It would seem that a reasonable application of the Virginia aims and their faithful use in the way intended would result in even a wider grasp of worthwhile subject matter. Certainly they should stimulate a richer, more enjoyable, more meaningful learning experience.

VI. Conclusions

1. Aims represent the ends to be achieved in the lives of children. They are a directing, driving force toward those ends.

2. Aims are stated by philosophers, arranged in usable form and adapted to school purposes by teachers, and accomplished by pupils through learning efforts.

3. Aims must be attained actively by children through their learning experiences in situations that have meaning. They can not be imposed.

4. Aims are peculiar to individuals and situations. They are adapted to the situation by teachers and personally adopted as learning purposes by pupils.

5. Aims are dynamic and changing. They must be revised from time to time.

6. Aims provide no solutions to educational problems; they should furnish guidance in the thinking called for in solutions.

7. Aims should be stated in plain, simple English for the use of all who are concerned with the educational undertaking.

8. Aims for the use of high-school teachers should take into consideration the nature and needs of adolescent children.

PAUL HOUNCHELL

MODIFICATIONS IN HOME-READING REQUIREMENTS SINCE 1900

FORMAL instruction in English was first required at Harvard, and then only as late as the last quarter of the past century. At that time, the faculty decided that many of the candidates presenting themselves for admission to the institution were so poorly equipped in their ability to read and to write intelligently that they could not be considered as adequately prepared to pursue a higher education. Consequently, the masters in 1865 decreed that, thereafter, any prospective student of Harvard must give a satisfactory demonstration of his ability to read aloud, though they did not specify any particular writing from which the reading was to be done. Five years later, we find, however, that entrants were required specifically to have studied either *Comus* or *Julius Cæsar*. By 1874, the entrance examinations included questions on spelling, punctuation, and handwriting, and allowed a choice in reading of one of the following classics: *The Tempest, Julius Caesar, The Merchant of Venice, The Vicar of Wakefield, Ivanhoe, The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

Following the example of Harvard, other colleges laid down definite requirements in knowledge of the classics as prerequisite to admission to baccalaureate study. The high schools of the day, existing largely for the purpose of college preparation, endeavored to offer instruction in all the classics required. Most of them followed the practice of distributing these classics throughout the three or four years of high school. There was no consistent scheme followed as to the placement of specific classics. Indeed, any one book might appear in any one of the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth years.

However, complaint came from the high schools that, with the wide diversity of requirements for entrance into many colleges, it was impossible to organize an adequate course of study. As a result of this protest, there was formed the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements, with the consequent standardization of literature courses in secondary schools. The National Education Association's Committee on College Entrance Requirements, in its report published in 1899, laid out a purely formal course of study, based on the theory of formal discipline. The recommended list for

intensive analysis grew gradually longer, until, in 1912, it was increased to allow for optional reading.

Meanwhile, there has been growing in the past twenty years an increasingly evident feeling as to the value of the high school curriculum in itself, instead of as a preliminary to college work. The general acceptance of the social aims of secondary education is reflected in the changing attitude toward the purpose of teaching literature and reading in the public high school. Bobbitt listed these aims for the teaching of literature in 1924 in his *How to Make a Curriculum*:

1. Ability and habit of enjoyable reading
2. Apprehension of the realities which make up life
3. Development of large group consciousness
4. Development of the sense of the brotherhood of man
5. Ability to catch glimpses of the Infinite Being
6. Ability to participate in philosophic thought
7. Ability to "follow men of vision"
8. Ability to get along well with people
9. Ability to choose one's vocation wisely
10. Ability to harmonize one's mental, emotional, and physical states
11. Ability to use the dictionary and other helps

These broad objectives are very far removed from the cut-and-dried technicalities required for successful competition in the College Board examinations.

Hosic agreed with Bobbitt's point of view when he advocated the selection for use in the junior high school of books chosen for the value of their content and for their power to grip the pupils of a given grade. Emphasis, then, would be placed on books of a narrative type in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. Hosic believed that, in the last three years of high school, the purpose of literature should be to broaden the pupil's knowledge of human nature, and that the literature course should afford ample opportunity for the study of great personalities. While he would stress the teaching of classics, he still believed that there was a large place for modern types.

