

Fundamentally there is no great difference in interest or intellect, and it is for discussion if the onset of adolescence, coming as it does during school age, is any reason for the segregation of the sexes. Association with the opposite sex at this time may result in the majority acquiring a better understanding, a sounder appreciation, and consequently enjoying, in the later years, a more stable life.

Segregation may have the opposite effect. Prejudice and tradition have so far caused this problem to be avoided, and the blame cannot be laid wholly at the door of the educationist. The experiences, however, of teachers familiar with both types of class will be invaluable in the determination of this aspect.

The practical difficulties of designing a curriculum to suit both sexes can hardly be considered as insurmountable, for apart from the purely vocational subjects, the basic syllabus is the same for each.

True, the handling of a mixed class will call for special skill on the part of the teacher, but this is not to be compared with the difficulties and limitations imposed by tradition on the instruction of, say, a male class by a woman teacher.

The opposite also applies, and it can be fairly confidently stated that, measured both by standards of discipline and academic achievement, a mixed class under a skilled teacher attains results more easily.

Problems of behaviour must be carefully examined. For instance, is the desire to excel stimulated by the presence of the opposite sex? If so, has this phenomenon any practical value, or is it merely "showing off?" Again, what is the reaction of the boy whose efforts are overshadowed by a more gifted girl? Is the male pride wounded? If so, is the damage permanent? Is there a spirit of competition evident between the sexes, and does this aid instruction?

The mixed class, learning the same subjects from the same instructor, has reactions apparent in its individual

members which must be reconciled with the principle of co-education before it can be proved that the method is sound.

The solving of this problem will, no doubt, be one of the post-war tasks of the education authorities. A conclusive answer, followed by the necessary practical application, will mark one of the most important advances ever made in education, in the Dominion.



Four Years Ago

13 Oct 1940.—Brig. H. E. Barrowclough arrived in Egypt by air from U.K. to command 6 Infantry Brigade.

16 Oct.—Mr. Anthony Eden visited 6 Infantry Brigade at Maadi.

19 Oct.—General Freyberg inspected railway units in Maadi Camp.

20 Oct.—First air raid over Maadi Camp. Bombs dropped near native village.

21 Oct.—13 Railway Construction Company and remainder 16 Railway Operating Company joined HQ Railway Construction and Maintenance Group in Western Desert.

22 Oct.—Mr. Anthony Eden inspected 4 Infantry Brigade units at Baggush.

25 Oct.—All troops in Maadi Camp inspected by Mr. Anthony Eden and Generals Wavell, Wilson and Freyberg.

26 Oct.—6 Field Ambulance and reinforcement draft (with Third Contingent) arrived at Port Said from Bombay and proceeded to Maadi.

29 Oct.—Italy attacked Greece.

30 Oct.—General Freyberg inspected 6 Field Ambulance and latest reinforcements at Maadi.

—2 NZEF Archives Section.