

Responsibility.

The extension of facilities for free secondary education seems to demand that all who accept these privileges shall make adequate use of them. Secondary education costs the State about three times as much per head as does primary education, yet attendance at the secondary school may be spasmodic and broken off at will. It seems only just that when a pupil accepts a free place he should come under some effective obligation to make a proper use of the opportunities offered him and remain in attendance sufficiently long to derive substantial profit from the instruction. How this may best be done will be a matter for further consideration. It may be that the best solution of the whole problem is to be found in the extension of the compulsory provisions of the Education Act to an age-limit of sixteen or seventeen years.

The question has been raised whether, in lieu of scholarships, which are often won by those who do not need them, provision might more profitably be made for conveying to or boarding at secondary schools those country pupils who at present are out of reach of suitable secondary education, thus overcoming the distance difficulty and putting all pupils on a more equal footing. This will also require further consideration.

Technical Education.

Considerable changes seem to be necessary if we are to secure that the large sum spent on technical education is really invested in the improvement and efficiency of our industries and occupations. The only direct technical education we have at present is provided by the evening or other classes attended by persons whose trade or occupation is fixed. This should be developed, especially by trade continuation classes for all apprentices and those who go direct from the primary school to a definite occupation.

Technical high schools can scarcely claim to have an appreciable effect on our industries, except that they provide a more rational, practical, and modern form of secondary education than in the conservative high schools. If the latter were reformed in the manner suggested above, the general secondary-education course therein outlined could be as well provided for in a modernized secondary school as in what is known as a technical high school. The latter is at present a protest to the existing secondary education, and, like all protests, tends to overemphasize the point of distinction. Such a school should only be broadly vocational in the sense of being related to the activities of life and of lifting work and industrial interests into the interests of education. There would not need to be a great variety of practical work in a well-balanced technical high school. Until an occupation has been selected the same broad, practical work-classes would, in the main, serve for all pupils. Work would be dignified, shown to be scientific, and worthy of the highest skill and intelligence.

The greatest service that all secondary schools, apart from their special university classes, can render is to break down the present absurd preference for clerkships and so-called genteel occupations. These have come to be regarded as "genteel" because formerly they were the only occupations for genteel and educated people. The far more skilful, scientific, manual and trade occupations of modern times would soon be equally "genteel," if that be worth anything, if our secondary pupils saw the wisdom of investing their education and intelligence in our skilled occupations, trades, and industries, where ample scope worthy of their advanced education would be found—nay, where it is demanded—if we are to make progress in industry and commerce.

The main functions of a modern, practical education, primary or secondary, is to foster a taste for some form of definite work, for some definite trade or skilled occupation, and to gain the boy's interest through practical activity while actually at school. It gives him the taste for a trade: it does not teach him a trade. It does not specialize for a trade, which is often the mistaken ideal of a school. It gives him a general, practical, and technical foundation which will be of service to him in any trade he may chance to follow. This is really the same principle as that set out when dealing with the rural secondary course.

The general vocational classes should awaken an inclination for skilled trades, for it is a well-known experience that boys who have received good and comprehensive instruction, even in drawing and general handwork, or in subjects related to practical affairs, do not readily take up an unskilled occupation, or even prefer