

# PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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## Dear Mr. Editor

(Continued From Page 2)

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to the inquisitive minds of our future scientists and inventors. Many of these "extras" were standard facilities in Toronto and other urban areas twenty years ago and more. Oral French was not, and still isn't. Because 94 school boards out of 5,000 in Ontario feel that this subject is a necessity, Vaughan is jumping on the bandwagon so that they may say, "We wuz foist!" For, at present, that is the only visible achievement of such a programme instituted in this rural area.

The argument heard loudest and strongest is that children will learn more easily at an earlier age, and that being taught French now will assist them in high school. Assist whom, when the Roberts plan permits almost all except those who intend to go further than high school to drop all languages but English? The remaining number, who take an academic course in preparation for university will be of the calibre who will find French as easy in grade 9 as in grade 5. Added to this is the observation that the pupils coming into high school without having had French are on an equal basis with those having had the subject for a year or two by the time they finish grade 9.

What happens? Do the "non-French" work twice as hard, do the "having-had-French" loaf a little, or yet, are the public school courses of so little value that everything has to be re-learned?

The letter from the Department of Education gives permission to the Vaughan Township School Area Board to hire a qualified teacher (which has been done) to teach Oral French to "those pupils whose parents wish it" and with the "least adverse effect" to the present curriculum. Now, how "least" is least adverse? Can your child afford any adverse effect to his present work, no matter how high his marks? Yet this must be expected or else why is it mentioned?

Over 1,800 names were submitted on the petition presented to the board at its April 11 meeting. In this number of "backward, ignorant," etc. people we have signatures of school principals and teachers (who work where Oral French is taught), engineers, nurses, accountants, and those in many other honourable professions and occupations. These people didn't earn their degrees by being backward and unconcerned about their own educations. Does it not follow that they would wish to see their children provided with a sound education, using the "three R's" as a strong springboard to arouse an interest in additional subjects?

The board chairman suggested that some of those signatures on our petition were also on forms agreeing with the implementing of Oral French, the implication being that some people will sign anything. Until I knew the facts of the case, I too thought, "Oral French? Why not?" Upon learning of the deplorable conditions in some of our schools, I began to have serious doubts regarding that "good idea", Oral French. Hundreds of others obviously are expressing those same doubts and have signed their names to that effect. If the board has any conscience at all, it must consider this most sincere and valid protest.

Yours truly,  
Mrs. Ruth Keffer,  
Concord.

**ORAL FRENCH - A STATUS SYMBOL?**  
Dear Mr. Editor:  
The hundreds of people in Vaughan Township who oppose the introduction of Oral French into public schools have been called "backward, ignorant..." not interested in the enrichment of their children's education." True or false? False, and for many good reasons. First of all these people are not against Oral French as such, but against the introduction of the subject at a time when there are many deficiencies in the present school programme, and indeed in the schools themselves.

Many children are poor readers, poor spellers and poor speakers in one language. Why add to their frustrations by making them bilingually incompetent? Where are the school libraries, home economics and industrial arts classes? A pupil should be taught the love of reading, cooking, sewing and other creative activities necessary for everyday living. In this science-minded world we live in, what about added facilities to enable children to explore the world around them - classroom aquariums, terrariums and other projects geared

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