIAL PRIZES FOR THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION  
IN AGRICULTURE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

*Competition for 1896. Department of Cantal.*

Name of teacher - -	Etienne Manoux.
Name of commune - -	Le Vigéan, a village of 1,197 inhabitants.
Age of teacher and length of service.	51 years. 33 years.
Since when has theoretical and practical instruction in agriculture been given.	Theoretical instruction since 1866 ; practical since 1878.
Rewards obtained by the teacher for :	
(a.) General instruction.	Honourable mention (1874), bronze medal (1881) silver medal (1885), officer of the Academy (1889), officer of Public Instruction (1895).
(b.) Agricultural instruction.	One silver gilt medal, four silver medals, one bronze medal, various prizes of books and money.
(c.) The competition organised by the Society for the Protection of Animals.	Two silver gilt medals, two silver medals, one bronze medal, prize of £4.
(d.) Personal services	Thirty-five rewards.
Number of pupils :	
(a.) In the school - -	Upper division 6, middle division 13, elementary division 8 ; total 27.
(b.) Rewarded in the competitions.	Nine.
(c.) Rewarded by the Society for the Protection of Animals.	Nine.
(d.) Who have obtained the Certificate of Primary Instruction within the last six years.	One in 1890, four in 1895.
(e.) With special mention of agriculture.	Four in 1895.
Time devoted each week to :	
(a.) Theoretical instruction.	Three hours a week.
(b.) Practical instruction.	Five hours a week out of school time.

Summary of the Instruction for each month:—

- I (a.) Elementary notions of the physical and natural sciences as applied to agriculture.  
 (b.) Elementary ideas of agriculture and horticulture.

- I. October: (a.) Formation of the earth. (b.) Properties of the soil.  
 November: (a.) Manure, its composition, use, and management. (b.) Agricultural implements and machines.  
 December: (a.) The effect of water, frost, snow, hail and ice on agriculture. (b.) The housing and care of animals, particularly farm stock.  
 January: (a.) Classification of animals. (b.) Care of sheep, goats and pigs.  
 February: (a.) Solipedes. (b.) Care of horses asses and mules.  
 March: (a.) Atmospheric pressure; the barometer and its uses. (b.) Work of the spring: the best seeds and how to sow them.  
 April: (a.) Germination. Beneficial and noxious insects, how to destroy them. (b.) Natural and artificial pastures. Irrigation. Drainage.  
 May: (a.) Chemical manures and their constituents. Beneficial and harmful birds. (b.) The qualities of different manures and how to apply them.  
 June: (a.) Effect of temperature on crops. The thermometer and how to use it. (b.) The choice and breeding of animals. Milk. Butter. Cheese.  
 July: (a.) The structure of plants. How to classify them. Useful and harmful plants. (b.) The harvesting of crops. Ensilage.  
 August: (a.) Oxygen and hydrogen. (b.) Cleaning the land. Agricultural accounts.

II. Demonstrations, experiments and practical work performed by the pupils or with their assistance.

They have taken part in all the work and experiments in the demonstration plot and in the school garden. Specimens to illustrate the diagrams prepared by the master have been collected. In school they have assisted at simple experiments with gas, acids, lime, chalk, etc. The anatomy of the heart, stomach, and digestive organs have been practically illustrated. Instruction has been given in pruning, grafting, budding, and layering.

III. Walks and excursions.

The following visits have been made. October, to a dairy; November, to a farm; December, to an estate for a lesson on drainage; January, to a silo; February, to a chalk pit; March, study of the different properties in the commune, with plans and charts; April, (1) to see the effect of chemical manures on certain crops; (2) to watch potato planting; May, (1) to a neighbouring property to catch insects; (2) to destroy May-bugs with the "Muscardine rose," from the Pasteur Institute; June, (1) to hunt for the holes of small field animals and test the effect of Dr. Danys' "virus"; (2) to see some buckwheat sown; July, (1) mowing and hay making; (2) harvest work.

<p>IV. What part has the master taken in the formation and working of societies for the protection of animals.</p>	<p>The school has been affiliated to the Paris Society for the protection of animals since February 3rd, 1878. At different schools the master has founded three societies for the protection of birds and the destruction of insects. Such a society was formed in connection with this school in March, 1879.</p>
<p>Character of the agricultural instruction given to adults.</p>	<p>In 1894 three lectures were given on the choice of animals, improved seeds, and the most productive plants. In 1895 there were nine lectures on science in its application to agriculture, and three on methods of cultivation; these lectures were illustrated with a magic lantern. In 1896 there have been three lectures on science and nine on agriculture. In addition, an evening class has been held from the beginning of November till the end of March; agricultural subjects were selected for the instruction in reading, dictation, mathematics, and so on.</p>
<p>Results</p>	<p>A large number of cultivators have asked for improved seeds, which have been procured by the master or through the departmental professor of agriculture. Manure is more carefully kept. Liquid manure has not been wasted. A more general and extended use of chemical manures. Trials have been made of more productive plants. One silo has been constructed and others are being made. Ashes and potassic manures have been used for potatoes. Steps have been taken to prevent the escape of fertilising gases from farmyard manure by covering it. The younger people take more interest in agricultural pursuits. Modern ways in butter and cheese-making and in dairy management have been adopted. Something has been done towards draining the marshes. Liming, which was previously unknown or not practised in the commune, has been introduced. Marling has also been attempted in some instances.</p>

In 1892 the *Société des Agriculteurs de France* passed a resolution pointing out the advantage of such competitions as a stimulus to agricultural instruction, and since then they have been organised by agricultural societies of every degree throughout the country. Prominent among these is the *Comité Central Agricole de la Sologne*. This society neglects nothing which can either directly or indirectly promote agricultural interests. Its secretary, M. Denizet, most courteously supplied me with a large number of reports, from which the variety and extent of the work undertaken is apparent. In his own words, "*vous y verrez que depuis le voyage que faisait en France en 1787 et 1788, votre compatriote le voyageur, Arthur Young, la Sologne dont il a parlé avec une compassion trop justifiée, a subi la transformation la plus extraordinaire et est devenue une contrée suffisamment fertile et très-recherchée pour sa chasse qui y*

*est très belle.*" As examples of the kind of competitions usually arranged the following may be taken. The *Comice Agricole de l'Arrondissement d'Orléans*, aided by grants of £40 from the Government, and of £28 from the Department, in addition to large prizes to agriculturists, farm servants, and workmen, offers medals and books as prizes to all teachers, male and female students at the training colleges, and to pupils in primary schools for agricultural instruction. The examination for the latter is partly written and partly oral. The character of the examinations may be gathered from the subjoined specimen of a paper written by a boy of 11 for a similar competition at Montargis (Loiret) in 1898.

