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EDUCATION IN FRANCE  
IN 1916-1918

By I. L. KANDEL

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## EDUCATION IN FRANCE IN 1916-1918.

By I. L. KANDEL.

CONTENTS.—Administration—Physical welfare—Elementary education—Secondary education of girls—Secondary education of boys.

The war has affected the conduct of education in France perhaps more than in either England or Germany. For the first two years the demands at the front tended to subordinate all other thought and activities to the one great purpose. More recently the educational literature of France indicates that the war has had the effect of provoking considerable questioning and dissatisfaction with the existing systems of education. Radical changes have not yet taken place in educational administration or organization, but the ground is being prepared by discussions and conferences, by public and private commissions of inquiry, by articles in the daily press for the reforms that it is now generally felt must come after the war. The schools will be called upon to play an important part in the restoration of the country and must, in the opinion of many, be improved to meet the new demands.

While the war has strengthened the universal conviction that the principles of French democracy and the basic French institutions are sound, it has none the less directed increased attention to the need of widening educational opportunities and the general scope of the school. The proposals for the better administration of school attendance, and for compulsory attendance at continuation schools, the reform of the examination for the *certificat d'études primaires*, the consideration of the reform of the higher elementary school, and the urgent demand for greater opportunities for higher education as well as its reform are all comprised in the present tendency. Within the school there is a demand that instruction be less academic and bookish and more adapted to local circumstances and modern needs in general.

As in other countries there are those who would convert every school into a technical or vocational school. This problem is well summarized in the following statement:

The present problem is that of reconciling two cultures—the humanistic and practical. What shall be the relations in the elementary schools between in-

struction and local conditions? What in the higher elementary schools or in the technical schools shall be the relations between general education and vocational training? In secondary education what shall be the relations between classical culture and preparation for modern life, and in higher education between pure and applied science? Is not the problem the same everywhere?<sup>1</sup>

The answer to this statement is that, the principle of balance, the principle upon which the Republic is founded, will offer a solution here too.

A balance between science and letters, between authority and liberty, between discipline and initiative; a balance attained with wisdom and moderation, with tolerance and humanity, with finesse and good sense; a balance so conforming to the liberal ideas maintained by the defenders of civilization that it will suffice for us to establish it in instruction so that it may become adapted to the demands of modern society and definitely serve the interests of the country.<sup>2</sup>

While one tendency is represented by those who desire to retain the present organization provided it is reformed to a considerable degree, there is a still more marked tendency, as is indicated below, to demand a thorough reorganization of the educational system. According to this view, represented by a number of teachers grouped together as *Les Compagnons* and attracting considerable attention in the country, the problem is no longer merely one of pedagogy or of internal reform. "This is a moment when the whole country feels too strongly the need of a general reconstruction, of reform in administration, politics, economics, industry, etc., for one to confine oneself strictly to the field of pedagogy."<sup>3</sup>

The authors accordingly advocate not a reform of the disparate parts of the system, but a reorganization of the whole system based on one point of view. They advocate a common school (*école unique*), upon which can be built up on one side the humanistic, on the other vocational courses. This should be the national type, whether in public or private schools. The elementary school should be the portal for all, but opportunity should be offered to all to advance as far as their ability warrants.

#### ADMINISTRATION.<sup>4</sup>

There appears to be a marked feeling that the need for the reform of administration, organization, curricula, and methods of instruction is one of the most pressing problems of the present time. The

<sup>1</sup> Crouzet, P. Pour la revision d'ensemble de l'éducation nationale. *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, p. 395.

<sup>2</sup> Besard, J. Les leçons de la guerre dans l'enseignement secondaire. *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> Les Compagnons. Le lycée et l'école primaire. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 272, Oct., 1918, pp. 1722. See also *Les Cahiers de Probus, Premier Cahier*, by the same authors (Paris, 1918).

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed consideration of this subject see *Les Cahiers de Probus, Premier Cahier, Par "Les Compagnons"* (Paris, 1918).

charge is made that the administrative machinery of French education no longer meets the requirements and demands of modern education.<sup>1</sup> The present situation has developed partly out of the existence, side by side and without coordination, of different branches of education, some under the control of the ministry of public instruction and fine arts, others distributed among other ministries, partly out of the practice of piecemeal reforms and reorganizations. Reform at this hour, it is urged, must be based on a consideration of the needs of the country as a whole and of the functions of education in general. Peace will bring a well-defined task, for which half measures will be inadequate.<sup>2</sup> The whole national structure of education must be reorganized from the elementary school up.<sup>3</sup> The demand for reorganization and reconstruction in industry, commerce, agriculture, politics, and social life cannot be met without the one reform on which these all depend—the reform of national education. Only through such a reform—the conservation and training of its human capital—can France reap the benefit of her great material and spiritual resources.

