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## The Educational Journal.

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J. E. WELLS, M.A. Editor.  
H. HOUGH, M.A. Manager Educational Dept.

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## Editorial Notes.

THE Michigan *School Moderator* says "There are 5,000 teachers in this State who take no educational journal," and adds "there is a chance for missionary work for the 10,000 that do take them." A good suggestion for Canadian teachers who take the JOURNAL, and have the missionary spirit.

THE Humane Society of Toronto is engaged in an educational work of the most valuable kind. In no respect is its influence more beneficial than in encouraging the formation of Bands of Mercy. It would be a grand thing to have one of these Bands formed in every school, in city or country. The only pledge required for membership is a promise to be kind to all living creatures. These societies have a total membership of about 400,000 in the United States. The members wear a small badge. They are said to take great delight in the work and aim of the society, and are often heard begging teamsters in the street to stop beating their horses. Kindness and mercy to all living things are characteristics of the bravest and manliest natures. It is a noble work to save the poor animals from needless suffering, and a still nobler one to train up human souls for thoughts and deeds of mercy.

APROPOS of the subject of private *versus* public schools, we note that the statistics of the Toronto schools for the month of December last give the numbers in some of the classes in each of twenty-five schools as ranging from 70 to 133. The average number in 46 classes enumerated was 82! This is a plain violation of the law, which provides that not more than 50 shall be allowed in any one class-room or division. Fancy one despairing teacher vainly struggling to keep himself or herself in living contact with the untrained minds of 133 restless children. It realizes Sir Walter Scott's famous picture of one against a host indeed! Poor teacher, we pity you, and we pity your pupils still more. After some experience both in teaching and in noting results of others' teaching, we should prefer having a child under fifteen two hours a week with a competent private tutor, rather than sending him to a public school to make one in a class of even fifty, under the best teacher.

DR. MCCOSH, late President of Princeton College, who is one of the foremost educators of the day, once expressed the opinion that children ought not to be sent to school before the age of six years, and that a boy should be ready for college at sixteen. With the first part

of the opinion all thoughtful teachers will agree, if by school is meant the organized public school, with its long hours and rigid programme. The kindergarten comes in here to supply a felt want. From the second part of the opinion we are strongly inclined to dissent. There are, however, so wide diversities in the degrees of maturity of boys at the age mentioned that no definite rule can be laid down, but our experience and observation incline us to the view that, in the majority of cases, the college course will be much more profitable if not entered upon before the age of eighteen or nineteen. This question has an important bearing upon that of the minimum age for teachers, discussed elsewhere in this issue.

WE should be glad to have the views of teachers of experience on the matter treated of in Mr. Lent's article in our Contributor's Department. Nor shall we deny the certificated minors an opportunity to be heard in their own defence. If it be the fact that the supply of teachers in Ontario is so largely in excess of the demand, it is needful, in the best interests both of the profession and of the work, that some remedy be found, else the appeal to the poverty or parsimony of school boards will prove too strong, and we shall see able and experienced teachers crowded out to make room for juveniles who are willing to accept infinitesimal salaries. So far as we at present see, the method proposed is one of the best, and is not inconsistent with others, such as raising standards, etc. It is true that the rule, like most the rules which draw hard and fast lines, would work badly in certain cases, as some minds are better matured at eighteen than others at one-and-twenty. But the same objection lies against the present rule. Some are more mature at fifteen than the majority at eighteen.

WE remark in another paragraph upon the excellent influence of the Bands of Mercy societies, both in preventing cruelty to animals and in ennobling the children. Another, and still more admirable phase of the work done by the juvenile members of these societies, is caring for the neglected waifs of their own kind to be found in the alleys and gutters of the cities and towns, and too often even in the country villages. To enlist the sympathies of children in early life, on behalf of their destitute and suffering brothers and sisters, and thus to inspire them with some of the "enthusiasm of humanity," is not only to teach them to become helpful to their fellow-creatures, practical philanthropists, but to exert an influence of the happiest and most elevating