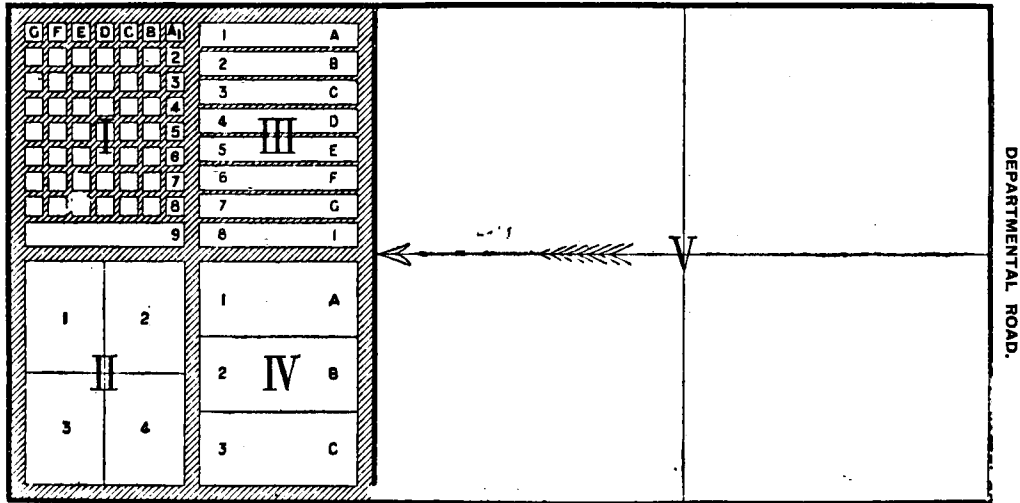
#### *Concours Cantonal : Montargis.*

*Devoir d'agriculture.*—Des prairies. Définition et division. Leur utilité. Plantes qui les composent. Création d'une prairie. Soins à lui donner. Engrais qui leur conviennent. Fenaison et récolte. L'ensilage. Des prairies artificielles. Comment on les crée. Plantes qui les composent et sol qui convienne à chacune d'elles. Soins à donner à ces prairies. Leurs récoltes.

*Développement.*—Une prairie est un terrain sur lequel on a semé les plantes herbacées fourragères. Il y a deux sortes de prairies ; les prairies artificielles et les prairies naturelles. Les prairies ont une grande importance dans la ferme, c'est pourquoi le cultivateur ne doit pas négliger d'en créer de nouvelles s'il n'en a pas assez, car avec du fourrage on a du bétail, avec du bétail du fumier et avec du fumier on a de bonnes et abondantes (*sic*) récoltes ; il y a un proverbe qui dit : "Qui a foin a pain." Les plantes qui composent les prairies artificielles sont : la luzerne que l'on sème au printemps dans un sol profond et de bonne qualité, le sainfoin, ainsi appelé à cause qu'il est très bon et qui signifie foin sain, réussit bien dans les sols calcaires et sableux. Le trèfle se sème dans les terres fraîches et profondes, on cultive trois espèces de trèfles : le trèfle incarnat à fleurs rouges, le trèfle violet qu'on sème dans une céréale de printemps, le trèfle blanc qui se plaît à peu près dans tous les terrains se sème aussi au printemps. La minette se sème en mars, on la fait ordinairement pâturer, elle réussit bien dans les sols calcaires. On cultive aussi pour être consommés en vert ; les grands choux, les grands maïs et souvent l'orge et le seigle. Les prairies naturelles sont formées de plantes de la famille des graminées, tels sont ; le fromental élevé, le pâturin des prés, le dactyle pelotonné, le ray-grass, la féтуque, la fleuve odorante, les trois trèfles. Pour créer une prairie naturelle, on choisit un terrain dans une vallée le plus près possible d'une rivière, car cette sorte de prairie aime l'humidité, on fume avec de bon fumier trois ou quatre fois la dose ordinaire. Ensuite on sème les divers (*sic*) graines. Les prairies artificielles sont sujettes à une maladie ; la cuscute que l'on combat en répandant de la cendre, de la suie. Les prairies naturelles pour donner une récolte de bonne qualité exigent

PLAN OF THE GARDEN AND DEMONSTRATION PLOT.  
 AT THE BOYS' SCHOOL, VIGEAN (CANTAL).

Scale—Half a Centimètre to a Mètre.



DESCRIPTION.

I.

1. Without manure.
2. Complete manure.
3. Strong manure.
4. Complete manure without nitrate.
5. The same without potash.
6. The same without phosphoric acid.
7. The same without lime.
8. Farmyard manure.
9. Farmyard manure.

- A. Forage crop.
- B. Barley.
- C. Oats (Joannette).
- D. Black Californian Oats.
- E. Roots.
- F. Potatoes.
- G. Prickly Comfrey.

II.

CROP: LUZERNE.

1. Farmyard manure.
2. Manure and lime.
3. Manure and chalky marl.
4. Chloride of potash.

III

1. Without manure.
2. Cinders and potassic manure.
3. Farmyard manure.
4. Manure.
5. Horse manure.
6. Horse manure.
7. Fowl dung.
8. Horse manure.

- A. Peas and beans.
- B. Onions.
- C. Short carrots from the Ardenne
- D. Mulhouse onions.
- E. Large spinach from Viroflay.
- F. Long thick carrots.
- G. Early flat turnips.
- I. Long turnips.

IV.

1. Basic slag.
2. Farmyard manure.
3. Manure and lime.

- A. Cabbage.
- B. Beans.
- C. Kohl Rabi.

V.

CROP: IMPROVED OATS.

1. Without manure.
2. Superphosphate.
3. Basic slag.
4. Farmyard manure.

qu'on y répande du terreau ou du fumier décomposé, du purin étendu, un litre de purin pour trois ou quatre litre (*sic*) d'eau, pour détruire les mouese (*sic*), les joncs, les roseaux on met de la cendre de la suie. Par fenaison, j'entende l'époque où l'on fait la récolte du foin et du fourrage et les travaux qu'ils exigent pour les récolter. Quand le foin est fauché, on les retoure (*sic*) avec une fourche en bois ou en fer afin qu'il sèche, quand il est sec on le pousse de chaque côté de manière à former un ou plusieurs gros tas de la longueur du champ, puis en (*sic*) le met en melons (*sic*), petites meules qui contiennent environ de dix à onze bottes, et on le charge dans des voitures pour le rentrer ou pour le mettre en meules si on n'a pas assez de place pour le mettre. Quelquefois on met le fourrage en moyettes ou petites bottes liées à une extrémité ce qui fait un cône, s'il pleut, l'eau glissera sur ce cône sans en mouiller l'intérieur. Dans certains pays, quand il y a de grandes pluies au moment de la fenaison, on rentre le foin ou le fourrage tout vert, on en met tous les jours une couche d'environ quatre vingt centimètres que l'on foule bien. Quand il n'y a plus rien à mettre, on recouvre le tout d'une couche de terres de vingt à vingt cinq centimètres, le tout fermente bien et on le donne l'hiver au (*sic*) bestiaux, ce mode se nomme ensilage.

This paper, which was written by Paul Castallot, aged eleven, of the boys' school at Dammarie-sur-Loing, was marked "assez bon" by the examiner. To enable a school to compete, at least one-tenth of the pupils upon the register must be entered for the examination.