The chief administrative change that is considered desirable is one that will abolish the extreme form of centralization that characterizes the system. If the needs of the nation and the different localities are to be met, some flexibility must be introduced in educational administration,<sup>4</sup> and provision must be made for the cooperation of various economic and industrial interests, as already proposed in 1911 by M. Steeg. The present system inevitably leads to administration through official documents and correspondence rather than by direct personal supervision. The future requires the grant of larger liberty to local authorities. At present the powers of the local authorities in education are almost negligible, and many of the local school committees (commissions scolaires) contemplated by the law have ceased to function.<sup>5</sup> Any increase in local freedom must be extended to the teachers, who should feel at liberty to adapt their work to local needs within certain well-defined minimum requirements and standards.

One writer sums up these suggestions as follows: "There will not be the same uniformity among the schools of different departments or among diverse communes of the same department; but what does such uniformity, created artificially and externally by the State laws, matter, if there is an internal harmony; if each school obeys the rhythm of the life about it?"<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Crouzet, P. Pour la revision d'ensemble de l'éducation nationale. *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, pp. 392ff.

<sup>2</sup> Crouzet.-P., *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> See *L'École et la Vie*, a magazine established to propagate the closer relationship between education and life. See also the work by "Les Compagnons" cited above.

<sup>4</sup> Collet, E. Tous les enfants en classes. *L'École et la Vie*, Oct. 13, 1917, p. 70.

<sup>5</sup> Bugnon, E. L'École primaire et les leçons de la guerre. *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, p. 511. Also *Les Cahiers de Probus*.

Concrete proposals for the development of a system of administration to give effect to these tendencies have not yet been put forward to any extent. It is suggested that the conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique can be brought more closely into touch with the currents of national thought by the inclusion of women and of representatives of employers and employees from the fields of industry, commerce, and agriculture.

#### PHYSICAL WELFARE.

It was perhaps to be expected that France would be influenced as a consequence of the close contact with the British and American forces, just as it may be expected the French intellectual influences will affect British and American thought in time. A widespread movement has begun for the improvement and extension of physical education and games throughout the country, not merely to develop agility and endurance in the individual, but to strengthen the Nation as a whole. The recently reformed examination for the certificate of primary studies includes a gymnastic exercise. Associated with this movement is the recognition that more attention must be given to medical inspection and treatment of children of school age and pre-school age. The American Red Cross has aroused considerable interest, as, for example, in Lyon, by distribution of leaflets and exhibits on the physical care and welfare of children. Early in 1917 a commission was appointed to study the reorganization of physical training in the schools.

In April, 1918, the ministry of public instruction issued a circular<sup>1</sup> to the rectors of the academies urging the development of physical education, games and athletic sports in secondary, normal, and higher elementary schools. It is pointed out that such training could be organized without encroaching on class work. School principals and teachers are asked to encourage the establishment of clubs under their general supervision and with the assistance of advisory committees representing the public and alumni associations. From another point of view, school athletics are advocated as a center for cooperation between parents, teachers, physicians, and pupils.<sup>2</sup>

La Ligue française pour l'hygiène scolaire is actively promoting the introduction of open-air exercise, in which teachers should also participate, and is advocating the introduction of school medical inspection and the keeping of records of physical development. A Union des sociétés françaises de sports athlétiques has been established to promote the development of school athletic clubs and to secure playing fields. It is suggested in the circular that participation should not

<sup>1</sup> *Bulletin Administratif*, Apr. 15 and May 18, 1918; *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 27, 2, p. 1417.

<sup>2</sup> See Etovenon, L. Les sports, terrain d'entente entre les parents, les maîtres, les médecins, et les élèves. *L'École et la Vie*, Dec. 1, 1917, pp. 1802.

be made compulsory and that no boy be allowed to take part without the written consent of his parents, so that the State might be relieved of responsibility for accident. The union has made advantageous terms with insurance companies to furnish compensation in cases of accident.<sup>1</sup>

The further development of the movement is indicated in the following account of some propaganda that has already been undertaken:<sup>2</sup>

