

fact of every citizen, is to oppose at all times every scheme or proposal which in the slightest degree disturbs public confidence, for upon the preservation of this the welfare of the entire community hangs. The harm done by shaking public credit is only less than that done by destroying it, for there is no more paralyzing influence to put into the channels of industry and business than the element of uncertainty, either

as to the money standard of value, or as to the prices of commodities as these are influenced by legislation. It would be an incalculable boon to the country were Congress to realize that promptness is the first and imperative requisite of all financial or industrial legislation. It is uncertainty rather than change which does the harm. This is a lesson of the hard times which our National legislators would do well to take to heart.

OPEN LETTERS.

The Reform of Secondary Education.

THE National Educational Association began in July, 1892, a movement for the reform of secondary education in the United States that seems destined to accomplish even more than its most enthusiastic promoters dared to hope for. This fortunate outcome is in part due to the systematic and authoritative way in which the task was undertaken, and in part to the ability and skill with which the Committee of Ten who were selected to plan and carry on the investigations that have now resulted in an elaborate report¹ discharged their functions.

Representing as it does teachers of every grade and from all parts of the country, the National Educational Association was perhaps the only body large enough and comprehensive enough to give authority to an undertaking of this kind. Its directors took the initiative in the matter, selected the Committee of Ten, and made an appropriation to pay the necessary expenses that they might incur. The Committee of Ten consisted of President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University (chairman); Dr. William T. Harris, Commissioner of Education; President James H. Baker of the University of Colorado; President Richard H. Jesse of the University of Missouri; Professor Henry C. King of Oberlin College; President James M. Taylor of Vassar College; Principal James C. Mackenzie of the Lawrenceville (New Jersey) School; Principal O. D. Robinson of the Albany (New York) High School; and Principal John Tetlow of the Girls' High School, Boston.

At a preliminary session held in the autumn of 1892 this Committee determined to call nine special conferences of ten members each, one conference for each leading subject or group of subjects taught in secondary schools, and to submit to them, as experts, a series of searching and comprehensive questions concerning secondary-school work. The members of these conferences were selected with great care. The ninety experts chosen were drawn in almost equal numbers from the schools and the colleges, and pains were taken to give representation to every part of the country and every type of school. Conferences were called in Latin; Greek; Mathematics; English; other Modern Languages; Physics, Astronomy, and Chemistry; Natural History; History, Civil Government, and Political Economy; and Geography.

The several conferences assembled in December, 1892. Two met at Ann Arbor, Michigan; one at Poughkeepsie, New York; one at Washington, District

¹ Published by the Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C., and to be obtained on request.

of Columbia; one at Cambridge, Massachusetts; one at Madison, Wisconsin; and three at Chicago, Illinois. The questions submitted by the Committee of Ten were fully considered and answered in elaborate reports (which appear as appendices to the report of the Committee of Ten), that are alone most important contributions to educational literature. The last of these conference reports was not completed until August, 1893, and in November last, after having considered these reports for some weeks, the Committee of Ten met a second time in order to complete their task. How well they did it, their report shows; and it must stand as the most important single discussion of the aims, methods, and content of secondary education that has ever been made. It will be eagerly studied, as it ought to be, in every college and high school of the country. If its suggestions are generally acted upon, as there is good reason to hope that they will be, there will result a most healthy reform of our secondary instruction, and a long-wished-for improvement in the relations of the secondary schools to the colleges.

One of the most useful features of the report is a series of four plans for four-year courses in secondary schools. These four plans are not submitted by the Committee as final, but as sample school programs, each of which conforms, as nearly as may be, to the desires of the special conferences. The Committee's tables are as follows, the abbreviation "p." standing for a period of forty-five minutes, and this work of the school being limited to twenty periods a week:

CLASSICAL.

Three foreign languages (one modern).

<i>First year.</i>	<i>Third year.</i>
Latin 5 p.	Latin 4 p.
English 4 p.	Greek ¹ 5 p.
Algebra 4 p.	English 3 p.
History 4 p.	German [or French] . . 4 p.
Physical Geography . . 3 p.	Mathe- {Algebra 2}
20 p.	} matics } Geometry 2} 4 p.
	20 p.
<i>Second year.</i>	<i>Fourth year.</i>
Latin 5 p.	Latin 4 p.
English 2 p.	Greek 5 p.
German ¹ [or French]. 4 p.	English 2 p.
Geometry 3 p.	German [or French] . . 3 p.
Physical 3 p.	Chemistry 3 p.
History 3 p.	Trigonometry and . . .
20 p.	Higher Algebra } 3 p.
	or History }
	20 p.

¹ In any school in which Greek can be better taught than a modern language, or in which local opinion or the history of the school makes it desirable to teach Greek in an ample way, Greek may be substituted for German or French in the second year of the classical program.

LATIN-SCIENTIFIC.

Two foreign languages (one modern).

