

sensation in Parliament, is found beset with practical difficulties, some of which the *School Guardian* forcibly points out. In the first place there is the difficulty of getting constituencies to return their candidates. Then their representatives, once elected, would be no longer teachers but only ex-teachers. Again as no man can serve two masters, the representative elected would be in a very awkward position. Will he be the servant of the constituency which returns him or of the Union which supports him? Worst difficulty of all, as the membership of the Union is made up of Liberals and Conservatives, shall the candidates be Liberal or Conservative? Upon this rock the movement will probably split. To an onlooker it would certainly seem as if the Union might influence legislation, much more hopefully from without Parliament, than from within. Its power which is happily becoming considerable, may effect more by being brought to bear through a number of representatives, than if the duty of representing advanced views were left to rest upon the shoulders of one or two specially chosen members.

There is no accounting for taste in logic any more than in dress or decoration. Most educationists will join with the London [Eng.] *Schoolmaster* in deprecating the cruelty and cowardice of such "bullying" in the Public Schools as led to the death of the poor lad at King's College, but few will be able to see the force of the argument which that Journal quotes with approval from *The Queen*, and which regards "this lamentable occurrence as in great part due to the maudlin and mawkish sentimentality of the age," the sentimentality, viz: which "is opposed to the infliction of corporal punishment." "At a good Public School," argues the *Queen*, "where the master has the authority of a parent delegated to him, and can inflict corporal punishment if he sees fit to do so, such an act of tyranny as the killing of a boy by the elder scholars would not occur, as the bullies would dread the sound flogging they would receive for every act of tyranny practised by them. "This is surely applying the principle of *similia similibus* in logic with a vengeance. It reminds us of the anecdote we have somewhere read in which a father is represented as reproving his son in terms of awful profanity for swearing. The argument is surely on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle.

PROFESSIONAL READING.

We notice that at one or two of the Teacher's Associations resolutions have been passed favouring the proposal to have a course of professional reading prescribed by the Minister of Education, as a kind of post-graduate course for members of the profession. This desire for further improvement is laudable. No one, with a spark of the true teacher's spirit in him, will wish to "rest and be thankful," when once he has secured his certificate and a tolerable situation. But is there not a more excellent way of progress? Cannot a large body of intelligent, educated men and women do better than follow a uniform, monotonous, cut-and-dried course, made ready for them by the Education Department? Will not take the matter into their

own hands, emancipate these readings from the fetters of departmental routine, and, relying upon the ample resources of their own complex individuality, form their own reading circles and mark out their own courses? Those courses will be all the better for not being too strictly professional. A generous admixture of general literature of a high class will make it more stimulating and more broadening. Nor is it at all desirable that all teachers throughout the province of Ontario even should read the same course? On the contrary, both the profession and the country will be the better for a variety. If any number of teachers from half a dozen, or less, to half a hundred, can consult together, agree upon three months' reading, and make arrangement for regular interchange of thought and work either at stated meetings or by systematized correspondence, we venture to say better results will be gained than are possible from any authorized routine? The benefit to be gained will be proportioned not to the amount or quality of the matter read, nor even to the thoroughness with which the ideas of celebrated educators are learned, but rather to the amount of individual thought and application secured. For this there is nothing like the friction of mind with mind, the free interchange of opinion and criticism.

METHODS OF TEACHING.

A writer in the *New England Journal of Education* asks his readers whether it has ever occurred to them in looking through some of the new primary and oral arithmetics that the author was afraid the children might have something to do. The question suggests a fault which, it seems to us, besets many of the so-called new methods as well as new books. It is the danger which threatens the kindergarten. In reading the "Quincy Methods," excellent as its lessons are in many respects, and full of helpful hints as to the best means of getting at the child mind, the query perpetually recurs, can there really be living children of four or five years of age and upwards, who require to have every obstacle in their pathway so finely pulverized, and all their mental pabulum so wonderfully diluted? No doubt there are such children and as long as the methods in question are strictly adapted to the mental state and needs of the little ones, they are truly admirable. The great danger is that many teachers may, through error in judgment, go on pulverizing and diluting to the injury of the child whose brain craves heartier food and the more vigorous exercise necessary for healthful growth.

It must never be forgotten that the intellect of the child, no less than its limbs, must be strengthened by exertion, and that the healthy child delights just as much in the vigorous use of the one as of the other. We all know how the average child enjoys the most vigorous gymnastic feats of which it is capable, at the various stages of growth. Nothing is more contrary to its nature, or more repugnant to its impulses, than to be helped to do that which it can do for itself, or to be restrained by leading strings when it would gambol and tumble at its own sweet will. It is the gambolling and tumbling, not the helping hand or the leading string which strengthens bone and muscle. And the healthful child is formed to take just as much pleasure