

IMMENSITY OF SPACE.—Humboldt's "Cosmos" says, "It is calculated by Sir John Herschel that the light is nearly two millions of years in coming to the Earth from the remotest nebulae reached by his forty-foot reflector, and therefore, he says, those distant worlds must have been in existence nearly two million years ago, in order to send out the ray by which we now perceive them. It also follows that their light would continue to reach us for two million years, were they to be now stricken from the heavens!"



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SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS.

The importance of these exercises in connection with our schools is too much underrated by parents generally, and a few remarks devoted to that important subject will not be inappropriate at the present time, when many of the quarterly examinations are approaching. Our common schools are the people's colleges, and unless they can be kept up to the standard designed in the establishment of the system, the educational status of the people of Canada must decline and the country suffer in a thousand ways. These are the palladium of our liberties, the groundwork of our free institutions, as every student of political philosophy well knows, and the grand precursor of the spread of religious truth and the advent of the millennial age. General education is proverbially the paramount care of the state in every civilized country, and it requires but an allusion to well-known facts to convince every one of its importance in the minutest details. Then why need we urge upon parents the importance of looking well to the working of their schools, and to the complete equipment of these indispensable establishments with every appliance and attention which may facilitate their advancement, or encourage those engaged in conducting them? One would think that allusions of this kind must be egregiously unnecessary. But do the facts confirm us in this opinion? It is far otherwise. Every day we hear teachers complaining that their examinations are ill attended, and that they feel almost discouraged in their attempts to

excite a necessary enthusiasm in the minds of their pupils, inasmuch as parents seem perfectly listless and indifferent as to the progress of the children, and leave everything connected with the school to take its course without either their countenance or disapprobation. The effect of this state of things must be seen in the lack of energy in teachers and the absence of a proper emulation amongst the pupils. Examinations every three months do not occur too often, and they should be looked forward to and spoken of by the parents with that deep interest which could not but engender in the children and teacher an anxiety to meet the honest expectations of the trustees and patrons which the interval had aroused. Let no parent complain of listlessness and sloth in a teacher while that functionary is deprived of the countenance and support which should be accorded by every parent in the section at the regularly appointed examinations of the school. These complaints by the parents are manifestly unjust, but such inconsistent petulance is common, and must have been experienced from time to time by every teacher. What shall we say of Trustees who so often hold office and display extraordinary officiousness but still neglect this important duty. Amongst the great mass of the people of Canada the common school is the only reservoir of those educational advantages which are obtainable, and with the majority of the more opulent it lays the foundation for that superior culture which is to be afterwards acquired in the Grammar School and University; it is therefore a subject worthy of the assiduous attention of not only friends of education generally but the whole community from the peasant to the legislator, and we cannot too earnestly impress upon our readers the interest we feel as friends of the great cause advocated by this journal, in those periodical displays of attainments and improvement in our common schools, established by a provision of our excellent School Law. Let Teachers, Trustees, and Superintendents urge upon the people of each section the necessity of greater attention to the facts at which we have hinted, and a salutary improvement will be the consequence.

—Plato observes that the minds of children are like bottles with very small mouths; if you attempt to fill them too rapidly, much knowledge is wasted and little received; whereas with a small stream they are easily filled.

INGENUITY OF AN INSECT.—Being in the habit of rising early, I have my breakfast table got ready over night.—On sitting down this morning, a remarkable circumstance attracted my attention. About twelve inches from the table, and over the sugar basin I saw suspended in mid-air two small lumps of sugar about the size of large peas. At first I felt much surprise, for I looked, and looked, and looked again; but sugar it was, and there they were—a fact. I blew at them, they moved, like the pendulums of a clock, but what held them I could not see. I thought of Mahomet's tomb being suspended between heaven and earth; then I thought of the spirit-rapping world; but surely, I thought, they had not reached this peaceful spot in Kent. However, I lifted the candle up to the ceiling, and away ran a spider along the ceiling, which at once told me that the busy little thing had been to work in the night. I then closely examined, and saw that each lump was suspended by a single thread or web of the spider, and whom I must have disturbed, or he would have had them up in his aerial abode before long.

A REMEDY FOR SLEEPLESSNESS.—How to get sleep is to many persons a matter of great importance. Nervous persons, who are troubled with wakefulness and excitability, usually have a tendency of blood on the brain, with cold extremities. The pressure of the blood on the brain keeps it in a stimulated or wakeful state, and the pulsations in the head are often painful. Let such rise and chafe the body and extremities with a brush or towel, or rub smartly with the hands, to promote circulation, and withdraw the excessive amount of blood from the brain, and they will fall asleep in a few moments. A cold bath, or a sponge bath and rubbing, or a good run, or a rapid walk in the open air, or going up or down stairs a few times just before retiring, will aid in equalizing circulation and promoting sleep. These rules are simple, and easy of application in castle or cabin, mansion or cottage, and may minister to the comfort of thousands who would freely expend money for an anodyne to promote "Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

—Most natures are insolvent; cannot satisfy their own wants; have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force; and so do lean and beg day and night continually.