Throughout Loiret competitions for school gardens have been arranged by the *Société d'Horticulture d'Orléans et du Loiret*. The conditions of the competition are that the school garden shall be a special piece of ground, divided into as many plots as there are children from 10 to 13 years of age at the school; the plots are to be cultivated by the pupils under the direction of the teacher; seeds are supplied free to all masters and mistresses who enter their schools for competition; the practical work is to be done out of school hours; either flowers or vegetables may be grown; all the produce is the property of the pupils. One of the most useful competitions was organised by the *Société d'Agriculture de Cher*, of which the Marquis de Vogué is President, in 1895. Various medals and valuable money prizes were given to those teachers who sent in the best detailed account of the agricultural, social, and economic conditions of their respective communes. The Marquis informed me that similar competitions are now held in many parts of the country; and, as he said, besides inducing the teachers to acquire information of the highest service to them as teachers, and in their relations with the parents, they furnish the Government and the agricultural societies with invaluable statistics. In this way he hopes eventually to cover the whole country. The *Syndicats Agricoles*, which somewhat resemble the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, and of which a very interesting account



has recently been published,<sup>1</sup> hold annual examinations and give certificates in agriculture and horticulture to boys and girls at the primary schools. This work, which was specially recommended by the *Société des Agriculteurs de France* in 1893, was first started in Brittany by the *Syndicat Agricole et Horticole* of Ille-et-Vilaine with the assistance of the Christian Brothers at Ploermel. It has now spread all over France. Excellent schemes of general instruction, the object of which is "*faire servir la lecture, l'écriture, l'orthographe, l'arithmétique, voire même la réduction, pour instruire et former le futur agriculteur et développer chez lui des idées en rapport avec la profession de ses parents,*"<sup>2</sup> have been issued from Rennes, the headquarters of the Superior Council of Agricultural Education in Brittany. Last year the *Union des Syndicats Agricoles du Sud-Est* examined 1,636 boys and 219 girls, from 218 free denominational schools and 29 State schools. As a rule the teachers of the State schools are forbidden to allow their children to enter for the examination. This is partly due to a belief that the *Syndicats Agricoles* are political in their objects. There does not appear to be the slightest foundation for this, the work of the syndicates being almost identical with that of the Irish Society, and M. Bourgne, Departmental Professor of Agriculture for Eure, told me that in his opinion the *Syndicats Agricoles* during the past 15 years had done more than any other body of men for the improvement of agricultural education. At the same time it must be admitted that, since agriculture has been made a compulsory subject for rural schools in the examination for the *certificat d'études primaires*, the necessity for another examination and certificate is not so apparent. Any detailed account of the ever-increasing amount of agricultural instruction given in the various denominational schools throughout France, all of which is voluntary and due to private initiative, would be beyond the scope of the present report. It deserves to be carefully studied, and I much regret that I cannot here avail myself of the extensive information upon the subject courteously placed at my disposal by the Frère Paulin, director of the magnificent Agricultural Institution at Beauvais.

Enough has been said to show that the Government and the leading agriculturists of France are fully alive to the importance of agricultural instruction in the rural schools, and realise how valuable it may be made. Progress, however, must be slow. Time and experience are required to determine the best methods of instructing little children. Farmers and labourers, fettered to routine, have still in many parts to be convinced that the village schoolmaster can help in the cultivation of the soil, and science is mistrusted. Parents, too, despise the teaching which does not specially prepare their children to become "*fonctionnaires*" of some kind, and to enter into "*la politique alimentaire,*" as it has been aptly termed. M. Franc, Departmental Professor of Agriculture for Cher, with whom I had a long interview at Bourges, goes so far as to say that this prejudice will never be destroyed, and that agricultural education will never be esteemed as it

<sup>1</sup> Les Syndicats Agricoles et leur œuvre, par Comte de Rocquigny, 1900. Arma Colin et Cie

<sup>2</sup> Rapport de Frère Abel l'Association Bretonne ; edit. ii. p. 8

ought to be in a country like France, whose prosperity depends so largely upon agriculture, until such education is compulsory in every school of every grade. Few things are more important than to eradicate the foolish idea that manual labour is socially inferior to clerical occupations. The habit, too, of depending upon the State, and of looking to it for guidance and direction in all the *minutiæ* of public life—the result of the centralised system of government so well described by Mr. Bodley in his volumes upon France—paralyses local initiative and local enterprise. The communal authorities do not feel that the duty of enabling their schools to meet the needs of rural life is a responsibility that rests on them.

Whether improved agricultural education will effectually check the tendency to desert the rural for the urban districts may be open to question. The migration is mainly due to social and economic causes, or perhaps, as M. Levasseur has put it, “*la force d'attraction des groupes humains est correspondante à leur masse.*” During the last 100 years the rural population in France has sunk from 78·24 per cent. of the whole in 1789 to 60 per cent. in 1896. In an interesting article upon the subject, which has just appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, M. R. Waurin gives a very true summary of the reasons why life in the towns is preferred. “*Il y en a deux sortes : les unes de tous les temps, les autres propres à notre époque.*

*D'abord, la ville fascine le campagnard ; on y prend le tramway, la voiture du peuple. Puis, quelles splendeurs dans les cités modernes ! Qu'est, après cela, la ferme modeste, noircie par l'âge, ornée seulement d'une fosse à purin ?*

*Ensuite, dans les villes, 'Voilà,' dit le paysan, 'on s'amuse.'*

*'Le travail de ville, ajoute-t-il, est bien moins dur que celui des champs.'*

*L'agriculteur madré réfléchit que, quand on a l'œil ouvert, on doit, dans des centres semblables, pouvoir tirer son épingle du jeu*

*Mais ce qui le séduit le plus, c'est la certitude du salaire régulier. Il a assez d'être frustré du fruit de son travail par la grêle, la mauvaise saison, les maladies du bétail.*

*Enfin, il perdra là-bas la gaucherie native qui le gêne : il y grandira socialement.*

*Il y aura de bonnes écoles pour ses enfants qui pourront, un jour, faire honneur à leur père.*

*Quelques-uns, cependant, apeurés devant le bruit de la cité, préfèrent rester attachés au terroir : ceux-là sont l'exception, les sages, que les jeunes gens ne manquent pas de blâmer."*

The compulsory military service also, which takes a man away from country life for three years, disinclines him afterwards to go back to its dull monotony. To remedy this it has been suggested that, following the practice in Algeria and the colonies, one year's military service should be remitted to those who have served for two years with credit, and who will undertake to return to their villages and follow agricultural pursuits for a definite period. But, after all, the discussion of the probable effect of education upon the depopulation of the rural districts

is somewhat academic. Of one thing, however, we may be sure. If the instruction in the village school is such as to direct the mind of the child towards the life about him rather than to that of the town, and to put him in the way of qualifying himself in after life to make the cultivation of the soil a source of profit, he will not be more inclined to seek his fortune elsewhere. Already in those districts in which agricultural instruction has been successfully given for some years, there is a marked revival of interest in all that relates to agriculture, and a greater disposition to look to it as a calling. The Marquis de St. Paul told me of two young men in his own village of Chécy (Loiret) who had remained at home and become excellent farmers, solely because their ambition had been stirred through what they were taught in the village school and the continuation classes. One swallow does not make a summer, but there is no reason why such instances should not be indefinitely multiplied.

