

weight with them, and both can scarcely fail to have weight with the Executive authority, though whether sufficient to secure the condemned a reprieve remains to be seen. That question will, we fear, be determined more by political than moral considerations.

### The School.

In our last issue (July 30th), a series of problems by "Ceidan," for the Arithmetical Prize Competition, were erroneously stated to be intended for 3rd class. They should have been announced as 4th class problems.

Our Question Drawer is quite full this week. We are glad to note the increasing readiness of teachers and others to resort to it for information and interchange of opinion on literary and other topics. We must, however, again remind correspondents that the real name of the writer should accompany all documents intended for publication. This is necessary as a guarantee of good faith, and henceforth we shall decline correspondence of all kinds in which this rule is not observed.

The adoption of a Free School system in England is but a question of time, probably of a very short time. It is already a plank in the platform of prominent liberals. Several newspapers recently reported that the London School Board had passed a motion approving it, and predicted momentous results from the resolution. The fact seems to be that the motion was defeated by a majority of one,—18 yeas and 17 nays. But as the *Schoolmaster* observes, there is not much difference, as an expression of opinion, between a resolution thus lost and one carried by 19 for to 18 against. The *School Guardian* thinks that not a single voluntary school would survive such a resolution. This is surely a most unwarrantable deduction. Where are voluntary schools more numerous or flourishing than in the New England and other States, and in Canada, where the schools have long been free?

In the annual announcement of Alma Ladies' College for 1885-6, a very neat and attractive pamphlet, we find the following commendable paragraph:—

"Believing that young ladies should be taught to value education for its own sake, and that the prize system diverts the thought and aim from the path of true scholarship to that of pride and selfish ambition, the founders of the College and its present Faculty have unanimously discarded it, and have thus far courteously, yet firmly, refused donations kindly designated for this purpose. The one advantage of the system in exciting laggard spirits to greater activity is acknowledged, yet the exceeding great difficulty in awarding prizes, medals, etc., impartially and according to merit, the burning sense of injustice left in the minds of the many, the injury often done to the student's health in severe mental contests, the cramming necessarily connected with the competitive examinations, and the fostering of pride and folly in the public bestowal of such rewards, ought to suggest to educators the utter abolition of the prize system."

There are many deaf and dumb children whose parents are not aware of the liberal provision made by the Province for

such afflicted ones. Every deaf and dumb child in Ontario, of suitable age and capacity, may have instruction and training in intellectual culture and in some useful occupation, by attending the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, at Belleville. There were 240 pupils in attendance last session, but as a number completed their education and left in June, there will be room for all for whom admission is desired when the Institution re-opens in September. It will be a great pity if any of this class of afflicted children in Ontario are suffered to grow up without a course of instruction at this institution. The advantages afforded must be greatly superior to any that can be ordinarily provided at the child's home, and parents and friends will be sadly wanting in duty to the poor unfortunates if they do not strain every nerve to secure for them the alleviation which special instruction only can bring.

We give in our news columns a short summary of the very lengthy report of the committee appointed by the London, (Eng.), School Board to inquire into the allegations of overpressure in the schools. The extracts we give would seem to indicate a state of affairs which affords much scope for improvement. The *Schoolmaster*, however, attaches little importance to the report. The witnesses examined were largely inspectors and head teachers. "To ask," says the *Schoolmaster*, "some of those who are chiefly responsible for the evils existing, to give evidence as to the fact of their existence, is somewhat of the nature of a practical joke in connection with a very serious subject." The inquiry, moreover, was necessarily limited to schools under the London Board. The *Schoolmaster* says that "these schools, as a rule, are carried on in healthy, well-ventilated buildings, are amply furnished with school requisites, and are taught by what in comparison with other schools would be considered sufficient and efficient staffs, and that for some reason the Board could not secure evidence from competent medical experts. In regard to which one cannot but wonder, seeing that the committee had to report as it did upon such schools what it could have said had it been set to inquire about schools of the worst kind."

### THE COMING CONVENTION.

Before this number is in the hands of our readers the Teachers' Convention will be in session in this city. There seems every reason to expect that the meetings will be of great interest and profit to all who can attend. The programme promises well. Themes of the first importance to the profession will be treated by able and representative men. This is as it should be, and the younger teachers cannot fail to learn much from the wisdom of those fitted to teach by years of study and experience. The young pedagogue who is either too wise, or too dull, to profit by the wisdom and experience of others, is in a hopeless case. The majority will, we have no doubt, treasure up many hints and suggestions for future use and development.

But it may not be amiss, on the other hand, to utter a word of caution against a tendency which has been felt in connection with some of the great educational gatherings of our neighbours