

Frequently a few historical or scientific facts may save us the labor of proving over again what was long since investigated. Perhaps there is no other department in which men are more prone to neglect the results of previous explorers than education. This partly accounts for the *ex cathedra* dogmatism of shallow doctrinaires, who are always ready to pass their quartz for diamond and expatiate on its purity with the vehemence of a patent medicine vendor. One cure for the prevalent empiricism in educational methods is found in the study of mental science and the laws of mental evolution and development. Another, almost as important, lies in the history of the educational systems that have prevailed in various countries, especially those of modern times. There we may see particular theories clothed with practical application and worked out to their legitimate results, and thus save ourselves from the repetition of demonstrated error. We may gather valuable suggestions for new progress as we note the principles and the steps of the old. The scientific educator cannot afford to neglect the results.

TEACHERS AND TEXT-BOOKS.

A text-book for elementary schools to be successful must of necessity be the work of a practical teacher. The author must have some grasp of methods, some comprehensive knowledge of the best ways of presenting the subject matter to beginners. There is no other principle of early education more firmly established beyond all controversy. Some of the worst text-books on mathematics for junior students have been produced by writers who were themselves eminent mathematicians. It were easy to draw illustrations from science, literature, music, and other departments. When the mere technical skill of the author is not supplemented by adequate knowledge of educational facts and laws it is quite safe to predict the same conspicuous failure in the future as in the past.

Mr. O'Brien, the lately appointed drawing master for the public schools of Toronto, is undoubtedly a good water color painter. Quite as undoubtedly also he is not an experienced practical teacher, and, notwithstanding the skill of his fingers, he will have a great deal to learn in his new position before he understands the best methods of teaching the elements of drawing to young children. When Mr. O'Brien entered on his duties he recommended Prof. Walter Smith's books, which are the result of half a lifetime spent simplifying and systematising the course suitable for public schools. Owing to some misapprehension, however, on the part of the Board these books were not immediately introduced. In the meantime, at the request of a Toronto Publishing firm, one of whose members is an active member of the Toronto Public School Board, Mr. O'Brien has, we believe, notwithstanding his lack of public school experience, undertaken to prepare a series of drawing books. No doubt he has done this the more gladly from a hope that they will be used in the Toronto schools. Let Mr. O'Brien first prove himself a competent teacher of the subject he has undertaken, and then we see no

good reason why he should not have an opportunity of being heard from as an author. But we protest against the time of the pupils and money of the citizens being wasted to enlarge the income of even an artist, and increase the profits of a trustee. As to Mr. O'Brien's ability complaints have already been made, which go far to show that he is not the right man in the right place, and does not possess the first qualifications of a practical teacher.

We shall hold over further discussion of this important matter until next issue, when we shall give some interesting points on this question, believing that it will be of service to the profession and public generally to thoroughly ventilate the whole subject.

WEEKLY EDITION OF THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL.

We have lately been urged by prominent educationists to make still greater efforts to meet the growing wants of education in the Dominion. We have received definite proposals to issue a weekly edition, and generous offers of support to make it an assured success. The great strides of educational progress that have been made since the JOURNAL was founded in 1875, and the favor with which it has been received in educational circles in all the provinces are certainly very encouraging. No doubt a weekly educational journal will appear as soon as the country demands such further assistance, and we know of none more likely than the CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL to enter first on this enlarged mission. We shall be glad to hear from our friends throughout the teaching profession.

MANITOBA.

The Legislature has, during the present session, made an important change in the mode of levying taxes for the support of rural schools. Hitherto each school section, or district, as it is called, was compelled to raise from local taxation, every dollar required for the support of its school, except the Government grant of one hundred dollars. This law bore very hardly upon newly settled districts and tended toward the prevention of the establishment of schools in new settlements.

The change made requires three-fourths of the expenses of each school, not exceeding in each case four hundred dollars, to be raised from a tax upon the whole municipality and the balance from the school district, thus ensuring to every school a minimum sum from the general tax, at the same time leaving each free to increase its expenditure from a local tax.

The Normal School under its new regulations is proving very successful. The first session at Birtle during the month of May was well attended and excited great interest. Principal Goggin has won golden opinions by the knowledge he displays of his subject and the enthusiasm he succeeds in infusing into the students. At the close of the session both at Brandon and Birtle, Mr. Goggin was the recipient of addresses from the students, expressing their appreciation of the benefits they had received from their attendance.

The offices of the Education Department have been re-