#### CONTINUATION CLASSES.

If the instruction in the elementary school is to be of permanent value opportunities for its extension are imperative, and nothing in the recent history of French education is more striking than the growth in the number of the *cours d'adultes*. In Loiret, for instance, out of 343 communes, 305 have one or more continuation classes. The latest statistics are as follows:—

	Number of Classes.	Number of Pupils.	
		Male.	Female.
Seine-Inférieure - - - -	457	7,085	1,437
Eure-et-Loir - - - -	321	3,836	331
Loiret - - - - -	364	6,578	610
Cher - - - - -	231	3,705	1,050

The average attendance at each class in Cher is about twenty, and in Loiret about sixteen. I have not been able to procure the figures for Seine-Inférieure and Eure-et-Loir, nor do I know the exact number of classes in Eure. M. Pérot, however, the Inspecteur d'Académie for that department, who also gave me a circular letter authorising and requesting all primary teachers throughout the department to give their pupils a holiday, if by so doing they could place themselves more entirely at my disposal, procured me specially prepared reports from the primary inspectors of each of the districts into which the department is divided, upon the condition of education generally within

their respective areas. From these it appears that the increase in their evening schools is equally marked, and that they are very well attended.

The classes, which are only open to students above thirteen years of age, and to which students of both sexes are not admitted, are established by the Prefect, after consultation with the Inspector of the Academy, on the application of the Municipal Council. They are subject to the same inspection as all primary schools. They are usually taught by the elementary teachers, but any person, nominated by the Mayor, if approved by the Prefect and the Inspector of the Academy, may conduct the class. A syllabus of the instruction to be given must be submitted to the Inspector when the request for a class is made. The usual subjects are, for males, arithmetic, writing, land surveying, cubic measurements, practical agriculture, forms of lease and other agreements, discussions on matters of general interest; and, for females, French, arithmetic, and domestic economy. In every case the instruction is as practical as possible. The classes are held in the winter, and generally last from three to three and a-half months, with six hours' instruction a week. In many parts of Cher, where the population is extremely scattered, attendance in bad weather is often a matter of considerable difficulty. On condition that the communes pay the cost of lighting and heating the rooms, the State makes a grant towards the payment of the teachers, and these grants are increasing. The salaries are also made up of contributions from the communes, the County Boards or Councils, in a few exceptional cases from the students, and by bequests. The following were the sums contributed towards the expenses of the classes held in Loiret 1898 to 1899: — Lighting and heating 6,381.60 frs. Contributions from the communes towards the payment of teachers 27,463 frs., from students 219 frs., from the department 1,500 frs., from the State 920 frs., bequests 280 frs. Total 36,763.60 frs. Of this sum 30,372 francs were available for salaries, and as there are 364 classes, each teacher would get on the average about 83½ francs, or £3 9s. 7d. This is poor pay, and in several departments the communes contribute a good deal less. Frequently the teachers receive no salary at all, and M. Pérot has urged that the communes, or at any rate the more important of them, should be compelled to raise adequate funds. Teachers are under no obligation to take *cours d'adultes*, but at present they are very enthusiastic about the work, and presumably trust that, as its success increases, their claims will be more fully recognised. The amount of salary is arranged between the communes and the teachers. Since January, 1899, certain honorary distinctions have been conferred by the Ministry of Public Instruction upon those masters and mistresses who have displayed most zeal and achieved most success in continuation classes.

Public lectures (*conférences populaires*) provide a somewhat more advanced form of instruction, and invariably attract large audiences. Last year no less than 2,131 such meetings were

held in Loiret, and 1,491 in Eure-et-Loir. The subjects generally treated are geography, history, and science. Most of the departments are well supplied with magic lanterns, photographic views, and other apparatus. This is also work to which many of the teachers devote themselves with so much energy that the Inspectors are beginning to fear that the ordinary duties of the day school may be neglected. One of them in his last Report remarks:—" *Il y a certainement des maîtres qui peuvent mener toutes choses de front : école, mairie, cours d'adultes ; mais, n'est-il pas permis de s'inquiéter et de se demander si pour beaucoup d'autres l'accessoire ne devient pas le principal. Nous connaissons des instituteurs qui sont réputés comme conférenciers, et qui ont, hélas ! une bien mauvaise classe.*"

### THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

The establishment and maintenance of both a Male and a Female Training College became incumbent upon every department within four years after August, 1879. In certain circumstances two departments might combine for the purpose of establishing a single college. Towards the initial expenses the State issued loans, repayable within 31 years, and pays the salaries of all members of the college staffs. Attached to every college is a practice primary school, and female training colleges should have an infant school (*école maternelle*) as well. The Ministry of Public Instruction, upon the advice of the Rector and the Departmental Council, determines every year how many students are to be admitted. These are selected according to their order of merit after examination. All board and tuition are free. Every candidate for admission must (1) be not less than 16 years of age, and not more than 18, on the first of October in the year when he presents himself; (2) must have obtained the *brevet élémentaire*; (3) must undertake to serve for ten years as a teacher; and (4) must be free from any disease that would incapacitate him from teaching. The regulation as to age may be remitted occasionally. If any student leave the college or is expelled, or if a teacher break his engagement to serve for ten years, he is bound to refund all the expenses incurred on his behalf for food, washing, and books. He may, however, be relieved from this. The course lasts three years, and students are promoted from the first to the second, or from the second to the third year, according to their success in the examination held at the end of each year. At the end of the course every student must present himself to be examined for the *brevet supérieur*. On passing this the students become entitled in the order of their seniority and according to their degrees to the first vacancies in the department. When first appointed to a school the teacher receives a present of books, which he selects for himself. The character of the instruction may be gathered from the subjoined copy of the time-table in use at the training college at Chartres:—

TRAINING COLLEGE FOR MALES AT CHARTRES.

Time-table 1899-1900.

	Years of the courses.	8-9 a.m.	9-10 a.m.	10-11 a.m.	11-12.	12-1.	1-2 p.m.	2-3.	3-4.30.	4.30-5	5-6.	6-7.							
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">RISE AT 5 A.M. PREPARATION 5.30-7. BREAKFAST 7-8.</p>	Monday.	I.	History.	Geometry.	Preparation.	Psychology. 10.30-12. Work with the Professor of Agriculture and the Professor of Science.	Work in the garden.	Music.	Preparation.	}	Writing.	German.	}						
		II.	Arithmetic.	French composition to 10.30.			}	Work in the garden.	}		Agriculture. Dept. Prof.	}		German.	Preparation.				
		III.	History.	Agriculture. Dept. Prof. of Agriculture to 10.30.							Preparation.			Preparation.					
	Tuesday.	I.	Reading.	Arithmetic.	Preparation.	Geography.	}	Geometrical drawing.	Preparation.	}	Gymnastics.	}	Preparation.						
		II.	History.	Chemistry.		Morals.		}			Drawing from models.		}	Music.	}	Music.			
		III.	Natural Science.	French Composition.		Physics.													
	Wednesday.	I.	Grammar.	Chemistry.	Preparation.	Writing.	}	Work in the garden.	Preparation.	}	Reading.	}	Preparation.						
II.		Geometry.	Geography.	Grammar.		}		Manual Instruction.			}		German.	}	German.				
III.		Geography.	Literature.	Pedagogy.															
Thursday.	I.	French Composition. (Dictation.)	Physios.	}	Composition.	}	}	}	}	}	}	}							
	II.	Arithmetic.	Reading.																
	III.	Chemistry.	Arithmetic.																
Friday.	I.	History.	Natural Science.	Preparation.	Manual Instruction.	}	Drawing from models.	Preparation.	}	German.	}	Preparation.							
	II.	Natural Science.	History.		Morals.		}			Geometrical drawing.		}	Gymnastics.	}	German.				
	III.	History.	French Composition.		Geometry.														
Saturday.	I.	Grammar.	Arithmetic.	Preparation.	History.	}	}	}	}	}	}	}							
	II.	Physics.	French Composition.		Geometry.								}	Address and discussion.	}	Psychology.	}	}	}
	III.	Arithmetic.	Physics.		Pedagogy.														
													<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">DINNER AND RECREATION.</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">RECREATION.</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">PREPARATION FROM 7-8. SUPPER AND RECREATION 8-9.</p>						

Rural Education in France.