<i>First year.</i>		<i>Third year.</i>	
Latin	5 p.	Latin	4 p.
English	4 p.	English	3 p.
Algebra	4 p.	German [or French] ..	4 p.
History	4 p.	Mathe- {Algebra 2}	
Physical Geography ..	3 p.	{Geometry 2}	4 p.
	20 p.	Astronomy (½ yr.) and	
		Meteorology (½ yr.)	3 p.
		History	2 p.
			20 p.

Second year.

Latin	5 p.	Latin	4 p.
English	2 p.	English	4 p.
German [or French] ..	4 p.	German [or French] ..	3 p.
Geometry	3 p.	Chemistry	3 p.
Physics	3 p.	Trigonometry and	
Botany or Zoölogy ...	3 p.	Higher Algebra	
	20 p.	or History	3 p.
		Geology or Physi-	
		ography (½ yr.) ..	
		and Anatomy, ...	
		Physiology, and ..	
		Hygiene (½ yr.) ..	3 p.
			20 p.

MODERN LANGUAGES.

Two foreign languages (both modern).

<i>First year.</i>		<i>Third year.</i>	
French [or German] ..	5 p.	French [or German] ..	4 p.
English	4 p.	English	3 p.
Algebra	4 p.	German [or French] ..	4 p.
History	4 p.	Mathe- {Algebra 2}	
Physical Geography ..	3 p.	{Geometry 2}	4 p.
	20 p.	Astronomy (½ yr.) and	
		Meteorology (½ yr.)	3 p.
		History	2 p.
			20 p.

Second year.

French [or German] ..	4 p.	French [or German] ..	3 p.
English	2 p.	English	4 p.
German [or French] ..	5 p.	German [or French] ..	4 p.
Geometry	3 p.	Chemistry	3 p.
Physics	3 p.	Trigonometry and	
Botany or Zoölogy ...	3 p.	Higher Algebra	
	20 p.	or History	3 p.
		Geology or Physi-	
		ography (½ yr.) ..	
		and Anatomy,	
		Physiology, and	
		Hygiene (½ yr.) ..	3 p.
			20 p.

ENGLISH.

One foreign language (ancient or modern).

<i>First year.</i>		<i>Third year.</i>	
Latin, or German,		Latin, or German, or	
or French	5 p.	French	4 p.
English	4 p.	English	5 p.
Algebra	4 p.	Mathe- {Algebra 2}	
History	4 p.	{Geometry 2}	4 p.
Physical Geography ..	3 p.	Astronomy (½ yr.) and	
	20 p.	Meteorology (½ yr.)	3 p.
		History	4 p.
			20 p.

Second year.

Latin, or German,	
or French	5 or 4 p.
English	3 or 4 p.
Geometry	3 p.
Physics	3 p.
History	3 p.
Botany or	
Zoölogy	3 p.
	20 p.

Fourth year.

Latin, or German,	
or French	4 p.
English	4 p.
Chemistry	3 p.
Trigonometry and	
Higher Algebra	3 p.
History	3 p.
Geology or Physi-	
ography (½ yr.)	
and Anatomy,	
Physiology and	
Hygiene (½ yr.)	3 p.
	20 p.

A careful study of these four programs discloses the fact that they are constructed with great skill and according to fixed principles. They postpone to a period as late as possible the necessary bifurcation of classical and scientific courses; but no classical student is permitted to ignore science, and no scientific student is deprived of good linguistic training. In the classical program history and English suffer serious contraction, but this is atoned for, in part at least, by the fact that no inconsiderable amount of history is learned through the classical writers, and that accurate translation from a foreign tongue is itself admirable training in the use of English. All four of the sample programs, as the Committee points out, conform to the general recommendations of the conferences: they treat each subject in the same way for all pupils, with trifling exceptions; they give time enough to each subject to win from it the kind of mental training it is fitted to supply; they put the different principal subjects on an approximate equality so far as time-allocation is concerned; they omit all short information courses; and they make sufficiently continuous the instruction in each of the main lines, namely, language, science, history, and mathematics. Very slight modifications in them would be necessary in order to prepare pupils for admission to the appropriate courses in any American college on the present requirements.

The Committee is unanimous in the opinion that under existing conditions in the United States as to the training of teachers, and the provision of necessary means of instruction, the two programs called respectively Modern Languages and English must in practice be distinctly inferior to the other two. In this opinion the Committee recognizes, as fair-minded observers must also do, that the subjects that have been longest in the school curriculum are those that we are able to teach to the best advantage.

It is also suggested by the Committee that requirements for admission to college might be much simplified, though not reduced, and so brought into harmony with the above programs, thus closely articulating the secondary schools and the higher institutions in a way that would be advantageous both for themselves and for the country.

