

to be hoped that there are not now many graduates of American or Canadian Colleges in the position of the young friend, fresh from graduation, who once brought his B. A. parchment to the writer in search of help to translate it, shrewdly fearing he might be called upon by some unclassical friend to render it into the mother tongue, otherwise another strong argument in favour of the substitution of English in College documents might be forthcoming.

"The use of objects in the class-room is as liable to do harm as good, and whether it does the one or the other depends upon its tendency to enslave or liberate mental activity. If object-teaching increases accuracy and facility in the use of the senses, it is well; but if, as too often happens, it makes the mind dependent upon objects as an aid to thought, as some children count on their fingers, it is a positive evil."

The foregoing sensible remarks of the *American Teacher* we heartily endorse. The object-lesson system has excellent features, and in many cases its introduction would do much to kill out dull mechanical rote, and promote intelligent study in the schools. But like most other useful innovations, it is in great danger of being carried to an absurd and injurious extreme. Anything more inane than some of the specimen exercises set before us occasionally as exponents of the method, it is hard to conceive. If there is danger, in the absence of sense objects, that the child will mistake sounds for ideas, and a jumble of words learned by rote for thoughts and conceptions, is there not still more danger of enfeebling instead of strengthening the mental action by always supplying the child-mind with the crutch of a visible or tangible object?

We gave last week a summary of the changes proposed by the Minister of Education, for incorporation in the Consolidated School law. Amongst Educational Notes and News in this issue will be found a list of similar proposed changes in the High School Bill. Some of these changes in both are of a more important character than might be at first supposed. Many if not all of them demand serious consideration. Protests are already coming in from thoughtful and experienced teachers against certain of the proposed alterations. Fuller consideration leads us to emphasize more strongly the opinion expressed last week, that it would be the part of wisdom to have the Bill printed and circulated, and allow it to lie over one year for fuller discussion and criticism. In no other case, we venture to say, would the Government or Legislature pass an Act specially relating to the work and interests of the members of any profession without first submitting it informally for their approval or criticism. Mr. Ross has already laid himself open to charges of rashness by ill considered action on important questions. We trust that in this case he will perceive that the path of true wisdom as well as of courtesy to the teachers of Ontario, lies in the direction of giving them full opportunity for the expression of opinion.

A writer in the *Central School Journal* gives as one of the first principles of the "New Education" the dictum of Comenius:—"Whatever is to be learned must be learned by doing it." For instance, "the spelling book, the grammar, and

rhetoric are discarded, and the pupil by the use of the tables and pencil learns to write and spell by writing the words as needed and to compose with ease and elegance by composing." But, as the writer goes on to observe, everything depends after all upon the skill, tact and ingenuity of the teacher. But this is true of the old as well as the new method. Given an earnest, active, intelligent and thoughtful teacher and he will make substantially his own system. The less he is cribbed by any cast-iron system the better. Each child pupil must be dealt with as an individual if the highest results are to be obtained. If some minds can be best reached by setting out from an objective standpoint, others, we believe, almost instinctively discard the material symbol and proceed at once to deal with their own conceptions as thought objects. The wise and skilful teacher will lead the former in the direction of abstract thinking, the latter in the direction of concrete, practical, application. There can be, in a word, no one theory or system of education of which it can be said "This is the system, all others are false and worthless."

Dr. Trevor, an experienced educationist, writes to the *London Times* a very emphatic letter on the alleged over-pressure in the primary schools. "Payment by results" he characterizes as "an absurd condition unknown in any other county. The results are a certain number of passes in certain subjects. With a view to these the Department has issued a code to govern the daily lessons, but observance of the code is not enough; the grant is paid only on those children who actually make the requisite passes; for all who fail from natural incapacity, irregularity of attendance, or absence on the day of examination, the school—i. e. the managers and teachers—is fined by denying the grant. The remedy is first to abolish the condition, invented by Mr. Lowe to keep down the grant and starve the schools; and secondly to abolish the code, leaving the managers to work in their own way, subject to some rational inspection and examination." Speaking of the evil results of over-pressure Dr. Trevor says: "The Education Department knows nothing of over-pressure till the mischief is done. It does not want to hear of it. When forced to notice it, it sends down an inspector to discredit the evidence and throw the blame on the teachers and managers. We know well enough of the over-pressure and the cause of it; the mothers know of it who hear their little ones talking in their sleep; the doctors know it; and occasionally the coroners. But all these go for nothing with the clerks in Whitehall who write themselves "My Lords."

An interesting item of news from Montreal is to the effect that the Hon. Donald A. Smith, who has already given fifty thousand dollars for the establishment of separate classes for women at McGill, is about to give another fifty thousand or more, in order to provide a complete arts course for women, in separate classes. This is a move in the right direction and an example worthy of imitation by other wealthy men throughout the Dominion. Whatever room there may be for doubt as to the extent to which the public funds may be properly devoted to