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✻ Editorial Notes. ✻

IN connection with the closing exercises at Queen's University, tablets in honor of various benefactors of the College were unveiled and the corner-stone of the new Science Hall, provided for by the liberality of the late Mr. John Carruthers, was laid with appropriate ceremonies.

FROM the statement of a friend in our "Question Drawer," in correction of an answer given in a previous number, it appears that the Regulations in Ontario do not make it compulsory on the trustees of a rural school to employ an assistant teacher until the number of pupils in attendance exceeds 120. We hope this number represents the maximum of names on the roll, not average or even actual attendance. In either case it is far too large. Unless the teacher has organizing and governing powers far above the average, he or she is in danger of being simply bewildered in the presence of a hundred or more boys and girls of all the varied ages and attainments usually found in the country school. It is "one against a host," indeed. In England a rule of the Education Department allows a certificated assistant to be estimated as staff sufficient for an attendance of eighty children, but Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, forgetting, perhaps, the rule, recently intimated to one of the London Boards that eighty scholars are too many to be under charge of a single master.

AT a recent meeting of representatives from the various schools of Toronto, called to consider the best means for interesting the advanced pupils of the city schools in the study of botany, and the preservation of wild flowers in the vicinity, it was decided to discountenance, among the pupils, the destructive practice of pulling the wild flowers in large quantities, as it was felt that they will soon be extinct in the neighborhood if this habit is not discontinued. A committee was appointed to prepare directions for collecting and mounting specimens. It was also agreed that it would be well to encourage the pupils in the several schools to have wild flower beds in suitable portions of the school grounds, and, if permission can be obtained, in certain selected portions of the public parks. A committee was appointed to consider the advisability of holding an exhibition, and of awarding prizes for the best school and individual collections of wild flowers, either growing

or pressed. This is a movement of the right kind, and one which might be inaugurated with advantage in many other places.

THE new School Law in Manitoba went into operation on the first day of this month. In districts where only Protestant schools existed they are, we suppose, continued as Public schools. Where only Catholic or Separate schools exist, these too become the Public schools. The same school boards continue to act, in both cases, until the general school board election in 1891. Wherever both Catholic and Protestant schools exist in the same districts, the former cease, so far as Government recognition is concerned, and the latter become the Public schools. This clause of the Act affects only Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk, and possibly one or two other localities. It is probable that in these cases the supporters of the Separate schools will continue them for a time at least, as they have a perfect right to do, without public aid. The new system will be more economical and should promote efficiency. If it is fairly and wisely administered it is probable that, when the present excitement has had time to subside, Catholics and Protestants will find themselves able to work harmoniously together, to mutual advantage, as they are now doing in New Brunswick and elsewhere.

IN a newspaper report of an address recently delivered to the city teachers by Mr. Houston, the following passage occurs: "Mr. Houston said teachers should not rest satisfied unless they were succeeding in cultivating the æsthetic side of the nature as well as the intellectual. He held that even more attention should be given to developing the æsthetic than the merely intellectual." This is quite in harmony with Mr. Houston's views as expressed in his article in our last number. What puzzles us—we make the remark in no captious spirit, and with high appreciation of the excellent work Mr. Houston is doing for the intelligent study of English in the schools—is this. How is the æsthetic side of the nature, as directed to literature, to be reached save through the intellectual? The æsthetic faculty, as related to sense perception, that is, the power to perceive the beautiful in nature, may be cultivated by the contemplation of a beautiful sky or landscape. In like manner the æsthetic faculty, as related to art, may be cultivated by the attentive observation of beautiful works of art. But how can the perception of the beautiful in literature be cultivated save through the intellectual apprehension of what

ever is beautiful in thought or its expression? In other words, does not the intellect stand to the beautiful in literature in a relation very similar to that in which the perceptive faculties stand to the beautiful in nature or art? And if so, is not a clear apprehension of the meaning of the words used, that is, of the thoughts expressed, a *sine qua non* of the cultivation of the æsthetic faculty, in its relation to literature? Can this faculty, as concerned with literature, be reached in any other way than through the intellect, and if so, in what way?

It is often said that Public school teachers are, as a rule, "touchy," so that one has to be more careful in dealing with them than with members of other professions. We do not like to believe this. We prefer to think that, as a rule, teachers are distinguished by "sweet reasonableness," and freedom from the abnormal self-consciousness, or egotism, or whatever it may be that produces super-sensitiveness to anything savoring of criticism. But it may be that there is something in the daily use of a large measure of autocratic authority that tends to make the teacher impatient of opposition, and to hinder the development of that capacity for "taking" as well as "giving," which is fostered in most other professions by daily contact with equals instead of with children. Certainly one does occasionally meet with teachers who are excessively sensitive. For instance, a question was sent, a few weeks since, for our Question Drawer. It was an easy question for one who had had practice in mental arithmetic, though it might puzzle for a little time one who was without that experience. A lad sent us a solution, and accompanied it with a statement of the age of the solver and the number of seconds spent in solving it. We smiled inwardly at the boy's conception of his own smartness, and published the answer as received, supposing, if we thought at all of the matter, that the sender of the question, who probably intended it for a simple catch, would smile also. Instead of that he sends us a note which shows that his feelings were sorely hurt by our insertion of the answer, and intimating that he will probably never send us another question, that we have lost a prospective subscriber in the person of another for whom he sent the problem, that we may lose another, etc. Our too sensitive friends ought to occupy an editorial chair for a few weeks. The mental epidermis would soon become tough enough to enable them to smile at much sharper cuts than that. Moral: Don't be too sensitive, and don't take offence where no offence is intended.