In the course of a recent manifestation in favor of physical education, organized at Bordeaux, M. Henry Pate, deputy, delivered a very interesting address, in which he stated that he and some of his colleagues in the house of deputies had decided to participate actively in the physical education and athletics of the young, in accordance with the following program: (1) To adopt a general method of rational physical instruction, based on a knowledge of the physical needs of the subject, the specialization of the work, and the attraction of the exercise. (2) To create regional schools and a superior school destined to create and to maintain a unity of methods. (3) To open these schools to the physical instructors of the army, to the monitors of the preparation for military service, and to the instructors of both sexes. (4) To direct the young toward outdoor exercises, giving them freely. (5) To obtain (a) the simplification of school programs, which are frightfully overloaded and tend to destroy energy; (b) the introduction of a physical test in all examinations; (c) the institution of outdoor schools and open-air or outdoor colonies for the physically abnormal children; and (d) the complete reorganization of school medical inspection. (6) To assure the employment of special professors of gymnastics. (7) To demand legislation providing for obligatory post-graduate instruction and the introduction of the eight-hour day (la semaine anglaise), so as not to injure the vocational work of the adults, or their apprenticeship, or reduce the wages to which they may aspire. (8) To give a larger place in the training for military service to physical education and athletics, as a base for the future reorganization of the army, and of the recruiting laws.

In order to solve these multiple problems, there has been appointed a comité national de propagande pour le développement de l'éducation physique et sportive, de hygiène sociale et de la rénovation de la race. This committee will cooperate closely with the public authorities, the universities, the faculties, the commercial centers, industrial centers, financial powers, and the press.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

The most pressing problems in the field of elementary education are the improvement of school attendance, adaptation of the work of the school to local environment, and better articulation with higher schools. The withdrawal of adult workers affected French agriculture and industry seriously, and until better adjustments

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 25, 1, p. 330, Les exercices physiques; vol. 26, 1, p. 378, Voeux relatifs à l'éducation physique; vol. 26, 2, pp. 95ff., La question de la culture physique dans l'enseignement secondaire; vol. 27, 2, pp. 131f., Les sports athlétiques dans les établissements secondaires.

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted in *School Life*, vol. 1, No. 2, p. 18, from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, July 20, 1918.

between the needs of the army and the needs of industries were made, the immediate result was a marked increase of child labor with a consequent effect on school attendance. This condition was already marked and subjected to criticism before the war;<sup>1</sup> the law of 1882 permits the exemption of children from school attendance for three months of the year if they are assisting parents in harvesting, potato gathering, fruit picking, and other agricultural pursuits, and for one school session out of two if they are working for another employer. A ministerial circular<sup>2</sup> issued on October 1, 1917, urges that better efforts be made to improve school attendance and indicates that restrictions would be introduced officially. The preparation of the next generation and the great task awaiting it require that children should enjoy a longer education. To this end it is pointed out that the teachers, who have gained considerable prestige during the war, can contribute much by cooperating with the home. The suggestion is also made that municipal authorities might make the grant of clothing, food, and other assistance to school children dependent on their regular attendance.

The curriculum of the elementary school suffers too much from uniformity and continues, as in many other educational systems, to be too bookish. Says P. Crouzet, Inspecteur de l'Académie de Paris:

We are too confident that knowledge is power. We study to know instead of studying to live better. . . . The educational problem of to-morrow is not to extend or change the knowledge or to extend or modify the programs so much as to direct knowledge of life, to teach everything, not in terms of the past but of the present and future.<sup>3</sup>

Although the regulations permit adaptation to local industrial and agricultural needs, very little appears to have been done to make this permission effectual. It is urged that instruction in the elementary school should be made more real and practical, not merely by the effective introduction of manual work for boys and household arts for girls, and school gardens for both, but by vitalizing the curriculum by reference to the environment with which the pupils are familiar. Such a reform, it is admitted, will demand more teachers of good training who can make the best use of the responsibility that should be theirs. In country areas it is recommended that principals be appointed to supervise a number of teachers and schools. It is felt that the new education for responsibility and liberty, that are fundamental to modern democracy, can not be developed under the existing pressure of uniformity.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bugnon, R. L'école primaire et les leçons de la guerre. *La Grande Revue*, p. 500; Coitet, E. Tous les enfants. *L'École et la Vie*, Oct. 13, 1917, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Bulletin Administratif*, Oct. 13, 1917.

<sup>3</sup> Crouzet, P. *L'École et la Vie*, vol. 1, Sept. 15, 1917, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Bugnon, R. L'école primaire et les leçons de la guerre. *La Grande Revue*, pp. 480-486; Une programme d'éducation nationale, proposed by La Ligue Française. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 26, 1, pp. 306.

