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*An Honorable Mention at Paris Exhibition, 1878.
Recommended by the Minister of Education for Ontario.
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Recommended by Chief Superintendent of Education, New Brunswick.
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Recommended by Chief Superintendent of Education, British Columbia.
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The Publishers frequently receive letters from their friends complaining of the non-receipt of the JOURNAL. In explanation they would state, as subscriptions are necessarily payable in advance, the mailing clerks have instructions to discontinue the paper when a subscription expires. The clerks are, of course, unable to make any distinction in a list containing names from all parts of the United States and Canada.

A THIRD HIGH SCHOOL INSPECTOR.

During the past year, we have heard many times from high school officials, and have seen many remarks in the press, to the effect that two inspectors would never be able to overtake the extraordinary amount of work thrown upon their hands. To bring their duties at all within reasonable bounds, the Minister was obliged to announce that henceforth the intermediate examination would take the place of one semi-annual inspection. We were sure that this would be found unworkable and unpopular, but refrained from criticism in order to give time for mature opinion. We are now prepared to state that there is throughout the country but one view entertained with regard to this substitution of impersonal examination for personal inspection.

In the first place, it is an examination of a fraction only of the whole school. No matter how excellent the work done above or below the standard, this examination cannot possibly give any account of it. Then, with respect to those who are not quite well enough prepared to pass the examination, the report of their *failure* is not an equivalent for the personal examination by the inspector, which in the great majority of cases would enable him to perceive that those students had been making good use of their opportunities, and lead him to commend their industry while he encouraged them to push forward into the regions beyond. A visit of this kind does incalculable good both to students and teachers, even in the rare cases in which the inspector finds it necessary to point out defects and shortcomings. On the spot, he can make allowance for special difficulties, and can give credit for *all* the work done. He can consult with teachers and trustees; and a few words of

friendly counsel, admonition, or encouragement, are many times more valuable than a dry report, which is quite certain to show that at least 40 or 50 per cent. of the candidates have failed to satisfy the examiners in some one of the fifteen or twenty subjects of the intermediate examination. The youngest pupils in the high schools could testify that the arrival of the inspector is a much more joyous event than the solemn breaking of the seals on the examination papers, which is to them suggestive of the scenes described in the Apocalypse.

It is agreed on all hands that the inspector should be able to spend at least a whole day in each school twice a year; *a whole day*, so that he may be able to handle a considerable number of the classes himself; may have opportunity to see all the teachers give a specimen of their style of teaching; may have time to catch fully the spirit and atmosphere which pervade the school; *twice a year*, so that he may see the whole school, which is not the same in autumn as in winter, neither in regard to numbers nor in regard to quantity and quality of work. We all know that there is a very large influx of students in January who leave in June. Under the present arrangement, the inspector will never see this portion of the high school, and the written examinations can give only a very feeble or indeed a very false impression of their progress.

Even while three inspectors were employed, their visits were often made on Saturdays, and were often rather hurried by the necessity of catching trains in order to keep abreast of their work. As members of the central committee, and examiners of the normal schools, directing the entrance examinations, and carefully examining reports, the inspectors have much tedious work, which curtails very seriously the time available for visiting schools. Now that the senior inspector has very properly been appointed director of the normal schools, it is not reasonable to suppose that he can do as much inspection in high schools as formerly, so that practically we are left with only one inspector, a position of affairs twenty years behind the times.

Long ago, Prof. Young, in his able report, pointed out the necessity for thorough inspection. Since that time our schools have nearly doubled the number of their students, and natural science has taken a prominent position within their walls, and, of all subjects, this demands a personal examination. The science papers set at the intermediate do not give much guarantee that students are practically trained in experimental science, whereas a very short examination by an inspector is sufficient to determine whether the science teaching is experimental and inductive, or whether it is merely a useless cram of second-hand knowledge. It may very likely be found practicable to substitute the December entrance examination for an inspection of public schools, but serious evils will soon crop out if this method is continued very long in the high school system.