Before attempting to make agricultural instruction obligatory in the primary schools, the Government realised that steps must be taken to qualify the teachers. The law of June 16, 1879, was therefore passed, which enacts that within six years of its date every department not already possessing a professor of agriculture shall elect one by competitive examination, and that the professors, besides their other duties, are to give instruction in agriculture to all students in the training colleges, to which their residences must be as near as possible. Article 10 of the same Act provides that within three years after the complete organisation of agricultural instruction at the training colleges, such instruction shall be obligatory in all primary schools. Long before 1879 agricultural instruction had been a common feature at some of the colleges. Special attention had been paid to the subject at Orleans since the foundation of its Training College in 1829. Now the instruction is given to all students alike in all training colleges. There has never been any thought of differentiating between the training of the urban and that of the rural teacher. Quite apart from its professional value to the teacher, instruction of the kind provided is useful to everybody, and any distinction between the qualifications of the urban and those of the rural teacher is open to many objections. It need hardly be said, therefore, that the idea of a special college for the training of rural teachers has never been suggested. Instruction in the physical and natural sciences is given by the Professor of Science. As might have been expected, some difficulty was experienced in co-ordinating his lessons with those of the Professor of Agriculture. To remedy this want of harmony a circular was issued on April 25, 1898, emphasising the necessity of co-ordination and amending the previous regulations under which the subjects were taught. Second and third year students, who alone come under the Professor of Agriculture, may no longer be taught in the same class. Each year is to have its separate course of twenty-one lessons of an hour and a half during the winter. The Professor of Agriculture is also responsible for the practical work done in the College gardens. His work is subject to inspection by the Inspectors General of Agriculture, and every scheme of instruction must be submitted for approval to a joint committee of members of the Ministries of Agriculture and Public Instruction.

The following is the revised syllabus at Orleans:—Second year:  
 (i.) Agriculture. *Agrologie*. Etude du sol et du sous-sol. Modifications des propriétés physiques des sols. Amendements. Engrais. *Hydrologie*: Irrigation, drainage. *Préparation du Sol*: Labours, hersages, roulages, quasi-labours. Céréales: Froment, épeautre, seigle, méteil. Orge, avoine, maïs, sorgho, millet, sarrasin. Ensemenements. Entretien. Récoltes à la main et avec les moissonneuses. Transport des récoltes. Conservation. Battage. Tararage. Criblage. Triage. Conservation des grains (greniers, silos). Plantes légumineuses alimentaires. Plantes fourragères artificielles. Prairies naturelles et temporaires. Racines fourragères et comestibles. Plantes industrielles: Oléagineuses, tinctoriales, textiles, saccharifères,

économiques. Viticulture. Pommier, poirier et cormier à cidre. Sylviculture. Notions sur les forêts. Assolements. Maladies des végétaux cultivés. (ii.) Horticulture. Notions générales de culture. Cultures arborescentes: Vigne, pêcher, prunier cerisier, abricotier, amandier, coignassier, groseillier, néflier noisetier, plantes d'ornement. Jardin potager. Installation Principales cultures potagères.

Third year. *Zootecnie, économie rurale, législation rurale, statistique.* Revision et complément du cours de l'année précédente. Alimentation rationnelle des bestiaux. Production du lait. Production de la viande, de la force, du fumier. Habitat. Lois de l'hérédité. *Equidés*: Cheval, âne, mulet. *Bovidés*: Bœuf, zébus, et buffle. *Ovidés*: ariétins et caprins. *Suidés*: porceins, chien, lapin, volailles. Maladies contagieuses des bestiaux. Pisciculture. Apiculture. Animaux nuisibles à l'agriculture. Hygiène des animaux. *Notions d'économie rurale Institutions auxiliaires de l'agriculture. Législation rurale (Lois principales). Statistique de la France et du Loiret.* Résumé du cours.

This practically covers every aspect of rural life, and it is not easy to understand how the students can digest it all in 40 lessons of an hour and a half each spread over two winters.

The applications of the instruction for third year students in 1899-1900 were as follows:—

1. Visit to the Departmental vine nursery at Olivet.
2. Visit to a tree nursery.
3. Lesson in the use of gardening tools.
4. Lesson on clearing trees of dead wood, &c.
5. Analysis of a piece of chalk in the laboratory.
6. Physico-chemical analysis of a soil.
7. Microscopic study of food.
8. Microscopic study of the diseases of plants.
9. Pruning.
10. Grafting, layering, cuttings.
- 11, 12 and 13. Vine grafting.
14. Visit to an agricultural factory.
15. Visit to an agricultural builder.
16. Visit to a farm.
17. Examination conducted by the *Comice Agricole*.

In addition to this second year students have three lessons in grafting vines. This scheme is eminently practical and well planned.

The work in the garden is thus arranged:—

First year students assist the gardener in his various duties.

Second year students perform some agricultural experiments and cultivate some plants in pots under the direction of the Professor of Chemistry, and have some lessons in kitchen gardening and the cultivation of fruit trees from the gardener.

Third year students each have a small portion of ground to cultivate.

I visited the training colleges at Bourges, Orleans, Chartres and Evreux. As it happened to be the vacation when I was at



Bourges, any criticism of the garden would be unfair. It is very small, and the general appearance of the college was not pleasing. Repairs are sadly needed, a matter to which M. Pouillot has frequently drawn the attention of the departmental authority.

At Orleans the students were just coming out for their morning recreation when I entered the garden. The eagerness with which the elder ones went off to water their plots and to compare notes upon their crops sufficiently testified to the popularity of the instruction and to the healthy rivalry which it promotes. These plots are about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  yards long by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  yards wide, and each had rows of potatoes, strawberries, scorzonera, and flowers. This affords a fair example of varied cultivation upon a small scale, and experiments are made with chemical manures. The whole garden, which is thoroughly well kept by M. Soleil, the gardener, comprises rather more than an acre and a half. Part of it is reserved as a nursery for fruit trees, some of which are distributed every year to the village schools throughout the department. Each student in his first year makes a graft, which he cultivates until the end of his course, and then removes to his new school garden. In addition to the applications of the theoretical instruction mentioned above M. Duplessis, the Professor of Agriculture, takes the students for botanical walks almost every Thursday, and there is a well-arranged "*jardin botanique*" at the college.