In 1917 the Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique voted to reform the examination for the certificate of elementary studies (certificat d'études primaires). This vote was followed by a ministerial decree on July 19, 1917, giving the details of the reform and by another on March 9, 1918, giving instructions to the rectors of academies on the conduct of the examinations. The purpose of the reform is to meet some of the criticisms that the work of the elementary school is too bookish, emphasises memory work, and neglects subjects not required in the examinations. The reform aims to secure a place for every subject in the curriculum commensurate with its importance, to develop uniformity of standards, and to encourage the development of judgment, intelligence, and will. The examination is to be conducted by commissions appointed by the academy rectors and is to be based on the work of the cours moyen, usually completed at the age of 11 or 12. The examination is in two parts. The first includes an essay on a simple topic, dictation, and questions on the text, problems in practical arithmetic and the metric system; a composition or some questions in history and geography or everyday science, and for boys an exercise in linear drawing or handwork, and for girls a test in sewing or design. The second part consists of questions in history and geography or science, a test in reading and simple questions on the text, recitation of a piece of poetry or singing at the pupil's option, a test in mental arithmetic, and a simple gymnastic exercise.

A similar reform of the examinations at the close of the higher elementary schools is also contemplated, but for the present is postponed until these schools undergo a contemplated revision. On August 3, 1918, a circular was issued by the minister of public instruction<sup>1</sup> directing the attention of teachers and inspectors to the need of promoting continued full-time education by improving instruction of pupils from the ages of 12 to 15. The circular proposes that conferences be conducted to consider the revision of the cours supérieur and the cours complémentaires. The following questions are proposed for discussion, with the suggestion that the replies be sent to the ministry in December, 1918:

The number of advanced courses in each canton and their adequacy? How to create new courses?

What should be their programs? What place should be given to vocational education?

Should there be a special examination leading to a sanction?

What can the elementary schools do to improve the work offered to older pupils of 13 and 14? Can not these schools combine general education and preapprenticeship instruction?

<sup>1</sup> *Bulletin Administratif*, Aug. 3, 1918, p. 189f. (Circular relative aux conférences de 1918 et à l'organisation d'un enseignement destinées aux enfants de 12 à 15 ans).

The importance of the problem, which is, of course, closely associated with the proposals for compulsory continuation school attendance, is emphasized:

The more the ruin and losses increase, the greater must be the service of national education. The end to be attained is two-fold—to stimulate, by means of the cours supérieurs and complémentaires and other schools offering the opportunity, the development of the pupils; and by the cours de perfectionnement to furnish the whole people with the means of increasing their moral strength, intellectual vigor, and economic productivity.

To repair the ruins of France in men and material caused by the war, the urgent need will be to discover ability wherever it can be found. The burden will, therefore, be placed on those intrusted with the administration not only to select pupils in the elementary schools who show ability to proceed further, but to articulate the different types of schools in such a way that each boy or girl will secure the training most suitable. This task will not only involve selection of pupils for advancement, but the creation of new types of schools adequately differentiated to meet the different abilities of the pupils and the diverse needs of the country. At present the only opportunity of which the elementary school pupils are able to avail themselves is to pass on to the higher elementary school. The doors of the secondary schools were thrown open to them in 1902, but very few take advantage of this opportunity in spite of the existence of scholarships.<sup>1</sup> That an elementary education is not sufficient equipment for life has been recognized universally,<sup>2</sup> and with the end in view of increasing educational opportunities compulsory attendance at continuation schools has been proposed. For the more able, however, the development of trade and technical schools and a reorganization of secondary education along modern lines are advocated.

To enable the poor pupil of parts to continue his education as far as possible it is urged not only that scholarships should be offered, but that maintenance grants be given and allowances to parents to compensate them for loss of wages. The proposals for the reorganization of secondary education are made largely with importance of articulation in mind,<sup>3</sup> while the better adjustment of the elementary schools to vocational preparation is also receiving considerable attention. These points of view merely indicate that the elementary school can not be organized without reference to the broader needs of the nation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Crémieux, A. De l'école primaire au lycée. *Revue Universitaire*, 27, 1, April, 1918, pp. 280ff.

<sup>2</sup> Clavière, J. L'enseignement national après la guerre. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 25, 2, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Bouhliol, J. P. Les leçons de la guerre pour l'enseignement secondaire. *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, p. 485.

<sup>4</sup> Une programme d'éducation nationale. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 26, 1, pp. 800f.