In this country, where no central educational administration exists, and private persons are almost unrestricted in their freedom to establish schools and colleges, any comprehensive scheme of reform is exceedingly difficult. It must be begun, just as has been the case in this instance, by a voluntary association of individuals. It must be carried on by the enthusiasm and energy of those enlisted in its service. It can only be successful if it is so reasonable and practicable as to

command willingly universal assent. It may safely be predicted that the work of the Committee of Ten, in principle and outline as well as in most points of detail, fulfils these conditions.

Nicholas Murray Butler.

An Honest Election Machine.

THE city of Montreal is not perhaps generally regarded as the most progressive city upon this continent, but it has been one of the first to learn that the only road to substantial reform in municipal administration is through the sanctity of the ballot-box, and the adoption of "machine" methods on lawful lines. On a winter evening, three years ago, the members of a social club of that city were informally discussing the influence of money in politics. There were several politicians of experience present, and, being among friends, they felt free to reveal what are usually held as state secrets. Many were the tales of electoral corruption, and the verdict rendered by those who knew was in effect that fraud in the preparation of the voters' lists, and "personation" (that is, one man voting in the name of another), were responsible for the election of many, if not all, of those who corruptly administered Montreal's civic affairs. Among the listeners were a few earnest young men who determined to test the truth of these statements, and, if found to be correct, to make at least one honest effort to devise a remedy. An extended inquiry was made. It was established that frequently fifteen per cent. of the vote polled was fraudulent, and that, where majorities were narrow, this fraudulent vote always elected the more unworthy candidate. The general belief appeared to be that the only way to elect good men was to fight the devil with his own fire. It was, however, evident to the would-be reformers that just so long as corruption was necessary to elect candidates, stainless men would not offer themselves, and honorable workers would not take active part in election contests. It was necessary to discover some means by which honest men could be elected by honorable means, or else to surrender the entire business of municipal politics to the unscrupulous element of the community. With this end in view the young men made the following experiment: A parliamentary election was close at hand, and, supporting a candidate whose character was good, they offered to man and operate, free of expense, the two worst polls in his constituency, provided they were given full control. Thirty-five fraudulent votes had been polled in this locality on a previous election, and the "heelers" of the district fully expected to maintain their reputation. Their offer accepted, the first step on the part of the would-be reformers was to devise the printed card which follows at the top of the next column.

One of these cards was issued to correspond with each elector. The heading was filled in from the voters' list, the description being obtained through personal visitation, and when election day arrived, at each poll sat the "watcher" with his packet of description cards, and no man polled his vote unless the watcher was satisfied. Six attempts at personation were made, but when it became evident that further trial was not only useless, but extremely dangerous, these efforts ceased.

Encouraged by their success, the young men determined to form an independent organization, and on

<i>Dist. No...</i>	<i>Poll No...</i>	<i>Voter No...</i>	
<i>Name</i>			(Watcher's Description.)
<i>Registered Residence</i>			
<i>.....(if Removed)</i>			
<i>Qualification</i>			
<i>Occupation</i>			
<i>Height</i>			
<i>Build</i>			
<i>Complexion</i>			
<i>Whiskers</i>			
<i>Color of Eyes</i>			
<i>Age</i>			
<i>Peculiarities</i>			

(Perforation.)

<i>Dist. No...</i>	<i>Poll No...</i>	<i>Voter No...</i>	
<i>Name</i>			(Card-stub.)
<i>Where to be called for</i>			
<i>When</i>			
<i>Sentiments</i>			

April 1, 1892, the first constitution of the "Volunteer Electoral League" was promulgated. The objects as therein set forth are as follows:

1. To revise and perfect the voters' lists.
2. To encourage the nomination of candidates of known integrity for public office.
3. To use all legitimate means to secure their return.
4. To prevent fraudulent and dishonest practices in elections.
5. To cause to be followed up and prosecuted, to the full extent of the law, those detected in any violation of the election act.
6. To suggest and promote any legislation, approved by the League, having for its object the purity of elections.

It was also clearly stated that the organization should be purely non-political, in the belief that civic affairs should be wholly divorced from national issues; that it should not aspire to become a nominating body, leaving this task for municipal organizations composed of older men; that possible aspirants for municipal honors and officers of political clubs should be excluded from membership; that funds should be raised by subscription among citizens, no gift to be received from any civic official, representative, or candidate; that the services of every member should be voluntary, and the organization absolutely independent even of candidates which it had selected, being equally as ready to unseat as to elect in case a representative proved unworthy of trust. Matters relative to the general policy should be determined by a council composed of three representatives from each ward organization, while those which related solely to a single ward should be left to the ward council, the minority, however; always having the right of appeal to the central body. This, in brief, constituted the platform of principles as laid down by the Volunteer Electoral League at its inception.

By the close of the year 1892 the League had grown sufficiently in numbers to warrant it in undertaking the management of the election for an entire ward. This it did successfully, and again the system was given a wider trial and was not found wanting.

Finding many defects in the city charter statutes regarding elections, the League prepared a series of amendments which were laid before the Provincial legislature in the fall of 1893. Nearly all these provisions