Chartres is provided with a garden of nearly five acres in extent. This affords ample opportunity for instruction in every form of horticulture, but the amount of land is more than can be properly managed by a single gardener. Portions of the garden are admirably cultivated, and all that is possible under existing circumstances is done. This year some interesting and valuable experiments in potato growing with various manures are being made. Each third year a student has a plot of his own, about 22 yards by a yard and a half. The general course of instruction is similar to that at Orleans, and, as will have been seen from M. Nalot's letter, M. Garola, the Professor of Agriculture, makes it of great practical value. M. Dauzat, the Inspector of the Academy, also spoke to me in the highest terms of the training which the students received for their rural duties.

At Evreux I was fortunate enough to find M. Bourgne engaged with the students. Some were planting potatoes, others sowing seeds under his direction: all appeared to enjoy it and the lesson was full of sound advice. M. Bourgne told me of the great assistance which he had received in his capacity as Professor of Agriculture from at least fifteen teachers in the country districts. One of the duties of the Professors is to encourage and assist the farmers to form experimental plots. In this work the teachers had helped him very materially by surveying and marking out the land, weighing and mixing the manures for the different plots, and calculating their respective crops. As at Nogent-le-Rotrou they take their pupils to see what is being done. M. Bourgne is convinced that the rural teacher may

thus play a considerable part in the diffusion of scientific knowledge and the consequent improvement of the agriculture of the country. I also visited the French Training College at Evreux, where the Directress is an enthusiastic horticulturist. The students go for botanical walks, and have flowers of their own in the college garden to cultivate. On the whole the instruction seems to me sufficient to satisfy the requirements of an elementary teacher. It will not make him an agricultural expert, but such a man would be out of place in a village school, and would do more harm than good. Children have to learn much besides the principles of agriculture and horticulture, and to train a teacher as though the latter were the most important of his professional duties would be fatal. The sense of proportion often suffers from enthusiasm for reform. In principle the system of training now pursued is sound: in practice it must vary in its results according to the skill of the different professors and the resources of each particular college. It is inevitable that the theoretical instruction should be more than the practical, having regard to the demands made upon the time of the students by their other lessons, but, if the science be applied as it is at Orleans and Chartres, the student will have laid a foundation of practical knowledge upon which in the future he may build on his own account. The agriculturist pure and simple may not be satisfied, but the claims of general education cannot be ignored. On the other hand, no training can be satisfactory which omits to prepare the students in any way for the conditions of rural life, and which is limited solely to the requirements of the town. The reasonable course to follow is well put by M. René Le Blanc: "*Le professeur d'agriculture et celui de sciences physiques et naturelles doivent se concerter pour assurer la communauté de leurs vues et de leurs efforts; ils se souviendront que l'école normale n'est pas un institut agronomique, qu'elle ne peut prétendre par conséquent à former des praticiens, mais qu'on ne saurait trop y orienter les leçons et les exercices de sciences vers les choses d'agriculture.*"

l'Enseignement Agricole, ed. iii. 64.

#### HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

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287.

A full account of these schools may be read in a paper<sup>2</sup> by Mr. R. L. Morant, which deserves to be carefully studied not only for the details of their organisation, but for the valuable remarks and quotations upon the character of the agricultural instruction that may be given in them. Few of them, however, have an agricultural side, and they are rarely to be found in the country districts. Complaint has frequently been made of the small assistance given by the State towards their establishment. Outside the towns the opportunities for education beyond the elementary school are lamentably few, and these schools with their commercial, industrial, and agricultural sections suggest just the type of institution which should be within reach of every child. At the *école primaire supérieure* at Bourges, where I was much pleased with the tone and behaviour of the boys, though less so with the condition of the buildings, the following is the timetable.

Time-table, 1899-1900.

—	Clauses.	8-9 a.m.	9-10 a.m.	10-10.15	10.15-11.15 a.m.	11.15-1.	1-2 p.m.	2-3 p.m.	3-3.15.	3.15-4.15 p.m.			
Monday.	3 { a } b }	History.	Mathematics. French Language.	RECREATION.	Preparation.	Manual Instruction. Drawing.	Manual Instruction.		Mathematics. English. Chemistry.	Drawing. French Language. Writing. History.	Mathematics. French Language. Manual Instruction. Drawing.		
	2 { a } b }	French Language. Manual Instruction.	Geography. Manual Instruction.				Mathematics. Writing. French Language. Drawing.	French Language. Writing. History.				French Language. Manual Instruction. Drawing.	
Tuesday.	3 { a } b }	Drawing.			RECREATION.	Chemistry.	Manual Instruction. Writing. French Language. Drawing.	English. Mathematics.	Civil Rights. Mathematics. Manual Instruction. Mathematics. Drawing.	English. Mathematics. French Language. Geography. Drawing. Manual Instruction.	Gymnastics. French Language. Manual Instruction.		
	2 { a } b }	Book-keeping. Physics.	Physics. Mathematics. Agriculture. French Language.					French Language. Mathematics. English. Mathematics.				French Language. Natural History. Drawing.	Book-keeping. Agriculture. French Language. Physics. Drawing.
Wednesday.	3 { a } b }	Manual Instruction.				RECREATION.	History.	Manual Instruction. Drawing. Mathematics.	French Language. Mathematics.	French Language. Natural History. Drawing.	French Language. Mathematics. English. Manual Instruction. French Language.	French Language. Mathematics. Gymnastics.	
	2 { a } b }	French Language. Morals.	Mathematics. Geography. Physics.						French Language. Natural History. Drawing.				French Language. Mathematics. Gymnastics.
Friday.	3 { a } b }	Physics.	Geography.	RECREATION.			English. Mathematics. Chemistry.	Drawing. Natural History. French Language.	Drawing.		Mathematics. Natural History. Mathematics. Natural History.	French Language. Natural History. Mathematics. Natural History.	French Language. Mathematics. Singing. Drawing. Writing.
	2 { a } b }	Mathematics. Manual Instruction. Chemistry. English.	English. Chemistry. French Language. Manual Instruction.						French Language. Natural History. Drawing.	French Language. Natural History. Mathematics. Natural History.			
Saturday.	3 { a } b }	French Language.	Writing.		RECREATION.		Morals.	Morals. Drawing. Algebra Manual Instruction.	Mathematics. Drawing.	Natural History. Manual Instruction. Book-keeping. History. Mathematics.	Mathematics. English. Manual Instruction. French Language.	Singing. Manual Instruction. History. French Language. Mathematics.	
	2 { a } b }	Writing. Morals.	History. Drawing. Mathematics. Manual Instruction.						Mathematics. English. Manual Instruction. French Language.				Mathematics. English. Manual Instruction. French Language.

DINNER AND RECREATION.

*There is a whole holiday on Thursday.*

Rural Education in France.

Of the 683 boys who have passed through the school from 1899 to 1900, 25 have gone into agriculture, 289 into industry, 128 into commerce, 52 to technical schools, 74 to training colleges, 103 into the public service, and of 12 the destination is unknown. The school career of those who complete the full course of three years should be crowned by the *certificat d'études primaires supérieures*, but very few seek to obtain it. Only 68 have been obtained by the above 683 boys. In many places, notably at Orleans, the Chambers of Commerce are endeavouring to make the certificate more in request by emphasising the importance which they attach to its possession.

Unfortunately I was unable to visit any of the higher primary schools with an agricultural side except at Onzain (Loir-et-Cher), which is described by Mr. Brereton.

