

August, 1877, without requiring them to attend the Normal School. Our correspondent holds that experience since 1877 has been quite as developing as before that time. This is quite true. The question is not one of the comparative values of experience at different times or to different persons, however. The reason for fixing the date August, 1877, was, that at that time the regulations requiring all second class candidates to attend a Normal School were first issued. Before that time three years' experience was regarded as equivalent to a professional second class course in a Normal School, and it would be manifestly unfair to those who had accepted the former regulations in good faith, and had fulfilled the departmental requirements for the professional part of their second class certificates, to require them to do the same work over again another way. New regulations should not be retroactive.

—It may be of interest to those who are watching the "Spelling Reform" agitation, to learn that the *Chicago Tribune* has put in use the following reformatory rules in orthography: Omit *ue* in *demagog*, *catalog*, *synagog*, and other words ending in "logue" and "gogue." Omit the superfluous *me* in *programme*, making it *program*. Omit the second *m* in *dilemma* (*dilema*). Omit the superfluous *te* in *cigaret*, *etiquet*, *parquet*, *coquet*, and all similar words. Spell definite in all its forms without the final *e*, thus: *definit-ly-ness*, *indefinit-ly-ness*. Omit final *e* in *hypocrite*, *favourite*; also *opposit-ly-ness* and *apposit-ly-ness*. In words ending in "lessness," drop one *s* from "less," viz.: *carelessness*, *thanklessness*. Omit the fourth *s* in *assassin* (*assasin*) and other forms of the word. Change *ph* to *f* in *fantom*, *fantasm*, and all other forms of the word; also in *fonetic-sal*, *fonograf*, *orthografy*, *alfabet*, *digraf*, *difthong*. The *Utica Observer* has accepted some of these changes. It is by inserting the "thin end of the wedge" in this manner that the desirable changes are liable to be brought about.

—Dr. Hodgins, Deputy Minister of Education, has been lately urging the importance of having the physical sciences taught in schools, at some of the Teachers' Associations.

Contributions and Correspondence.

THREE DANGERS.

BY CHAS. OLARSON, M.A., SEAFORTH.

No reasonable person can deny that vast advances in educational machinery and methods have been made during the last twenty-five years. We are in the midst of a further stage of growth and development. New ideas are being presented and pushed into practice, and old ones worked up into new combinations. We now teach the dumb to speak articulately; we save one or two of what Thring properly calls "the mighty ten years," by improved methods of teaching the written language; we have achieved the free school system; we have accumulated the experience derived from many educational experiments; we have made much gratifying progress in many directions. We have got hold of some good ideas. Is there not some danger that we shall be sorely tempted to ride some of these as hobbies to the death? Does not the history

of educational effort tend to repeat itself? Bell and Lancaster's monitorial system had some good points; it was overdone and abandoned altogether. Pestalozzi conceived some good ideas, but in practice he ran into great extremes and made painful failures. Will similar results arise in Canada?

OVER-DRILL, we believe, is one of the dangers to which young teachers are especially exposed now-a-days. Discipline is a fine thing, a very necessary thing; but it is not everything, nor even the chief thing. Many teachers are guilty of thus putting the part for the whole. It is absolutely necessary to run the machinery of the school, but let us by all means run it at the minimum expenditure of power, and economize our forces for real work. We believe thoroughly in good discipline, but entirely disapprove of the system of carrying rigid discipline to minute details, converting the pupil into a mere automaton, robbing him largely of his individuality, and tending to cramp rather than to expand his growing powers. An immense amount of valuable time is often frittered away in the vain attempt to make all children exactly alike, to do everything in exactly the same manner. Let us remember that drill is only one of the means employed to secure the ultimate object—that it is a means and not an end.

The education of the senses is another point of danger. This idea is now almost at the top of its bent. It has been written up, lectured up, talked up, until its advocates now present it with the air of certain triumph. It is a very good idea to develop as early and as perfectly as possible the portals of experience. But we must not be carried off by a single dominant thought. Education is many-sided; the human being to be educated is exceedingly complex. Kindergartens have their sphere, but their advocates may as well spare themselves the trouble of proving too much. The study of natural objects can only supply a certain kind and a particular amount of training. Sensations are not knowledge after all, but only the crass material through the medium of which the mind arrives at knowledge. Besides, a vast amount of our knowledge must be received on testimony very different from that of sensation, and it is just as well not to expect impossible results from a mere sharpening of the senses. Young teachers are liable to be carried off bodily on this hobby, and to imagine that it will secure the most important part of education. Let us try to grasp its proper relation as a part of the whole, and avoid exalting it into a region to which no Froebel ever can really elevate it. The principle of educational symmetry and proportion must not be violated even by the advocates of an excellent improvement.

Teachers' Conventions carry their own peculiar danger. Close observers state that many of the best qualified members rarely participate in discussions. Much of the debates in some counties is composed of crude notions vaguely expressed, and tending to the rankest educational heresies. Young, inexperienced teachers, or sometimes even those of maturer years, launch boldly out into intangible abstractions, glittering generalities, or grandiloquent nonsense. Many conventions waste their time in wrangling over petty details—"My method of teaching grammar," "My short method of computing interest," etc.,