



SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE? *By permission of Internal Affairs Department* The report recommends schools to "open their doors at convenient times to those ex-pupils who may elect to improve the skills they have already acquired." This plan for a school community centre at Rangiora was drawn by Paul Pascoe

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and humble needs; and it may be carried to the point of high art in conversation and oratory, in imaginative literature and scientific and philosophical exposition. So with comprehension, which at its upper levels includes what is called "the appreciation of literature."

Methods

These aims call for a programme that provides for:

- (a) Constant oral and written expression and work involving comprehension.
- (b) Systematic training in the use of a library.
- (c) Above all, opportunity to acquire a knowledge and appreciation of literature, in the widest sense of that term.

Again, the methods are not separate, nor separable. The division is only for convenience.

"What is Good English?"

There is implicit here, and particularly in relation to the first method, the question, "What is 'good English'?" To answer it we must ask the further question, "Good for what?" In other words, English must be taught from the point of view of *function*—there is an English which is good for conversation, there is an English which is good for serious discussion, there is another English which is good for imaginative writing, and for oratory, and for description, and so on.

The schools are mainly concerned with what may be called "English for everyday life"—writing and speaking, reading and listening, in relation to the ordinary business of earning a living and living with others. Few pupils will want to write essays or novels in later life; all will want, continually, to express their feelings, aims, and desires for everyday purposes and to understand the thoughts of their fellows.

We must note, too, that insincere emotional writing may, in the effort to deceive the reader, eventually deceive the writer, and self-deception is mental and moral suicide. Again, the form of composition which involves weaving a

web of threadbare platitudes and second-hand phrases must be fatal to the writer's own standards of taste. The critical faculty, which must somehow be developed in pupils, as based on absolute sincerity. A pupil will never be able to detect what is shoddy, insincere, and specious if his own writing has these qualities.

The second of the methods mentioned is systematic training in the use of a library. In one way or another (through the home, the town library, and the school) every post-primary pupil should have access to a generous store of books—poems, plays, histories, memoirs, biographies, travel books, records of scientific discovery, fiction, good translations.

There is a further principle that should be heavily underscored: George Sampson has said that the sentence, "Every teacher is a teacher of English" should be written in letters of gold over every school doorway. The aims we have discussed cannot possibly be achieved in separate disjointed lessons. English is not so much a subject as the essential tool of every teacher of

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