#### FARM SCHOOLS.

As the condition of agriculture and agricultural education has improved, the number of these schools (*fermes écoles*) has steadily decreased. In 1852 there were 75 such establishments, now there are only 14. North of Bourges, which may be taken as the centre of France, they have ceased to exist. They formed a useful part of the provision for elementary agricultural education, but the system under which they were worked laid them open to the objection that their directors (who were either the owners or lessees of the farm) looked upon the pupils as labourers placed at their disposal by the State. There was plenty of rough work upon the land but very little instruction. From conversation with farmers in different parts of the country, I found that they regretted the disappearance of these schools in view of the essentially practical character of what was done in them. There can be no doubt, however, that, from an educational point of view, it has been wise to convert them into or replace them by Practical Agricultural Schools.

#### PRACTICAL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS.

These also come under the category of elementary agricultural education. I visited an excellent school of this type at Chesnoy, about three miles from Montargis (Cher), where I was most hospitably entertained by the Director, M. Jolivet. Any detailed description would be foreign to the purpose of this Report. It must suffice, therefore, to say that the whole estate comprises some 400 acres, and that the high quality of the crops testifies to the value of the instruction, having regard to the poor nature of the chalky soil. In the garden considerable attention is naturally paid to the cultivation of the vine. I was also much struck with the fine appearance of the sheep—a cross between South-down rams and Berichonne ewes.

Nor can any account be given here of the methods pursued at the National School of Horticulture (*Jardin Potager*) at Versailles, or the National Agricultural School at Grignon (Seine-et-Oise), to both of which I had the advantage of long visits.

## CONCLUSION.

Although the character and extent of the instruction in the primary schools may not be such as might have been inferred from the official circulars and programmes, still an examination of the French system indicates many points worthy of serious consideration.

In regard to the primary school itself, I did not see any work out of doors of a more practical character than what has now been done for some years at several of our rural schools, especially in the Isle of Wight, where the influence of Mr. T. G. Rooper, H.M.I., has led to several interesting experiments being made in this branch of rural education. Nor did I hear any class lessons superior to those of the Alderney Grammar School, near Tarporley, or to those given during the past summer at the village school at Wye (Surrey) by Mr. A. D. Hall, Principal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College, whose paper upon the subject in the *Journal of Education* is full of valuable hints. These instances afford admirable models for the rest of England. Such instruction, however, should be supplemented by visits to experimental or demonstration plots, and by country walks in which the children should be encouraged to collect plants, insects, and geological specimens. Descriptions of these visits and excursions should invariably be written by the children afterwards. Each school should be furnished with a Museum, similar to the one at Olivet, and with a Library of attractive and reliable books upon every phase of rural life.\*

*Journal of  
Education,  
September*

A leaving certificate which children could only obtain by regular attendance and after examination in the subjects prescribed for one of the higher standards would tend to raise the whole level of elementary education. It would provide a definite *terminus ad quem*, and would insensibly promote the extension of elementary school life. This matter has been dealt with on several occasions by Sir Joshua Fitch. In France the certificate has partly failed of its object, because the standard of the examination is too low, but, if it were made a real test of a child's knowledge at the age of 12 or 13, it would soon become a passport to good employment. Parents would learn to recognise its value, and be anxious for their children to secure it. Nature study, instruction in which should be practical as well as theoretical (as is now imperative in the case of agriculture and horticulture under the new code for evening continuation schools), might well be made an obligatory subject of examination at rural schools. Mere ability to answer questions out of a text-book is in itself worthless.

The interest of parents in the school would be stimulated if they were to receive a monthly report of a child's progress and

\* A useful list of books on natural history pursuits and outdoor interests, suitable for the use of teachers or pupils in country schools, was prepared by Mr. Rooper for an educational conference held at Bilton Grange, near Rugby, in the summer, 1900. It will be found, with a full report of the conference, in the report entitled "How to Improve Rural Education." (Rugby Advertiser Company, Rugby.)

conduct, as generally supplied to parents by teachers in French schools.

As an inducement to teachers to introduce instruction suitable to rural schools, and to qualify themselves to give it, prizes, similar to those in France should be offered by the various Agricultural Societies. The prestige of these prizes would be greatly increased if, as in France, the Board of Agriculture also offered similar distinctions. When a teacher has devoted his whole time to instruction of a particular type, and is suddenly called upon to take an entirely new departure, it is not unreasonable that he should expect some recognition in return for the additional demands that are made upon him. The example set by the Agricultural Societies in France is one which those in England may properly be asked to follow, since the object in view is the provision of instruction which shall be more suited to, and a better preparation for, the industry of agriculture. But such prizes should not be given to the teachers only; as Mr. Jenkins pointed out in his Report, "the true principle of granting rewards for efficiency is to give them directly to the pupils, not only immediately by means of prizes, but also prospectively through the agency of scholarships or bursaries certificates of efficiency, and any means that may be devised to improve the future of the successful pupils."<sup>1</sup> Both teachers and pupils are now rewarded in France. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that it was owing to pressure from the agriculturists themselves that the Government undertook the reform of rural education there. The greater elasticity of the English Code has rendered the task of reform easier here, but progress will depend upon the co-operation of all whose interests lie in the prosperity of the villages.

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152.

Facilities must be afforded to all students at the Training Colleges to acquire at least an elementary knowledge of the principles of agriculture and horticulture, and their applications. It ought not to be difficult to organise such instruction upon the lines of that given at Chartres and Orleans, at those colleges which are already provided with gardens, and it might well be given by the lecturers of the County Councils. The fact that most of the students come from the towns and return to the towns is no objection. No one can be the worse for such instruction. Some of those who had received it, having their interests aroused in the pursuits of the country, and feeling themselves qualified to take part in them, might be led to prefer a rural to an urban life. The present system tends wholly in the opposite direction. In the words of Mr. W. Scott Coward's last Report: "To prepare the teachers of a nation with a life so rich in diversity, so varied, so complex . . . we have but one syllabus of a highly academic character. The colleges whose action it influences are moulded by it into an inevitable uniformity, and, as they can turn out annually not nearly as many students as are needed, who are at once absorbed by the large town schools, it follows, by a natural reaction, that their methods are shaped to prepare teachers for the more complex and artificial life of towns."

So long, however, as there is such an inequality between the salaries of the urban and the rural teacher, it is but natural for men to go where they will be better paid. Here again we may possibly learn from France, where teachers are paid not according to their particular schools but according to their qualifications as ascertained by examination. The rural teacher's position is often a more trying and responsible one than that of the town teacher, and he is entitled to equal treatment. The readjustment of salaries (a change which might involve their payment by the State) would do more than anything else to end the difficulty of providing for the rural schools. Contented teachers are essential to the success of any system of education; their legitimate grievances ought to be removed, and they should also have some right of appeal against what they believe to be unjust decisions.

Opportunities for instruction beyond the elementary day school should be within reach of every child: evening continuation schools alone are not sufficient, and the *écoles primaires supérieures*, with their commercial, industrial, and agricultural sides, suggest the type of school required. Some of the small endowed grammar schools in country towns might be remodelled after their pattern with special reference to the agricultural character of the locality. Where there is an entire absence of such schools, a suitably situated elementary school might be developed so as to meet the needs of a considerable area, as is done under the Dick Bequest in Scotland, or, more simply, upper divisions (*cours complémentaires*) might be added to some of the schools.

