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SUMMER NORMAL CLASSES.

It is a common practice in some parts of the United States for teachers to organize a normal class for special instruction in certain subjects during their vacation. There are some subjects, such as Drawing, Music, Drill, Writing, Elocution, etc., which have not yet been at all *fairly* taught in our schools, and most teachers FEEL and many *acknowledge* their inability to teach these subjects properly. By means of these vacation classes they can obtain the necessary instruction to enable them to do so. A cheerful retired place is usually selected for the class, and only a portion of the time devoted to study, the remainder being occupied by recreation and rest. If any Canadian teachers desire to make suggestions regarding such classes, they may do so in the JOURNAL.

DISHONESTY AT EXAMINATIONS.

Owing to certain irregularities in connection with the Intermediate Examination at St. Thomas, in July, 1877, which were investigated by Mr. Buchan, High School Inspector, an Order in Council was passed to prevent the issue of Intermediate Certificates to the candidates concerned, and taking away the Government grant for them from the St. Thomas High School Board. The High School Board of St. Thomas petitioned the Minister of Education for the withdrawal of the Order, and were successful, as the following resolution passed at the last meeting of the Board will show :

"Resolved, that the thanks of the Board be tendered to Dr. Wilson, M.P.P., for his successful exertions in obtaining a reconsideration and reversal of the Order in Council taking away the certificates of several teachers who had obtained the same at the last intermediate examinations and withdrawing the Government grant to the Board for said pupils."

Of course, forgiveness is not extended to those pupils of St. Thomas High School who had possession of the examination papers before the examination.

It will doubtless be felt by some, that the Minister of Edu-

cation was unduly lenient in his punishment of the offending candidates of July, 1877 ; but it must be remembered that the papers had been purchased for some years before the examinations were held. It was therefore impossible to detect all the offenders, and it would scarcely have been fair to punish the few with the clear conviction that the many were escaping. It was the knowledge of the fact, that the papers had been obtained in former years, which led the students of 1877 to try to obtain them. They have received more punishment already than many others equally guilty, because their names have been published to the world in a most undesirable connection, and they have lost the certificates for which they wrote. No doubt all honest teachers sincerely wish that *all* who ever had papers before the examinations took place could be convicted of their wrong-doing. We join them in that wish. As this could not be, however, we think the Minister acted wisely as well as charitably in allowing the convicted students of 1877 the privilege of writing again for certificates.

In the case of Intermediate Examinations it is of the utmost importance that great care be exercised by Public School Inspectors in selecting the presiding examiners, when it is necessary to have substitutes appointed. There has undoubtedly been considerable laxity on the part of some "substitutes" and even some Inspectors in the past. Some men have such unbounded confidence in the integrity of candidates. It is a matter of deep regret that they are not always worthy of the confidence so innocently reposed in them. High School Masters cannot always be blamed, when their pupils act improperly at an examination. They are not allowed to be in the room while the examination is going on. True, they should train their pupils to be honest and manly ; but a pair of *practical* eyes will do much more to make pupils honest at an examination than any theories. No honest boy or man either fears to be watched.

We have no fears that the Minister of Education will repeat his leniency in dealing either with High School pupils or candidates for certificates. Any communication in an examination hall should lead at once to the expulsion of the offender. The regulations are quite clear on this point, but regulations need to be carried out by trustworthy and *competent* examiners. The Department should satisfy itself thoroughly as to the fitness of every substitute before he is appointed. We would be glad to see a law placed on the Statute Book, making it a felony to sell examination papers before the date when they are to be submitted to candidates by the proper authorities.

A TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION FOR CANADA.

No one who knows anything of the history of the Ontario Teachers' Association will deny that it has been largely instrumental in bringing about educational reforms of various kinds, and that to its existence and operation are very largely due the present excellence of our school system in this Province. It has urged upon the attention of successive Governments and Legislatures the necessity of changes in the law, until these changes were in substance, if not exactly in form, effected, and it has laboured earnestly for the improvement of teaching.