The project for a continuation school law to which reference was made in the last report of the Commissioner of Education has not yet been passed, but seems to be exercising some influence already. At Corbie the local manufacturers have posted notices to the effect that they would employ young persons leaving the elementary schools with the certificate of studies, and allow them to attend the local higher primary school for three years, providing tuition, books, apparatus, and even maintenance grants. On leaving these schools the pupils would enter the factories as apprentices for two or three years, during which they would continue to attend school three times a week for general and technical instruction during working hours and without loss of pay. The abler among them would be sent on to schools of arts and crafts, receiving maintenance allowances and tuition during their period of study. The parents would be under no obligation to the employers except to permit them to control the educational progress of the young employees, so that "they may become active, hardy, enterprising, and proud of their country."<sup>1</sup>

#### SECONDARY EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

The changes brought about by the war in the position of women have made the reorganization of secondary education of girls a question of vital importance. As in other countries women have taken the place of men in every walk of life, and have proved themselves equal to most tasks, but the change in the social tradition has been more revolutionary in France than elsewhere. It is recognized that not only the professions but positions of leadership in commerce and industry must in the future be opened to women on an equal footing with men. Women have been admitted for some time to the practice of law and medicine, and new careers are constantly being made accessible to them. In the field of commerce where women are expected to find considerable scope in the future the Chamber of Commerce of Paris has opened the *École commerciale des jeunes filles* which will give a three-year course, including preparation not merely for subordinate clerical positions but for the more important work of management. The *École pratique de haute enseignement commercial pour les jeunes filles* at the Conservatoire des arts et métiers in Paris

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Pédagogique*, vol. 72, pp. 74f.

<sup>2</sup> See especially:

Bernes, H. La réforme de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles. *L'Enseignement Secondaire*, July-October, 1916, pp. 61f.; La question de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles. *Ibid.*, November-December, 1916, pp. 77f.

<sup>3</sup> La réforme de l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles. *Revue Internationale*, 203f.

<sup>4</sup> Projets relatifs à l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles. *Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement*, vol. 71, pp. 47f.

offers similar opportunities. Schools and institutions hitherto restricted to men have now opened their doors to women. These include the École centrale des arts et manufactures, the Institut agronomique, the École de l'horlogerie, and the École de physique.<sup>1</sup>

These developments have led to a demand for reform of the system of secondary education, which as organized under the law of 1882 is adapted chiefly for girls of the wealthy middle classes who do not expect to enter a profession or career of any kind, but desire a general education, leading to a diplôme de fin d'études, which, however, has no official value.

Private schools, however, offered facilities for the preparation of girls for the baccalaureate, while in a few cases some schools for boys admitted girls for advanced work. The proposals take the form of a demand either for secondary education of the same type as that for boys or a new and extended organization of the existing system. The objection to the first suggestion is that the basis of the lycées and the colleges for boys is not sufficiently broad and that the majority of girls at present do not desire a preparation that leads only to the universities and professions. It is also felt that while the secondary schools for boys are being subjected to criticism and discussion, it would not be advisable to copy them.<sup>2</sup> The difficulty in the way of the second proposal is the national tradition of privileges, certificates, and examinations which mark the end of a school course. A third suggestion, that a new section of the examination<sup>3</sup> for the baccalaureate be created, is rejected as introducing too much differentiation and leading as a consequence to much confusion, while its establishment would probably have the effect of ousting or lowering the standard of the present diploma. The problem involves, therefore, not so much the reorganization of girls' schools as the nature of the educational and other privileges (*sanctions*) to which it will lead.

In December, 1916, a *Projet relatif à l'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles* was presented to the Conseil supérieur de l'instruction publique, in which it was pointed out that any radical change in the system of secondary education of girls would require parliamentary action. The plan presented in the projet was based on the existing organization in the expectation that the reform could be effected by administrative machinery. The problem was to bring the diplôme de fin d'études into harmony with modern needs and to give it a value equal to that of the baccalaureat. The projet recommends the beginning of secondary education at the age of 11 instead of 12, as under the present system, thus extending the existing course to six instead of five years. The course is still to be divided into two

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 26, 1, pp. 66f.; vol. 26, 2, pp. 59f.; *L'Enseignement Secondaire*, 1917, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> *Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement*, loc. cit., vol. 71, p. 51.

parts—one of four years closing with the *certificat d'études secondaires*, and the other two years culminating in an examination for the *diplôme de fin d'études*. Except for those students who desire to take the *baccalauréat* with Latin the work is to be the same for all and is to include morals and psychology, French language and literature, modern languages, history, geography, mathematics and science, drawing, and gymnastics. It is suggested that a seventh year be added for those who desire to study for the second part of the *baccalauréat* or to continue a special general and cultural course or to prepare for any of the new careers open for women in administration, commerce, finance, industry, and the civil services.