"Any reading with a high ethical or social message," Hosic wrote in the *Reorganization of English in the Secondary Schools* (1917), "no matter how short its life, may well find a place in the literature hour."

Dora Smith and Fries, Hanford, and Steeves among present-day authorities advocate increasing the reading lists to include a wide variety of modern material. If it is true that every age is provincial, then it is the duty of every teacher to "focus judgment on this provinciality," assert Fries, Hanford and Steeves in *The Teaching of Literature.*

As the secondary schools began to awake to the significance of high school English as an entity, independent of college requirements, there came a shift in the fashion of presenting literature to adolescent pupils. The changing point of view in objectives resulted in a changing stress in methodology. New courses of study now reduce the time allotted to literary classics, and lay the emphasis on reading for pleasure rather than for detailed analysis. Since modern leaders insist that literature is to educate for life and not for college, it seems to follow that writings of merit should be studied for the experiences they unfold, and not for technique or form.

In his study of high school curricula for the North Central States, Stout found that, during the years 1890-1900, the following classics were those most frequently taught:

The Merchant of Venice
Julius Cæsar
Bunker Hill Oration
The Sketch Book
Evangeline
The Vision of Sir Launfal
Snow-Bound
Macbeth.
The Lady of the Lake
Hamlet
The Deserted Village

Gray's Elegy
Thanatopsis
As You Like It

Contrast this group with the thirty classics most frequently appearing in high school curricula, as listed by Dora V. Smith, in *Instruction in English* (U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1932,, No. 17):

Silas Marner
Julius Cæsar
The Idylls of the King
Ivanhoe
The Tale of Two Cities
The Lady of the Lake
The Ancient Mariner
Treasure Island
The Merchant of Venice
The Vision of Sir Launfal
As You Like It
Short Story Collection
Macbeth
The Odyssey
Sohrab and Rustum
The Sketch Book
Evangeline
Sir Roger de Coverley
Snow-Bound
The Christmas Carol
The Courtship of Miles Standish
Rip Van Winkle
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
The Man Without a Country
Midsummer Night's Dream
Modern Verse Collection
Essay Collection
Burke's Speech on Conciliation
Selections from the Old Testament
The House of Seven Gables

The use of certain masterpieces not so generally studied was suggested by Hosic: *Coriolanus, Twelfth Night, Henry V,* Chaucer's *Prologue, Hamlet, Paradise Lost* (Books I and II), *Beowulf, King Lear,* and *The Jew of Malta.* When there is added to this wide list of classics a varied but discriminating list of modern works including, among others, selected specimens of Wells, Shaw, Noyes, Locke, de Morgan, Frost, Sandburg, Lindsay, Barrie, Maeterlinck, Dunsany, and Synge, it is apparent that the high school pupil of this decade is being offered a vastly richer and, it is believed, more nourishing diet than were his predecessors prior to 1900.

This liberalism in literature courses in the secondary schools parallels the efforts of the colleges to find a more effective way to select their incoming students. Twenty years ago the examining boards began to sense the fact that formalized questions on the classics did not give a true indication of a pupil's ability to do college English. It was found that a truer picture of the student's potentialities was given by a comprehensive examination designed to test (1) his general knowledge of literature; (2) his ability to read with understanding an unfamiliar passage of literary merit; (3) his skill in expressing himself well in writing on one of a group of topics. In the last five years many colleges have supplemented their comprehensive examinations by aptitude tests. According to the latest report of the National Society for the Study of Education, the institutions adopting this innovation have found it highly successful. (See Thirty-first Year Book of the Society, Part II: Experiments in Liberal Arts and Education).

MILDRED R. OAKS

NATION-WIDE STUDY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADUATION EXAMINATIONS

HOW did the United States come to possess Alaska?

Who wrote "The Pied Piper of Hamelin?"

Did Louis Pasteur discover blood circulation?

How often have questions such as these proved a bugaboo to you when you went to school? Well, they're still asking this type of question in elementary schools throughout the United States, according to Dr. David Segel, U. S. Office of Education Specialist in Tests and Measurements. Dr. Segel made a nation-wide study of elementary school graduating examinations. The survey reveals many interesting facts.

The Office of Education consultant gave special attention to tests given pupils in seventh and eights grades of rural and village schools—tests upon which eligibility