Finally, the whole agricultural education of the country from its lowest to its highest stages should be under the supervision of Inspectors appointed for the purpose in each county by the Board of Agriculture, until such time as the educational work of the Board of Agriculture is taken over by the Board of Education, if the transfer appear desirable, which is open to doubt.

In addition to those whose names are mentioned in the preceding pages, and from all of whom I received the utmost kindness and assistance, I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to M. Leygues, Minister of Public Instruction, and to M. Jean Dupuy, Minister of Agriculture, at Paris, for the readiness with which they afforded me every facility to visit the schools and colleges under their respective departments; to H. E. Cardinal Vaughan, the Marquis d'Épinay St. Luc, M. Richard Waddington (Senator for the Seine Inférieure), Mr. Austin Lee, C.B., Sir Joshua Fitch, Sir Ernest Clarke, Major Craigie, Mr. Bodley, and Professor Meldola, F.R.S., for their many introductions, which enabled me to make the inquiry under the most favourable conditions.

I also wish to acknowledge the great help which I had from Mr. Arthur Zachary, Assistant-Master at Hymer's College, Hull, who accompanied me throughout the journey.

JOHN C. MEDD,

August, 1900,

## APPENDIX.

The following copy of the particulars furnished by the teacher at La Ferté-Vidame for the Government competition last year in that portion of France, which includes the Department of Eure-et-Loir, has been courteously sent to me by M. Dauzat.

Ministry of  
Public  
Instruction  
and  
Fine Arts.

## FRENCH REPUBLIC.

SPECIAL PRIZES FOR THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION  
IN AGRICULTURE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

*Competition for 1899. Department of Eure-et-Loir.*

Name of teacher - -	John Baptiste Sévin.
Name of commune -	La Ferté-Vidame.
Age and length of service.	53½ years. 35½ years of service.
Date when he commenced theoretical and practical instruction in agriculture.	Theoretical instruction in 1865; practical instruction in 1874.
Rewards obtained for :	
(1.) General subjects	One first prize, and award of books, two silver medals, six bronze medals, and four honourable mentions.
(2.) Agricultural instruction.	Order of " <i>Chevalier du mérite agricole</i> "; four silver gilt medals, ten silver medals, two bronze medals, and four honourable mentions.
(3.) The competition organised by the Society for the Protection of Animals.	One silver and one bronze medal.
(4.) For personal services.	Letter of congratulation from the prefect of the department, award of a work of art, two silver medals, three bronze medals, and two honourable mentions.
Number of pupils :	
(1.) In the school -	Upper division 5, middle division 18, elementary division 22; total 45
(2.) Who have gained prizes at the competitions.	Thirty-four.
(3.) Rewarded by the Society for the Protection of Animals.	Two honourable mentions at Paris, and a bronze medal at Havre for the work of twelve pupils.



<p>(4.) Who have obtained the certificat d'études primaires during the past six years.</p>	<p>1893, 1; 1894, 1; 1895, 3; 1896, 2; 1897, 2; 1898, 5. Seven of these obtained special mention for agriculture.</p>
<p>Time devoted each week to :</p>	
<p>(1.) Theoretical instruction in agriculture.</p>	<p>Three hours a week.</p>
<p>(2.) Practical instruction.</p>	<p>Three hours a week, each lesson lasting from half to three-quarters of an hour.</p>
<p>Summary for each month :—</p>	
<p>I. Principal subjects of theoretical instruction, i.e. simple notions on (1) the natural and physical sciences applied to agriculture, and (2) on agriculture and horticulture.</p>	<p>October : The air and its importance for plants. Autumn sowing. The vine. Cider crops. November : The barometer and atmospheric pressure. Preparation of the soil. The nursery garden. Protection in winter. Threshing. December : The composition of the air. Drainage. Liquid and farmyard manure. Winter work in the garden. January : Water, steam, dew, mist, rain, snow. The thermometer. Useful and noxious animals. Rotation of crops. How to store manure. Hedging. Fencing. February : Frost and ice. Vegetables. Agricultural implements. Destruction of caterpillars. Removal of dead wood. Pruning. March : Springs and wells. The soil. Work in the spring. Harrowing. Guano and chemical manures. Cockchafers. Bees. April : The weight of water. Poultry. Vegetables. Fruits. Flowers. Weeds. Grafting. Artificial and natural pastures. May : Heat and electricity. Lightning-conductors. Insects. Birds. June : Common metals and salts. Domestic animals. The farm. The dairy. Hay-making. July and August : The harvest and revision of the previous work.</p>
<p>II. Demonstrations, experiments, and practical work, performed by the pupils, or with their assistance.</p>	<p>The pupils assist as much as possible in the work of the school garden, for instance, in pruning, watering, manuring, sowing, planting, weeding and gathering the crops. In addition, simple experiments are made in school every month to illustrate the theoretical lessons.</p>
<p>III. Walks and agricultural excursions.</p>	<p>Advantage is taken of every opportunity to take the children into the country to supplement the instruction in class. These excursions are taken out of school hours, principally in the autumn and spring. They occur at irregular intervals, according to the state of the weather and the conduct of the children. The walks are made the occasion for collecting plants, insects, and geological specimens for the school</p>

<p>III. Walks and agricultural excursions —<i>cont.</i></p>	<p>museum. The pupils of the first two divisions always accompany the teacher when he has any surveying to do. They also assist the teacher in the cultivation of a second garden, which he has created and planted with various fruit and other trees.</p>
<p>IV. Organisation, &amp;c., of Societies for the protection of animals</p>	<p>The most interesting passages from the monthly Bulletin of the Society for the Protection of Animals at Havre are read in class, exercises are written upon them, and these the children take home, thus diffusing the information throughout the commune. It is very rare to find any of the children guilty of cruelty towards animals, and, although the district is one of woods and forests, birds and their nests are seldom touched. Special prizes are given at the annual prize distribution to those children who have displayed conspicuous zeal in the protection of nests; the fact that these rewards are thus publicly given has an excellent influence.</p>
<p>Agricultural instruction to adults.</p>	<p>Books on agriculture and horticulture are freely lent from the school library. The parents of the children attending the school receive presents of young plants from the teacher's nursery; new varieties of hybrid vines, strawberries, and potatoes. Frequent lectures on agricultural subjects are delivered by the Departmental Professor and the Professor for the Arrondissement. The teacher, who is a member of several agricultural societies, has also read many papers on rural questions in the commune. Several experimental plots have been laid out by him. The net result of the agricultural and horticultural instruction in the school is that very many of the pupils have become intelligent farm labourers and successful gardeners.</p>
<p>Place of the school garden, demonstration or experimental plot.</p>	<p>(Here the teacher gives three plans to scale. These plans indicate the exact nature of each crop, of the school garden, the fruit and vegetable garden, and the experimental plots. These latter have been created on his own initiative, and at his own expense, out of waste and uncultivated lands.)</p>
<p>Remarks of the Primary Inspector.</p>	<p>M. Sévin applies the above programme with judgment, and obtains most satisfactory results. The experiments which he tries in either of his two gardens, or in the plots, of which he has supplied the plans, are followed with interest by the cultivators of the district as well as by the children, and cannot fail to have a good influence on the agricultural progress of the Canton.</p>

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