

THE Christmas vacation is approaching when the executives of our educational organizations will be laying the foundations for the convention work of next summer. Any suggestions should be sent in immediately to members of any such committees.

WE regret to learn that Inspector Lay, of Amherst, is seriously ill of typhoid fever, which is nearly epidemic in that town.

THE song and chorus by Mr. E. G. Nelson, of St. John—"Up with the Union Jack"—is a spirited and patriotic piece.

PROFESSOR BOIER, of Halifax, is meeting with great success in teaching German by the Berlitz system.

ST. JOHN CITY NIGHT SCHOOLS.

In the autumn of 1888, the School Board of the late City of Portland established three night schools, in which more than one hundred pupils were enrolled. Through the agency of these schools some very successful work was accomplished.

In the early part of last month schools of a similar character were organized in the Grammar School rooms. At the beginning three schools were opened, but owing to the demand for increased accommodation three others were almost immediately added.

The schools are conducted by male teachers other than those employed in day school work. The schools are open for two hours during four evenings of the week, and the enrolment is now nearly four hundred. The subjects taught are reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, composition, and, in the more advanced departments, book-keeping, geography and English.

The central location of the schools allows of an almost perfect grading of the departments, and as a consequence much better results are secured.

Members of the School Board and other gentlemen are frequent visitors, and thus lend encouragement to the teachers and pupils in their work. It is but just to state that the very orderly character of the conduct of the schools is largely due to the careful supervision of the Secretary and Superintendent, who are regularly attendant at the schools.

Should the interest which has been manifest since the opening of the schools continue it might be worthy of the consideration of the Board of School Trustees whether the establishment of a permanent department in which business arithmetic, correspondence and kindred practical subjects may be taught to young men who are already engaged in the active duties of life but whose opportunities for acquiring such an education have been limited.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

It is customary with writers on education to review with complacency the work which has been accomplished in that department during the last half century, and there is good ground for their satisfaction. Though this period did not give birth to the agitation for national education its historian has to describe the progress of the discussion and narrate the steps by which it grew in strength and vehemence until the popular demand became the law of the land. He has to relate the incidents of the struggle which culminated in the expansion of the curricula of schools and colleges, the introduction of trained teachers and the establishment of institutions to equip them for their work, and the organization of departments to supervise, regulate and systematise the whole educational procedure. It is his duty, also, to note the adoption of better methods of instruction, a discipline more effective and humane, and a more elastic course of study, and to recognize the existence of a livelier interest, sympathy and vigilance on the part of the people at large. These are great reforms, and the philanthropist cannot fail to regard the prospect with pleasure when he sees that the influence of education is felt in every section of the community from the most densely peopled quarters of our towns to the remotest settlements in the backwoods.

Why then the expressions of impatience and dissatisfaction which we hear so frequently uttered respecting our education, and why is it that we can scarcely open a review or magazine which does not contain strictures upon the subjects of study and the way in which they are taught, upon the moral tendencies of our secular system, or its futility as an instrument for the preparation of the youth of the land for the business of life? Have not the schools in Britain and America, even the most conservative of them, bowed to the necessities of the time and modified their course of instruction to meet the demand for an education better suited to the needs of these modern days? Have these changes, then, disappointed the expectations of those who promoted them, or are the complaints which we hear and read the outcome of a hypercriticism, unreasonable, unjust and premature?

We propose answering this question, and undertake to offer a few suggestions applicable to the education of these provinces, but equally so to the interests of education generally.

The aim of education is to prepare men and women to play their part faithfully and well in their various positions and relations in life. As individuals with personal responsibilities and duties, as members of