It was thought by the framers of the projet, who claimed to have canvassed teachers and associations of parents, that by this plan the diploma could be given the same sanction as the *baccalauréat* and that with some modifications those who desired could specialize for the Latin or science sections. The introduction of the projet was opposed, however, as illegal unless passed by parliament. It was urged that the conseil supérieur could not introduce it as an administrative measure. Accordingly, the minister of public instruction, M. Viviani, at the close of 1916, established a commission to inquire into the modifications needed in the organization of studies and privileges for the secondary education of girls.<sup>1</sup>

M. Camille See,<sup>2</sup> the author of the law of December 21, 1880, in his evidence before this commission on January 19, 1918, pointed out that the original intention of the law was a secondary school for girls giving a seven-year course, divided into two cycles of four and three years, respectively, and leading to the diploma of secondary studies. The fundamental course was to be so organized that by the addition of elective subjects pupils would have been able to enjoy the same curricula as those offered since 1902 in the boys' schools. He mentioned that he had also advocated in 1878 the establishment of technical courses leading to scientific institutions. The present proposals, in his opinion, only represented a return to the spirit of the law of 1880, which had been overridden by an administrative regulation of January 14, 1882.

The commission issued a questionnaire, covering the following topics, to educational authorities and parents' associations:

Should the education of girls bear a distinctive character in organization and curriculum?

What amount of time should be given, consistent with the requirements of health, to intellectual studies?

<sup>1</sup> Commission extraparlamentaire chargée d'examiner les modifications à apporter à l'organisation des études et à la sanction de l'enseignement secondaire public des jeunes filles.

<sup>2</sup> See *L'Enseignement Secondaire des Jeunes Filles*, May 15, 1918, pp. 1982, and June 15, 1918, pp. 2412.

What modifications are needed in the curriculum? Should room be found for domestic science, hygiene, and physical and practical technical training?

Should the *diplôme de fin d'études* be retained or changed, and what should be its relation to the *baccalaureate*?

When, if at all, should Latin be begun?

A subcommittee of the commission drew up a number of recommendations which are now being considered by all the members. The chief recommendations are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

1. The education of girls needs a new organization and appropriate program of studies.
2. The schools shall be organized in two cycles, the first of four years, the second of two. The course shall begin at the age of 12.
3. In the first cycle the school day shall be of four hours; in the second cycle of five hours.
4. Fourteen hours a week shall be given to compulsory subjects in the first cycle; 17 hours in the second.
5. An important and compulsory place shall be given to studies appropriate for girls (household arts and hygiene), practical work, and physical training.
6. The six years' course shall be brought to a conclusion in an examination on the work of the last year, leading to a *diplôme de fin d'études*, equivalent to the first part of the *baccalaureate*.
7. As many careers as possible shall be open to girls holding this diploma.

One of the burning questions in the secondary education of girls is whether Latin shall be included in the reorganization. The commission will probably favor its inclusion for those who desire it. It is also proposed that a seventh year be provided in the organization for girls who wish to complete the *baccalaureate* to enter the universities or to prepare for a professional career.

#### SECONDARY EDUCATION OF BOYS.

The war has directed considerable attention to the system of secondary education for boys, and more discussion has probably centered around this problem than around any other. The education of adolescents gives rise to a large number of questions. If the schools are to play an important part in the restoration of the country, and if a new generation is to be built up to repair the ruins of the past four years, it is urged that the whole structure of adolescent education must be revised with a view to differentiation. The suggestions for the improvement of elementary education have already been discussed; the proposals for the extension of a part-time compulsory attendance were referred to in the report of the Commissioner of Education for 1916; the vital questions of the moment concern not merely the administrative reorganization of the secondary schools but the fundamental reconsideration of the principles on which their curricula are based. These questions resolve themselves, when

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Universitaire*, loc. cit., vol. 25, 2, p. 215.

examined, into the problem of better articulation with other institutions, elementary and higher, the problem of creating increased opportunities for able pupils, and into the problem of revising the curricula and methods of the secondary schools to meet modern needs and demands.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of articulation has already been referred to and the suggestions for selecting the abler pupils from the elementary schools for advancement to higher education have been mentioned. It is pointed out by the critics of the existing system that the reorganization of 1902 was based in part on a desire to meet social needs, and to this end the beginning of secondary education proper was postponed to 11 in order to encourage more boys to enter from the elementary schools. The division into cycles was based on the desire of opening the way for the transfer of pupils from the higher primary schools. It is proved statistically by M. Brelet<sup>2</sup> that neither of these purposes has been attained. In spite of the offer of scholarships pupils of the elementary schools do not present themselves as candidates in any large number mainly because the curriculum of the higher primary schools is better adapted to their needs. Nor do the pupils from the higher primary schools flock to the secondary schools to avail themselves of the opportunity of completing the second cycle and the requirements for the baccalauréat. The few who are transferred find themselves handicapped, for three of the four available courses of the second cycle are closed to them because of their inadequate preparation in languages. From another point of view it is also proved statistically that the division into cycles is not warranted either by social or educational needs. The justifications for the division were, first, to encourage pupils to transfer from the higher primary schools, and, secondly, to enable pupils to leave at the close of the first cycle after completing a definite round of knowledge. Statistically it is shown that very few pupils leave at the end of the fourth year (in 1910 only 965 out of 9,236), fewer in fact than at the close of any other year of the whole course. On these grounds, therefore, new principles must be sought for the reorganization of the secondary school, taking into account not merely its educational purpose and function, but its relation to other institutions.<sup>3</sup>

