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* Editorial Notes. *

WE have received, just as we are going to press and too late for this issue, several inquiries for Question Drawer, with special requests for answers in this number. This frequently happens, our friends failing to make allowance for the time necessary to make up, print, fold and bind the paper. Please note that in order to insure answers in next number all communications should be in our hands at least one week before the date of the paper.

IT is to be hoped that in every school in the Province, arrangements will be made for some kind of celebration of the Columbus Centennial, on the 12th of October, as requested by the Minister of Education. The occasion is a valuable one, and may be turned to good account, in the way of interesting the pupils in the history of the discovery, settlement and civilization of the Province. We will do our part, and provide a supply of material, including an historical and biographical sketch, and selections for recitation, in next number, which will be in the hands of teachers nearly two weeks before the date named. Meanwhile teachers can be refreshing their own memories and preparing themselves to make the most of the opportunity.

THE system of free text-books is now fairly inaugurated in Toronto. If we are not in error, this is the first trial of the system which has been made in Canada. In many places in the United States, free text-books have been the rule for years. We

have not heard of any case in which the plan has been discarded after trial. To our thinking, free books and other school implements, are the logical completion of the free school system. It would be difficult, we think, to quote any valid argument for the latter, which does not apply with equal force in favor of the former. There is, too, the important consideration of the great saving of time (and temper) to both teacher and pupil, which will result from always having the book or other educational implement, ready for use as soon as wanted.

WHAT constitutes an educated man or woman? President Gilman, of the Johns Hopkins University, says that "five intellectual powers should be the property of every liberally-educated man." These he enumerates as follows: the power of concentration; the power of distribution, by which he seems to mean the ability to arrange and classify the knowledge gained on any subject; the power of retention; the power of expression; and the power of judging. In addition to these developed powers, the liberally-educated man must also have certain possessions in the shape of acquired knowledge, as a capital stock upon which his powers may work, and which may be of service to him for the promotion of his enjoyment and usefulness. We do not suppose that this classification is meant to be exhaustive, and we are not sure that it is the best possible, so far as it goes, but it is eminently suggestive and will serve well as a test, or rather a series of tests, by which any reader who is so disposed, may try his own mental state and acquirements, and perhaps be helped to some clearer ideas in regard to his own deficiencies, and the best way of setting himself at work to overcome them.

THE death of the poet Whittier, at the age of eighty-four, removes another of the old literary landmarks. Though scarcely entitled to a place in the very first rank, Whittier deserved, and will no doubt inherit undying fame as a sweet and gentle bard, whose harp was always attuned to the loftiest and purest sentiments. It is to his lasting praise, that, having lived long and written much, he has left behind him no word, "which, dying, he would wish to blot." His fame will be enhanced by the fact that he was one of the noble few who bravely

and nobly espoused and stood for the cause of freedom, in the dark days when it required no ordinary courage to plead for the down-trodden slave, when to be known as an abolitionist, was to incur the almost mortal enmity of the slave-holding oligarchy and to be denounced as a fanatic by the timid Northerner. Whittier was almost the last survivor of a little band of emancipationists who deserve immortal honors, for their moral heroism in a time of cowardly compromise, as well as for their splendid talents devoted to the good cause. No doubt all our readers are more or less familiar with Whittier's writings. A study of his life and a few of his choice poems, would form an appropriate exercise for a Friday afternoon, or a literary evening.

TOUCHING the matter of good English, it is astonishing how much slipshod writing finds its way into the educational papers and magazines, which ought, one might say to be especially careful in this respect. We dare not hope that the JOURNAL escapes without its share. Certainly a good many of our American exchanges are lamentably careless in regard to the articles they admit into their columns. Nor are the solecisms confined to what may be called the second-rate contributions. Not unfrequently excellent articles are marred by carelessness in style and expression such as the writers would, we are sure, criticise sharply in their pupils. In a valuable paper which we recently republished from one of the best of our exchanges, were to be found such slips as, for example, "both in knowledge and state of mind." "To-day we will only consider one, etc." Of course the *in*, in the first sentence, should either have been repeated before "state" or placed before "both," while in the second, the writer affirms that he will do nothing that day but "consider," etc., whereas he evidently means that he will that day consider only that one point, leaving others for a future occasion. Careful attention to these little matters is one of the elements of precision in speech or writing, and without precision there cannot be absolute clearness. Then we notice that some of our own teachers, and many of the American, talk about "starting" or "starting out," when they mean beginning and setting out. These are instances which occur to us on the spur of the moment. Others may be noted hereafter.