

The Educational Journal.

Consolidating "THE EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY" and "THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL."

Subscription, \$1.50 a year.
In advance.

TORONTO, JUNE 1, 1891.

Vol. V.
No. 4.

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✻ Editorial Notes. ✻

AN essay on "How to Teach Writing in the Public Schools," by J. B. McKay, Principal of the Dominion Business College, Kingston, was awarded the first prize in the International Penmanship Competition in connection with *The Penman's Art Journal*, of New York. The essay is printed in a neat form and can be had, we presume, from the author. It would no doubt be very serviceable to many a teacher in connection with a very difficult part of his duties.

FROM the announcement in our advertising columns it will be seen that the "Ontario School of Elocution and Oratory," which is to hold a summer session at Grimsby Park, is to be continued permanently in Toronto, where its fall term commences October 5, 1891. So far as we are aware this will be the first and only school of the kind in Ontario. If well conducted, it will do a much needed work, and should be successful. The kind of reading and speaking we too often hear from pulpit and platform affords ample evidence that there is room for such a school in our city and Province.

A PROPOSITION is under consideration in pedagogical circles in England looking to the institution of a degree in Education co-ordinate in rank with the degrees now bestowed in connection with the other learned professions. Resolutions in support of this proposal were, we believe, to have been submitted to the Convocation of the University of London, on May 12th, but we

have not heard what was the result, or whether the memorial was actually presented or not. The suggestion is, to say the least, worth thinking about. The resolutions drafted, as discussed by a correspondent of *The Educational*, seem rather crude, but the general idea is to have a degree equal in value to the present Master of Arts degree, to be called the Degree of Master of Education.

THE enforcement of the new Truancy Act will no doubt make it necessary for cities and towns to make better and ampler provision for the accommodation and training of children of the vagrant classes. A late number of the *Schoolmaster* (London, Eng.), gives some insight into the way the London School Board is taking hold of this part of its work. It contains a report of the inspection of a new truant school which, was recently opened at Highbury Grove:

The school premises formerly belonged to the Church Missionary Society, and were purchased by the London School Board for £9,000. There is accommodation for 160 lads. When a truant arrives he enters by a side door, and is at once conducted to a room where his clothes are taken off and immediately placed in a very hot oven, and afterwards in a locker till he quits the premises. The lad has his hair cut, and is at once bathed. Then he is provided with a suit of school clothes, and is allowed to mix with the other truants. Special attention seems to be paid to the washing arrangements, a most thorough system of shower-baths having been adopted. The dormitories are clean and neat, and a fire-escape passes through them right down the centre of the house. The dining-hall is large and lofty, and the class and officers' rooms are all that could be desired.

We do not suppose that the boarding arrangements will ordinarily be necessary in our cities. When it is necessary that the waifs be taken wholly in charge the industrial schools are the best places for them. But, in a city like Toronto, we have no doubt that the rigid enforcement of the Act will make it necessary to increase considerably the Public School accommodation, and also to provide special schools for those who may require special training before attending the Public Schools.

THE Board of Overseers of Harvard University have rejected, by a very emphatic

vote, the proposal of President Elliott to reduce the Harvard University (academic) course of study from four years to some shorter period, in certain cases, the length to depend on amount of learning accomplished. The proposal had attracted much attention in university and collegiate circles, for it was felt that other schools of higher learning throughout the country would almost inevitably have been compelled to follow so influential a lead had the sixteen course plan been adopted. The conclusion of the Overseers was no doubt largely due to the unfavorable criticism of the scheme by the greater number of the influential papers. The gist of their hostile criticism is well summarized in the *New York Press* as follows:

"They pointed out that the scheme was, in effect, to put an extra premium on that curse of all school studies, cramming; that the very men whose facility in committing lessons to memory is greatest are often the very men who most need the calmness and thoroughness which an ample period of study allows; that the class system, which forms a chief charm and fraternal bond in college and in post-graduate life, would be shaken if not broken; and, finally, that half the value of a college education consists in the social and intellectual atmosphere breathed on the campus and in academic halls, so that any contrivance for diminishing that would result in a loss for which no mere stuffing of the mind with facts and words could compensate."

It is not a little singular that these arguments, most of which might have been expected to weigh specially with Professors, should have been rejected by the Faculties, and have prevailed with the business men of the Board of Overseers. But we suppose that the misapprehensions upon which they are largely based were more readily discerned by the professional teacher than by the newspaper correspondent, or editor or by the man of affairs. The former would readily see that cramming does not at all depend upon the existence of the opposite of a summer session, but upon the quality of the teaching and examinations, and so forth. The action of the Harvard Overseers may check, but will be powerless to stop a movement of which University Extension, and the New Chicago University, are the significant expressions.