The criticism of the present organization of the curriculum of the secondary schools is more widespread and more radical than is that of its administrative aspect. Education in France, it is argued, sets up false standards and is founded on false principles. France was

<sup>1</sup> Besch, E. *Le lycée et l'école primaire*. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 27, 1, pp. 524f.  
 Brelet, H. *L'enseignement secondaire et la réforme de 1902*. *Revue de l'Enseignement*, vol. 70, pp. 254f.; *L'enseignement secondaire, ce qu'il doit être*. *Ibid.*, vol. 71, pp. 361f.  
<sup>2</sup> Brelet, H. *Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement*, vol. 70, p. 266; *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 27, 1, p. 145f.; pp. 224f.  
<sup>3</sup> See Brelet. *Loc. cit.*

before the Great War a huge diploma factory and the educational horizon for every student is bounded by the diploma or the sanction that it carries. The universal test of individual worth is the possession of a certificate. M. Lavissee, in a letter published on January 1, 1918, writes:

We suffered before this war from these bad habits in all branches of education. All of us were more or less the slaves of the examination. The examination was the director general of public instruction. But the examination is a detestable director.<sup>1</sup>

The result of this worship of paper qualifications is seen in the character of the syllabi and in the methods of instruction. The curriculum of the secondary schools is overcrowded; the energies and attention of the pupils are dispersed. The emphasis is placed on the acquisition rather than the assimilation of knowledge, on making the brain a storehouse rather than an instrument or tool.<sup>2</sup> That is the necessary result of the preparation for recurring examinations instead of directing effort to the development of activity, judgment, and personality. Erudition, borrowed from the Germans, and bookishness have taken the place of intelligent observation, intellectual curiosity, and contact with the needs of modern life. The product of the secondary schools of to-day, it is charged, is a sort of lay priest, living a life of his own, removed from social activity, and ignorant of the needs of society.<sup>3</sup>

Fundamentally the problem is one of reconciling the old and the new cultures. The prevailing curriculum is merely a collection of subjects devised by specialists from their own point of view instead of a coordinated whole organized with a view to modern requirements.<sup>4</sup> Even the so-called practical courses, for example, in the sciences, that were introduced by the reform of 1902 are bookish and academic and but little related to present demands.

While there is considerable unanimity in these criticisms, there is a parting of the ways when the proposals for reorganization are put forward. Two points of view can readily be distinguished. The one would turn the schools of France into trade and technical institutions and put the traditional elements on one side;<sup>5</sup> the other, recognizing the defects of the present secondary school, would aim at introducing a new spirit responsive to modern requirements, while

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *L'Enseignement Secondaire*, July-December, 1918, p. 45. See also Faury, A. *La guerre et l'esprit française. La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, pp. 400ff.

<sup>2</sup> Bounhiol, J. P. *Les leçons de la guerre pour l'enseignement secondaire. La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, p. 487.

<sup>3</sup> Bralet, H. *Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement*, loc. cit.; vol. 71, p. 487.

<sup>4</sup> Parthault. *Pour une orientation pratique. La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, pp. 584ff.

<sup>5</sup> Ferrotin, L. *L'enseignement Secondaire*, July-December, 1918, p. 45f.

<sup>6</sup> Bounhiol. *Loc. cit.*, p. 485.

<sup>7</sup> Hersent, G. *La réforme de l'éducation nationale. Paris, 1917. Une programme de l'éducation nationale. Revue Universitaire*, vol. 27, pp. 806f.

retaining and emphasizing general education.<sup>1</sup> Both sides agree with the late M. Liard that the university of France needs at present "a deep bath of realism."<sup>2</sup>

While it is generally conceded that France must give greater attention than hitherto to technical and vocational training in all its branches, partly to repair the losses of war, partly as a preparation for the economic competition after the war, those who take the extreme radical view of the function of education are few in number. It is recognized that the danger is great of being dazzled by Germany's rapid industrial and commercial expansion in the past 30 or 40 years and her early success in the war, both of which are attributed to her systematic technical training. But it is also admitted that the fruits of victory will have been lost if the world goes to school to Germany, and if the materialism that characterised so much of her education is allowed to predominate, in spite of her defeat. The moral and humane functions of education are in danger of being relegated into the background if the schools are turned into miniature factories in which the youth of the land will specialize narrowly for the particular vocation that they have selected. There are many of those who see the urgency of technical and industrial education who agree with the advocates of general education that the primary purpose of education must be to raise the general level of intelligence, to train men and women who understand their duties as citizens and workers, to develop individuals with breadth of mind, devotion to the ideals of the nation, and interest in social questions instead of turning out human machines functioning solely for material ends.

