

2. If in the gymnasia the number of hours devoted to the study of Latin and Greek is to be reduced, Latin and Greek composition is to be dropped. Drawing is to be made obligatory in the lower classes and dropped out of the highest class. English is to be made a required study. Much greater emphasis is to be laid upon the study of the German language, German composition, and the proper use of the spoken language. Greater attention is to be paid to the recent history of Germany, without increasing the number of hours devoted to the general subject of history.

3. The decrease in the number of school hours must not entail an increase in the amount of home study. The consequent transfer of the principal part of the work to the school demands an improvement in the method of instruction.

4. In order that this better method may be acquired, and that teacher and pupil may fulfill the demands laid upon them, the following things are necessary:

(a) Scientific pedagogic training of the teacher.

(b) A better position for teachers as a class, in regard to all their outward relations.

(c) Greater responsibility of the teacher for the bodily and mental welfare of the pupil.

(d) Fostering of games and bodily exercises of all proper kinds, with gymnastic instruction, given as far as possible by teachers belonging to the institution.

(e) Control of school hygiene by a school physician, and instruction of teachers and pupils in the elements of hygiene.

(f) Instruction in the open air, so far as possible, in natural history, geography and local history.

With an occasional substitution of "English" and the "United States" for "German" and "Germany" there is much in the above to interest American educators. This Conference had no legislative power. But it consisted of forty-four of the first schoolmen in Germany, called together by the government, and it is reasonable to suppose that its conclusions will have an important influence upon the future development of the educational system of Germany. It is already rumored that the present Minister of Instruction, Herr von Gossler, will retire from office in the near future, for the reason that his views are not in harmony with the speech of the Emperor and the conclusions of the Conference. Dresden, 17th December, 1890.—*Lend a Hand*.

The lips that are full of words belong to those whose hands are empty of deeds.—*Ex*.

LITERARY.

FICTION.

There is, perhaps, no factor in civilization more important than literature. Study the rise and development of all nations, and the history of their literature stands side by side with the history of their progress in other directions.

History, science, and philosophy, are all important branches of literature, and fiction, though of a comparatively recent date, is hardly less important. Fiction, or the novel, which is now generally meant by that term, was not born until near the close of the seventeenth century, but its growth has been so rapid that now, in England alone, over one thousand new novels are published annually, while in America, though the number is not so large, it is greater than that of any other class of books. The novel, according to the accepted definition, depicts the lives of imaginary persons, exhibiting the passions of human life, which, in their action on one another, develop the story and bring about a sad or a happy conclusion. The whole world, and any phase of human life, may be its subject. With such a wide field, is it a wonder that there exists such a variety of opinions as to its true aim?

Let us consider first the many different departments of fiction, each important in its place. We have the historical novel, the realistic novel, the idealistic novel, and novels designed to bring out views philosophical, religious, and moral. All have done good in their place, which makes it difficult to decide what the true realm of fiction is.

One writer's definition of romance is as follows:

"It is a process of fiction-making by which life is expressed in its highest meaning. Mathematically, it is life raised to its highest power." We often say, "I do not like this book. It is untrue to life." Should a book be true to life as life appears to us every day? That is, should all the characters be on an exact level with ourselves? Realistic novelists have portrayed them so, making man almost an idol for himself to worship. They either make light of his follies, or speak of them in a hopeless, despondent way, giving no remedy for them.

Rather should not the virtues and vices of the character be intensified, so as to show us our errors more plainly, and to set before us higher ideals? A book should be true to life as life