

Notes and Comments.

WE must remind "Extra" of our rule which excludes all contributions unaccompanied by the name of the writer.

WE devote a large amount of space in this issue to two papers read before the Ontario Teachers' Association: to Mr. George Dickson's "The Ontario College of Preceptors," and Mr. D. C. McHenry's "Prizes and Scholarships."

"EX-PRESIDENT PORTER on Evolution" is the title of the opening article in the forthcoming September number of *The Popular Science Monthly*. It is by Mr. W. D. Le Sueur, already well known as an able writer on the relations of theology and evolution, and is an outspoken review, as entertaining as it is effective, of Dr. Porter's recent address before the Nineteenth Century Club.

A DELEGATION sent from Edinburgh by the Council of the Trades Unions of that city has recently been engaged in inspecting the Canadian Section of the Colonial Exhibition. Two of the delegates spent some time last week in gathering information as to the progress of printing and bookbinding in Canada, and expressed great surprise at the degree of perfection shown by the Canadian exhibits of this class.

"If a girl comes to my school for admission," says Col. Parker, an educational authority in the United States, "and she has had good experience in cooking a meal of victuals and over the washtub, but only has passed through a grammar school, I would sooner admit her than a girl who has passed through the high school, but has no kitchen experience. You have heard the great question: 'Is life worth living?' and the answer: 'That depends on the liver, and the liver depends upon the cooking.' I wouldn't give a picayune for the education that wouldn't make a girl go home and help her mother in the housekeeping."

A DESCRIPTIVE catalogue has just been issued to the collection of the economic minerals displayed in the Canadian Section of the Exhibition. In itself the catalogue is an exhaustive treatise upon the exhibits, while the many notes it contains upon minerals and rocks of purely scientific interest make it of more than temporary interest. The name and address of the exhibitor of each specimen is throughout the catalogue placed opposite the name of the place from which the specimen was obtained, and in many cases the geological formation in which the exhibit occurs is also stated. Under each heading the subordinate arrangement is geographical, the exhibits being enumerated as nearly as possible in order from west to east. The Philadelphia and Paris catalogues have obviously and properly been made use of as far as possible in the present

publication. Yet its compilation must have entailed considerable work upon the Geological Corps, of which Dr. Selwyn is director, and, though its appearance is somewhat late in the day, it may be expected to supplement the exhibits in a most beneficial way.

THE importance of the applications of arithmetic to business pursuits will always insure its cultivation; but it is worthy of profound study, as a science. The properties and relations of numbers are remarkably curious and interesting, and the diligent student will be well repaid for the labour he may bestow on this science. According to Josephus, Abraham was the inventor of arithmetic, and by him a knowledge of the science was communicated to the Egyptians. The art of calculation, however, at least in its rudimental form must have been coeval with the first stages of civilization. The origin of arithmetic is not, therefore, to be referred to one individual, or to one nation: for indispensable as it is to business, it must have been understood, to some extent at least, by the earliest civilized races. Both Thales and Pythagoras cultivated arithmetic with great success. According to the Platonists, arithmetic should be studied, not with gross and vulgar views, but in such a manner as might enable us to attain to the contemplation of numbers, not for the purpose of dealing with traders, but for the improvement of the mind, considering it as the path which leads to the knowledge of the truth and reality.

THERE are few who adequately realize the vastness of the British dominion in the East. The total population is about 250,000,000, of which at least about 180,000,000 are under the direct government of the Crown, while the remainder nominally under independent sovereigns, are yet practically under British control. A traveller arriving at Kurrachi, the proposed terminus of the mail route by sea or land from Europe, would take four days, travelling by railway at an average speed of twenty miles a hour, day and night, to reach Calcutta. The railway journey now from Bombay to Calcutta occupies two days and three nights. The use of the English language is rapidly increasing all over India. The matriculation examination of the Indian universities is in English, so that every candidate must be able to read that language, and thousands of young men every year appear at these examinations. It is becoming the *lingua franca* of the educated class all over the country, and it must be used more and more in schools, colleges, courts of justice, and all public affairs, so as to be the supreme tongue, to which all the native languages and dialects must be secondary. So far as the press is concerned the demand for English books will be enormous at no distant period.—*Leisure Hour*.

IN our issue of the 12th of August a correspondent signing himself "Peterborough," wrote to us as follows:—

"SIR,—As many teachers and pupils appear to be ignorant as to whom and on what principles the Governor-General's medal is awarded I should be much obliged if you would publish in your valuable paper all the information concerning it that may be interesting to them and the public at large."

We have found it somewhat difficult to obtain definite information on this point. The Department of Education for Ontario has referred us to Ottawa, and we now wait a reply from the chief clerk of the Governor-General's office. In the meantime our readers must be satisfied with the following information kindly sent to us by one who has had much to do with the awarding of these medals:—

When Lord Dufferin was here as Governor-General he began bestowing medals on the colleges—one silver and one bronze to each, I am not sure as to whether or not Upper Canada College was then in receipt of them; perhaps it was. But I am sure the collegiate institutes were not, and he himself offered to the Collegiate Institute at Galt two, a silver and bronze, to be distributed without reference to the Department. These were bestowed for general proficiency to the matriculants at Toronto University. His intention was then that they should be awarded to pupils seeking collegiate honours. My impression is that the Department had nothing to do with them, but the authorities of the local school. When the other institutes saw that Galt had got them they too made application and got them.

(Later.)

We have received the following from headquarters:—

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
OTTAWA, 25th Aug., 1886.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd inst., in which you request me to supply you with information as to the principle upon which the medals granted by the Governor-General to the educational institutions of the Dominion are awarded.

In reply I beg to say that it will be necessary before answering your question to obtain the sanction of Lord Lansdowne, who is at present in England, to that course.

Upon His Excellency's return your letter will at once be laid before him, and you will receive a further communication on this subject.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

CHAS. J. JONES.

T. A. HAULTAIN, ESQ., M.A., Toronto.