The problem of education is not solely one of economic production or the training of engineers, technicians, and workers, but of developing men and women. Even if it is true that the basis of modern social organization is division of labor, it becomes more essential than ever to provide and prolong that education that gives all citizens a common background of general ideas and of a culture that stresses human values. The best preparation for specialized technical training is a good and extended general education. Those who argue that a general education can be obtained from specialized training run the risk of incurring failure in both. It is pointed out that in the most difficult and most technical branch of the army, the artillery, the graduates of the secondary schools were able to master the intricacies after a very brief training. To concede the situation entirely to those who demand technical and vocational preparation

<sup>1</sup> Brelet, *loc. cit.*; *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, pp. 896ff; pp. 471ff; pp. 512ff; pp. 534ff. Clavière, J. L'enseignement national après la guerre. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 25, 2, pp. 64f.

<sup>2</sup> Béard, J. Les leçons de la guerre dans l'enseignement secondaire. *La Grande Revue*, vol. 94, p. 465.

would involve a betrayal of the ideals for which the world has been fighting to the dangers of barbarism and materialism.<sup>1</sup>

The real issue is, therefore, how to modernize the general education that is considered almost universally to be essential, how to redefine culture in modern terms, how to organize a liberal education adapted to the needs of modern society. As in Great Britain and Germany this problem resolves itself into a consideration of the value of the classics. Those who argue that the French and French culture are Celtic in origin would at once abandon the classics. The majority of those who discuss this question, however, are agreed that French culture is continuous with Latin, and that Latin must, therefore, be the basis of an education that aims to impart French culture, to strengthen the French points of view, and to fortify national ideals.<sup>2</sup> A classical education, it is felt by many, is all the more necessary to-day as the source of an ideal of humanity which is essential for the development of moral ideas and the evolution of society. The failure of classical education has not been inherent in the subjects taught, but in the methods employed, in the emphasis on erudition rather than on their spirit. It is even suggested that the Latinless course be eliminated from the secondary schools and relegated to the higher primary schools.

There is, on the other hand, a very pronounced opinion that in a scientific age, the sciences must form an important part of a liberal education. It is urged, however, that since science has no conscience and may serve a bad as well as a good cause, the emphasis in education should be placed on the relation of science to human welfare.<sup>3</sup> The greater extent to which an individual acquires a knowledge of the world of nature and of its manifestations, the nearer he approaches to a conception of his own place as a member of human society. It is conceded that the secondary schools may have neglected the sciences, but that does not establish its claim to absorb the whole of the curriculum. On this basis it is probable that, as in England, there will be no difficulty in reconciling the demands of the classicists and scientists. The reorganization of secondary education will demand the harmonious development side by side of the humanities and the sciences. A general secondary education will include, therefore, French, the classics, with exemptions for those unable to profit by them, modern languages, history and geography, mathematics and science, and philosophy. Specialization should be delayed as long as possible and be based on a general education of this character.<sup>4</sup> Such an education, it is argued, will reconcile the old and the new,

<sup>1</sup> Pécaut, F. La guerre et les pédagogues. *Revue Pédagogique*, pp. 512ff.

<sup>2</sup> See references in note 1, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard, J. Les leçons de la guerre dans l'enseignement secondaire. *Le Grande Revue*, vol. 84, pp. 495ff.

<sup>4</sup> Bounhiol. *Loc. cit.*, pp. 180ff.

the cultural and the utilitarian, the humanities and the sciences. On the basis of an education of this type those who are to become the nation's leaders can be trained, well prepared intellectually to meet the demands of modern society. Such an education should aim to develop not encyclopedists or academic scholars, but men of physical, moral, and intellectual strength. The function of secondary education would, therefore, be selective, to train the élite from all social classes to the position of leadership,<sup>1</sup> for as M. Steeg stated in presenting the budget of the Ministry of Education in 1911: "That an élite is necessary, it is not for democracy to deny; that an élite is necessary not only to maintain the prestige of society, but for the direction of the nation—on this point, I believe, that we can come to an agreement. The object of secondary education is the intellectual training of an élite which is destined to become directive and which must be prepared for its social rôle."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Besch. Le lycée et l'école primaire. *Revue Universitaire*, vol. 27, 4, p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> Brelet. *Loc. cit.*, vol. 71, p. 374.