

Notes and Comments.

It may be carried too far, but it is a good principle to have all answers in sentences. If, however, an unnatural sentence has to be framed in answer, it is a mistake. Common sense should always reign in school work, whatever rules are established.—*American Teacher*.

THE school board of Minnedosa is making an earnest effort to keep its excellent school in efficient operation by levying and collecting the taxes for school purposes, the council having abandoned its functions. The powers necessary to accomplish this being given the board by law, there is every prospect of its being successful.

RECITATION has three objects: first, to see if the lesson assigned has been conscientiously studied; second, to exercise the student in presenting a statement, clear, concise, and methodical, of the knowledge he has acquired; third, to uproot any erroneous principles which may have lodged in his mind, and implant true ones in their stead.—*American Teacher*.

INSPECTOR SEATH visited the Whitby Collegiate Institute recently, and inspected the different departments. The new Physical apparatus was carefully examined and approved of. The inspection was made with a view to ascertaining the teaching of the different members of the staff, so each teacher was given a fair share of Mr. Seath's attention. His report to the Board of Education will fully set forth his opinions in regard to the above.

THE University of Pennsylvania has issued an announcement from the Department of Philosophy, which is of more than ordinary interest. Comparative study in the Indo-European languages, the cuneiform inscriptions and the Hebrew form a part of the course for the second term of the current school year. Probably the most interesting of the several courses is that in American linguistics and archaeology, a department of study that has a distinguished Philadelphian as its leading exponent. There can be no question that the philological research as directed by the Department of Philosophy is university work in its highest sense, and it should find ready and earnest students among the learned professions.

THE St. Catharines Collegiate Institute has had in operation for some months, a very fine gymnasium, supplied with the usual accessories of trapeze, horizontal bars, ladders, ropes, boxing gloves, dumb bells, swinging clubs, etc. The apartment is spacious and well lighted and ventilated, and is probably one of the best of its kind attached to any collegiate institute in the country. This school is also supplied with a number of valuable books which will be added to

from time to time, until a good library is established. Not very long ago a reading-room was fitted up, and is supplied with newspapers and magazines. This is also a valuable accessory to students, and is much appreciated.—*St. Catharines Journal*.

WE should never forget that we send children to school not so much to learn facts as to learn how to learn them. Of course, there are some central facts which they must learn; as that three times three is nine, and that a b spells ab. But the principal business of education is to start boy and girl with aptitude, desire, and strength to follow, each in the right way, the line of life which he or she may have to follow. It is somewhat risky to give them "eleven weeks of botany," "eleven weeks of entomology," "eleven weeks of geology," "Spanish in six lessons," "Italian in six lessons," "French in six lessons," if we mean that they shall gain in young life the persistent power of enduring to the end to which only does victory come.—*E. E. Hale*.

WE take the following from the report of the Inspector of Schools for Northumberland and Durham. It contains some excellent hints:—"It will be noticed that about 67 per cent. of our schools are in the hands of third class teachers, many of them mere tyros, yet in their teens. In no other business in life is there so gross a manifestation of folly. To allow inexperienced third class teachers *carte blanche* in the matter of selecting any school in a county as the base of experiment, is not only an injustice to the teacher and the taught, but is manifestly suicidal to the best interests of the body politic. Under existing regulations, were school expenses proportionate to the value of rateable property in a school section, a section rated reasonably high should enjoy the advantages to be derived from tutorial experience and ability, and thus assist in more widely securing the permanency and respectability of the teaching profession. However, I am not insensible to the progress at present made in our public schools. I cannot better testify to the efforts of the teachers of Northumberland to keep pace with what is now commonly regarded as intellectual progress, than by calling attention to the very large number of candidates that year after year are prepared for the High School Entrance Examination. There are no fewer than 247 applications for admission at the forthcoming July examinations. Two hundred candidates passed these examinations last year, and from the notably strict examination of the work of candidates in Northumberland County, this shows efficient work. In attaching undue importance to sundry innovations in order to make our system of education subservient to the demands of an advancing civilization, there seems to be a proneness to ignore the creation of intellectual power. No sane

scientist ever taught that schools create intelligence. Equality of intelligence like equality of wealth is merely chimerical. Were natural aptitude of pupils to receive instruction the same, the present development theory, as now very generally put into practice, would be plausibly faultless. While the model schools of the country are doing most excellent work in exemplifying methods of teaching, they can give to our young men neither aptitude to teach nor experience in dealing with mind phenomena, with which passport I regret too many by half are furnished to be profitable either to the rising generation or to trades and professions, that might be graced by men never made to teach. *No mere imitator was ever a successful teacher.* The proper function of normal and model schools should be to ascertain whether a candidate is possessed of natural aptitude to teach, and if not, in justice to the candidate and to the educational interests of the country, the plain truth should be told. There is a school population in this county of 8,108. There were entered on the registers, 7,983. There were 125 children between the age of 9 and 13 who did not attend any school. There were 2,150 children between the age of 7 and 13 who did not attend school 110 days, as required by law, that is to say 27 per cent. of the children of this county registered as attending school at an age when children can best learn, had no earthly chance of obtaining the mere rudiments of an English education. I would that people were impressed with this important truth: unless a child gets the ground-work of an education before it reaches its twelfth year, the chance of attaining intellectual proficiency is a blank. This is the rule and not the exception. . . . I have received from the clerks of the several townships a statement, which I append, showing the assessed valuation of each section, the number of children of school age, and the number of mills on the dollar cost for the support of each school. To this I would call the especial attention of the Reeves of each municipality, in order, if possible, to effect an adjustment satisfactory to those who complain of inequality of taxation in the several school sections. From the remarks of the High School Inspectors, I am pleased to notice the excellent work done by our high schools in this county. I feel confident you will regard it a pleasure to do all in your power to render these colleges of the people as efficient as possible. In conclusion, I would earnestly and most respectfully ask that your honourable body individually take into careful consideration some points touched upon in this report, and as representative friends of education attach to them the measure of importance that the merits of each may demand. I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant, E. SCARLETT."