

stores of knowledge, may benefit and interest others whose studies may have lain in a different direction. With every good wish for the success of the undertaking, I am,

Your faithfully,

SPES.

Note.—We have only to add, that we hope the suggestion contained will be acted upon. It is part of our plan to find room in our columns for all information of a novel character, bearing on the work of Education.—EDITOR.

SHORTER CONSECUTIVE SCHOOL HOURS.

MR. EDITOR,—At this early stage in the career of the EDUCATIONAL RECORD, I ask for a little space wherein to plead for shorter consecutive school hours in the various educational institutions of the Dominion. After many years' practical experience, I am convinced that a session of three hours at a stretch is the longest period in which real work can be got out of young people. Even this is somewhat long, and two hours and a half are better still. But if the session extend beyond three hours, I do not believe that when that limit is passed, any really beneficial result, intellectually speaking, is arrived at. Young people may sit at their books, but their minds are jaded, their powers of attention enfeebled, and whatever is learned is not likely to be retained. I am of course assuming that both instructors and pupils, on the whole, work with energy during the school time. Also, while I consider that the natural intelligence of Canadian youth is of a very high order, I believe that sustained intellectual effort is more difficult, more laborious here than in England. Boys and young men in this country break down more easily under the strain of hard study. Our climate and mode of life have something to do with this. In summer the heat is generally very enervating, and even concentrated thought becomes irksome. In winter our houses are frequently too warm, our rooms ill-ventilated, and the youthful brain can scarcely cope with such depressing influences. Many of us are apt to forget that the brain power of children can easily be overtaxed, and that nothing is more likely to produce this evil than too prolonged hours of study. Again, splendid and enjoyable as is this climate, it yet may be somewhat exhausting as well as exciting, and as the results of my own personal experience, I think sustained intellectual effort is more fatiguing in Canada than in England. I may be mistaken in this idea, and I do not press it as an argument. But I would really urge on educators, if possible, to shorten the consecutive hours of school work for their pupils. This is not very easy in the case of day schools, and I mention it only as an end to be kept in view. Then I am a total unbeliever as to any real benefit being derivable from short intermissions. They are very unsettling, because, after the resumption of work, at least ten minutes elapse before the educational machine is really at work again. No intermission of