



K. J. DELLOW
"The change is generally welcomed"



MISS A. L. LOUDON
"You may quote me quite emphatically"



C. M. LITTLEJOHN
"The difficulties have not been unexpected"

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as equipment. This year one room has been used for handicrafts; next year at least two will be needed, and more could be used. Some of the congestion will be relieved, however, by offering drawing as an optional subject (as suggested by the 1943 report).

G.B.S. No Longer Right

While it might be true that the broadening of core subjects brought new problems for staff and demanded more of them, he did not think these would be found onerous after the burdens successfully carried during the war years. Shaw could hardly say nowadays that "those who can, do; those who can't, teach."

For the pupil, on the other hand, there will now be a necessity to make some choice in the fourth form instead of in the fifth, and the new curriculum makes it more difficult for a child with a linguistic bias to be given the academic type of education after his or her third form year. But it was too early yet to tell if the new system would have any positive effects on enrolments.

"I have heard people say that the State schools can't provide a classical education," he added, "and that parents wanting this kind of training will have to send them to private schools. But that is only uninformed comment. All registered private schools will be following exactly the same prescriptions as we will and technical schools too, for that matter, will have to teach the core subjects."

Girls Are Better Off

From the point of view of liberal education, girls have for a long time been better off than most boys, said Miss A. L. Loudon, principal of the Epsom Girls' Grammar School. At this school, history and geography had always been compulsory subjects, every girl doing two periods a week on each. As a result, the inclusion of social studies as a core subject had not affected the ordinary school syllabus to any extent. For third-form girls the two subjects were known as social studies, while further up the school they were, necessarily, differentiated.

"The main trouble with the new prescriptions in these subjects," said Miss Loudon, "has been the text-books. We overcame that difficulty this year by writing our own and we will carry on next year with these until other books are available. It is true that we could do

with twice the staff we have for physical education, but in the meantime we are giving half the time in this department to organised games as the curriculum allows us to do."

With relatively more time given to such subjects as music, speech-training, art and domestic crafts, girls have long been more liberally educated than boys, without any sacrifice of academic standards, she said, and very little change had been necessary to give effect to the committee's recommendations.

Better Science Arrangements

"But I would say," she concluded, "and you may quote me quite emphatically on the point, that I greatly prefer the new science arrangements. We can now prepare girls adequately for proper scientific study, such as medicine or pure science, where before they were severely handicapped by the Home Science which was imposed on us."

The increased emphasis placed on geography as one of the social subjects, though it had no repercussions at Epsom, was likely to be a hurdle for many schools. Under the old regulation a pupil was not required to study geography beyond Form II and only at Canterbury College was it possible for a teacher to take a course in this subject. A lecturer in geography has, however, now been appointed at Auckland University College and more teachers trained in this subject will be coming forward as time goes on.

Slower Academic Progress

The reactions of those pupils who have already experienced the change in their school-life appears to vary a bit.

"I suppose I should be able to tell you," said the headmaster of one district high school, "that the new system has already produced a marked improvement in pupils' work and that the pupils themselves react well to it. But I can't truthfully say that I've noticed any such difference. If they want to work well, they still do; if they don't, then they just don't."

But at Takapuna Grammar School, the headmaster (K. J. Dellow) reported that the third forms were taking to the new idea with some enthusiasm. "They have every reason to," he said. "The demands on them for hard mental work are definitely less and on the syllabus there is much more outdoor work, organised games and exercises, which they enjoy. So far as we can judge yet, the effects

are good. It is true that academic progress is slower, but if the spirit of the new system is carried out the children will become much better citizens. As far as the staff is concerned, the demands made on them will be greater, but I think it is correct to say that the change is generally welcomed."

Swing from French and Mathematics

It was impossible to carry out the letter of the new curriculum with the present equipment, Mr. Dellow went on, and the Department recognised this. Problems of equipment and space were much the same as those met at Auckland Grammar School, but some of the deficiencies in P.T. gear had been supplied by the school woodwork shop.

One more unfortunate result already noticed in the choice made by pupils of subjects for study next year was a swing away from subjects such as French and mathematics.

"Higher up in the school," he said, "there is already a tendency to select the subjects which are easiest and involve the least study and application. This is natural, no doubt, but none the less a pity. It is a good thing to wrestle with the principles of a foreign language, and French is a help in the appreciation of good English."

Back to Essentials

"What we have to realise is that now we are going to educate all children in our secondary schools, not a select few, and that is what is really behind all this reorganisation," said another educationist. "The change-over means that an extra burden of responsibility is being placed on the Training Colleges to turn out graduates qualified to teach the new subjects. Teachers of 20 years' standing can't be expected to drop overnight the methods they have used for so long, though some will adapt themselves easily but the younger ones should be able to face the task confidently and find in the new system much more scope for their gifts than in the old."

"It is true that there is a danger in the case of the 'academic' child, but it is a danger which can be avoided by understanding and commonsense. The long-term results of the change—and it is only on the long term that it can be judged—are bound to be good, since what is planned is the restoration of education to its proper place as an end in itself, as well as a means to an end."

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