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## \* Editorial Notes. \*

IT so happens that as we are preparing to go to press the Ontario School Trustees are closing their annual meeting at the Public school offices on York Street, in this city. Several interesting questions have been discussed. We hoped to have been able to give some account of the meeting in this number, but want of time and space forbids. We shall have to reserve it for next number.

We have received a copy of the new Public School text-book in Agriculture, but have not been able to give it the thorough examination its importance demands in time to express an opinion in this issue. We confess that we could have wished to see a more inviting volume, such as the attractions of larger type and more plentiful illustrations might have made it. The price, forty cents, seems high enough to have warranted a more captivating dress, though the book is neat and well printed, but yet suggests the fear that the authors have attempted to crowd too much into it for a Public School book.

It is gratifying to learn that the Senate of the Provincial University has appointed a strong Committee to mature and report a scheme of University extension, or to consider the feasibility of some such scheme, we are not certain which. As in the case of many other "forward movements" of the Senate, the Committee has been appointed at the instance of our friend, William Houston, M.A. Mr. Houston is doing another

good educational work, gratuitously, by conducting a Shakespearian Class in the Y.M.C.A. building on Yonge Street. The class, which is large, meets every Monday evening, and is reading *The Tempest*.

TOUCHING the question of compulsory attendance at school, the following facts in reference to the German system, which were given by President Hall, of the new Clark University, at Worcester, Mass, in his opening address will be of interest. In Germany every father must send his children to school from the sixth to the fourteenth year. In 1888, out of 5,000,000 of school children, only 5,145 were absent from school without cause. In Berlin, only fifteen children failed to attend. As a result there is practically no illiteracy. The soldiers are taught, and when their time is up, have not only been drilled in arms, but furnished with a fair education and, perhaps, with some industrial training. If this is so, it is the one redeeming feature of the German enforced military system.

A CORRESPONDENT asks if we have time and space to discuss in the JOURNAL the question of Home-work for Public School pupils, with regard especially to its use or abuse. We are not quite sure whether we are asked to discuss the question ourselves, or only to invite discussion. As the question is important, and the test of experience is one of the best which can be applied, we shall be glad to hear from teachers on the subject. What we should like best would be the opinions of a large number, with the chief reason or reasons for the opinion very briefly put. A postal-card symposium would be just the thing, we think. Our correspondent asks also for contributions from readers of games and amusements for pupils during intermissions. These are sometimes found in our columns, but we shall be glad to receive further suggestions.

THE Faculty of Queen's University have made an innovation in College work by the establishment of an institution called "The Seminary." This is described as "a method of teaching based on the principle that a man must educate himself, and that a professor does most for him when he guides his reading and gives him hints from time

to time." To carry out this method there have been placed in seven class rooms small but well-selected libraries, including books of reference. Students using these are supplied with keys, and are allowed to read and write in the rooms when classes are not being held in them. We should be glad of a fuller description of the method, especially with reference to the class of students for whom "The Seminary" is instituted, and its relation to the regular class or lecture room work. We like to pass a good thing on when we hear of it.

CONCERNING the change from a semi-annual to an annual examination for entrance to High Schools, of which we have something to say elsewhere, we note that "A Farmer" writing to some of the papers puts in a strong plea for having the examination at Easter instead of in July. He says:

"If this examination were held at Easter instead of in July it would benefit many who cannot attend now without great inconvenience. Let me put in a plea for the farmers' boys, many of whom cannot be spared from the farm during the summer—who attend the Public schools during the late fall and the winter months and would prepare for this examination if held at the season named. They cannot continue in school until July and will not go up for examination after several months' absence from school. With an examination at the close of the term in prospect, they will attend to their studies with greater diligence. To many pupils a prospective examination is an incentive to greater effort, and we can only get the benefit of this for the class referred to by making the change proposed. I am aware that teachers have a decided preference for the pupil who attends regularly all through the year, but schools are for the benefit of pupils and any who passed in April who could attend High School in the winters following would be greatly benefited. I am satisfied the change would be hailed as a boon by many farmers and their families, and it does not appear that any interest would be injured in the least. An opportunity would thus be given that would gladly be improved, and many of the youth of the country would get the benefit of a High School training who will not under the present arrangement."