

FADS IN SCHOOLS.

Mr. James Thorne, an Ontario teacher of some repute, at the opening of the session of the Ottawa Teachers' Association, raised a protest against fads in education, making the remark that everyone who had a fad now-a-days wanted it introduced in the Public schools. Circumstances, also, fairly justify Mr. Thorne's statements. We have those who desire that the schools shall devote time to teaching the dogmas of their religious faith, those who seek to give the ethics of prohibition an important place in the curriculum, those who would include a course of agriculture and those who would give the scholars the rudiments of manual occupations. There is nothing wrong in any of these fads. If the average pupil's attendance at school could be sufficiently prolonged it would be well for him that he should go through the whole course. The mischief comes in from the fact that between the ages of six and thirteen or fourteen there is not time to instruct a child in so many things outside of reading, writing and arithmetic, things that are essentials to his intelligent comfort in after life, and to the creation of a capable citizenship.

Anyone whose business makes him the recipient of many letters from what, for want of a better term, may be called the common people, must be struck with the very large number of his correspondents who are deficient in the matter of capacity either to spell or write properly, many of them being, it is plain, persons of good natural intelligence. To sit in a public place for half an hour will afford proof that the rules of grammar are unknown or forgotten by the majority of people. The schools have not done their proper work properly. This is not necessarily the fault of the teachers or of the plan of lessons. Some do not attend school long enough; some are inattentive. But so long as so large a number of those who pass through the schools are turned out or leave before they are sufficiently instructed in what the schools are designed to teach, there will be reason for criticizing additions to the list. The fads of the school improvers, as a rule, are not in themselves objectionable. Generally they are good. If the ordinary pupil stayed at school long enough, it would be advantageous all round that he should be instructed in them all. The danger under present circumstances is that they will take the time and effort that, it is too plain, do not serve to secure high enough efficiency in the elementary branches of education. This is why fads are to be deprecated, and it is well to have teachers speaking their mind on the matter, even when, as in Mr. Thorne's case, they seem to have fads of their own.—Montreal Gazette.

—The American Bicycle Company, with a capital of \$80,000,000, of which \$35,000,000 is seven per cent. cumulative preferred stock, and \$45,000,000 common stock, was incorporated the other day under the laws of New Jersey. The incorporators are James Young and A. Gordon Murray, both of New Jersey. It is understood that the company will take over the bicycle manufacturing plants on which A. Spalding holds options, which include most of the great concerns of this country.

—"We bought a lawn mower at the Montague auction." "Well, that was all right, wasn't it?" "All right? Maria says it is our old one which they borrowed and never returned."—Detroit Free Press.

—The Bystander—"What are you taking off your hat for?"

The Man at the 'Phone.—"I'm talking to a lady, blame you!"—Chicago Tribune.

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