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Editorial Notes.

WILL Inspectors have the kindness to forward us the programmes of conventions to be held in their inspectorates, at as early a date as possible? We desire, in each issue, to give a list of conventions to be held within the following fortnight.

IN reply to many inquiries and requests we have to say that the Literature and other lessons for next Entrance Examination have not yet been announced by the Department. They will be ready in a week or two, in time, we hope, for publication in our next number, Feb. 1st.

IN deference to the growing demand for commercial education, the Oxford and Cambridge Examination Board have arranged a new programme of studies, a new examination, and a new form of certificate, for youths of about seventeen who are desirous of adopting a commercial career. The first examination is to be held in July, 1888. What an iconoclastic age is this, in which those ancient institutions are forced to come down occasionally from the upper regions of classics and philosophy, to fit nineteenth century boys for bread-and-butter pursuits!

"A BRIEF Exposition of the Kindergarten, with Illustrations and Songs," is a little pamphlet issued by Selby & Co. (see advt.) of this city, which should be in the hands of every primary teacher. The use of kindergarten methods need not be confined to kindergarten schools, or rooms, strictly so called. Every teacher who has the care and instruction of very young children should study the methods and would find many valuable hints. The primary class in every school could be made happier and more orderly, and much more rapid progress secured, by a judicious adoption or adaptation of suitable methods from the Kindergarten.

A GOOD deal of discussion has been aroused again by the Entrance Examinations. The paper in History has been thought by some unreasonably difficult. The question, in our view, depends mainly upon the manner in which the answers are read and valued. The questions are of the right kind. They are evidently intended and adapted to discount rote work and mere memorizing of useless facts and dates. In attempting to answer two or three such questions as those proposed the pupil would afford a better test of the value of the work done in

the study of history, than by the glibest answers to fifty questions about incidents, names, dates, etc. But to expect anything but very imperfect answers, under the circumstances, to such questions, would be most unreasonable.

THE *Queen's College Journal* of a few weeks since was very severe upon the Senate of Toronto University for its recent decision that the degree of M.A. should be conferred upon any B.A. of two years' standing upon payment of the graduation fee. We cannot but think it would have been more in accordance with the high standard the Provincial University should maintain to have prescribed a rigid examination for its second degree. Of course the mere presentation of a thesis proves little or nothing, unless the thesis be examined on its merits, and the granting or withholding of the degree determined accordingly. We are inclined to think too much importance is attached to the matter of university degrees. We are not sure that the interests of sound education would suffer much if they were all abolished.

MANY teachers may find a useful hint in the following, which we clipped from the *Montreal Witness* two or three weeks since. We heartily endorse and recommend the last sentence:—

"It is hard to imagine how two great nations—the most enlightened on earth—could live continually under the clearest sky in the world and not know the planet Venus, the biggest and brightest of the heavenly bodies next to the sun and moon. Yet newspapers are being assailed on every hand to know if it is the 'Star of Bethlehem'—whatever that may be—which people see in the morning before sunrise. Venus has been, during this Christmas season, neither as big nor as remarkable as she very often is. She shines only with her wonted light, which people must see either morning or evening for the greater part of the year if they will only lift their eyes a very little. Surely children ought to be taught, at least, to know the planets and brightest stars."

A SOMEWHAT animated discussion is going on in some of the American papers, in reference to Catholic parochial schools. It is difficult to get at the merits of the controversy. The Protestant version is that the ecclesiastics are trying to obtain a portion of the public school money for the parochial schools. This would manifestly be a dangerous precedent, and in violation of sound principles. The Catholic version, on the other hand, seems to be that the Protestants are striving to destroy the parochial schools and to secure to the State a monopoly of public edu-