

system were placed upon a practical basis. One of our exchanges says:

"Whatever will induce a mortal to abandon idle or vicious habits, or associates; whatever will induce him to take up with himself, to trust himself, to find pleasure in thought, in books or in study; whatever will help to make him a better man for himself, for his family, or for the community, is commendable and worthy to be sustained by all the philanthropic strength of the day. For this reason we advocate the organization in every school system of a night department, not a hap-hazard thing of glittering generalities, but a real, solid, substantial, well-organized, well-officered night school."

FIRST-CLASS CANDIDATES AT NORMAL SCHOOLS.

When it was decided that teachers could obtain First-Class Certificates without additional professional training after that received as Second-Class Candidates, a decisive blow was given to the Normal School in Toronto, and a retrograde step taken, which will do much to prevent the growth of a progressive spirit among the members of the teaching profession generally. It could not be expected that students would attend the Normal School for a year, incurring a considerable expense by doing so, when they could secure equally good certificates at home. If those who attended the Normal School for First-Class training received certificates different from those obtained by others, they would have some inducement to attend. Unfortunately, however, even those who do attend the Normal School as candidates for First-Class Certificates receive no practical professional training. They are not required to teach a single lesson during their course. The result is that our Normal Schools are reduced in power, and are really used to train only Second-Class Candidates.

We are as fully convinced as any one possibly can be, that "teachers are born, not made." So are mechanics, and artists, and doctors. A man of special genius suited to his work may become a good mechanic, a good artist, or a good doctor, by experimenting, but he would have been a much better man in either department, if he had received a special course of technical or professional training in a school suited to that purpose. So a man may become a good teacher without attending a Normal school, but he would have been a much better teacher at a much earlier date, if he had taken a thorough professional training at a good Normal School. We would not allow an apprentice mechanic to experiment with our lumber, or an untrained quack to experiment with our bodies, why should we allow a quack teacher, however great his native ability, to gain experience at the expense of the intellects and moral characters of our children?

But the best mechanics learn their trades by working at them. True, *but they do not work alone*. There is the weak point in the argument. Teachers, too, should learn their profession by working at it; but they should learn it under the guidance of skilled teachers, as the mechanic learns his trade by working at it under the guidance of a skilled mechanic.

It has been claimed that after receiving their "Second-Class" training, teachers can read for themselves works relating to education, and thereby become proficient in their work. Reading good books will greatly aid them undoubtedly, but books

can never take the place of the living teacher. Works on education require explanation, and there is a positive necessity for a Professor of Education either in the Normal School or elsewhere. It may be that the higher professional training may be more economically done in some other place than in the Normal School. High School Masters require to understand how to teach, and it might be wise to found a University Professorship in Education, so that those who are to rank as First-Class Teachers, either in High or Public Schools, might receive a thorough professional training. In whatever way the end may be accomplished, we maintain that our present system of teacher-training, although strong at the beginning, is weak, lamentably weak at the close, and that an improvement ought to be speedily made. The adoption of the Art School as a part of the Departmental work adds another strong reason for requiring First-Class Teachers to prepare themselves in Toronto.

APPEAL TO FACTS.

No sound system of education, government, or religious doctrine has anything to fear from a thorough and impartial examination of its principles as tested by their practical effects. It is often, however, no easy task thus to determine the true character and estimate the real value of principles. These results require analytic observation, passionless judgment, and the most exhaustive collection of relevant facts which circumstances will allow. It must be borne in mind, too, that amid the complicated social and moral phenomena of the present day it is sometimes difficult to trace the working of the law of cause and effect. The effect of many causes is ascribed to one which may have been the meekest of them all. The true cause is often completely lost sight of, and a false one exalted in its stead. *Post hoc ergo propter hoc* was probably never so prevalent and powerful a fallacy as now.

As this difficulty is likely to increase rather than the reverse, it may be well to point out that the best of causes need discreet advocates and clear-sighted defenders. For instance, devoted as we are to the great and good cause of Public-School Education, we yet freely admit that exaggerated claims are sometimes made in its behalf. Neither justice nor wisdom dictates the policy of ascribing to it all political reforms, all social progress, all moral ameliorations. On the other hand its defenders need not trouble themselves to free it, as respects its practical working, from all imputation of human shortcoming and infirmity. It is rather their duty to distinguish between what is reasonable and what is unreasonable in the criticism of opponents, frankly conceding that no system of popular education has yet attained the standard of ideal perfection.

At the same time we cannot congratulate certain *doctrinaire* obstructionists who have been trying by an assumed argument from facts to impose on the plain common sense of the people on the success of their efforts. There may be minor sophistries requiring for their exposure the painstaking examination to which we have referred, artful argumentative deceits which a plain man might be pardoned for not detecting, but an attempt