

# UNIVERSITY GAZETTE

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## McGill University Gazette

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## Editorials.

### AN EXPLANATION.

Owing to a misunderstanding of the constitution, Mr. Lafleur believed himself elected Editor in chief of this paper. His claim to the office was disputed, and he thought it necessary to resign his position on this board. We sincerely regret that he should have come to this resolution.

### OUR TEACHING FACULTY

At the rear of Belmont street stands a plain stone building partially concealed by the branching maples that line its front. Its obscure site, sombre appearance and genuineness seem to indicate the nature of the future life and labor of the students within its walls. This is the McGill Normal School—the *Alma Mater* of over 1,150 teachers. To many of our readers the name will be familiar, to more unknown except in so far as they may have noticed it in the calendar as being connected with McGill University. From our more prominent position on the mountain's side, with a number of denominational colleges clustering around us, we are apt to overlook the more obscure institution by which we are largely sustained. The McGill Normal teachers are the roots that provide not a little of the material for the growth of our beautiful educational tree. Obscure but noble toil. Happily for the world their ranks are filled by the best and truest of mankind, excelling in the purity and self-sacrifice of their lives our theologians. Young men sometimes enter the ministry from widely differing motives among which a desire to gain distinction,

honor and power in a highly honorable profession exerts no little influence. The teacher rarely thinks of aspiring to such greatness. His chief source of happiness is a consciousness of good work well done. We cannot rightly estimate the important part which the McGill Normal has acted from the time of its establishment in 1857 up to the present in diffusing knowledge through superior methods of education and thereby advancing the true interests of our Province. A glance through the lately prepared list of graduates in which the number of years that each has spent in teaching is placed after his or her name, shows that a large number are growing old in the service having taught for fifteen, twenty and twenty-five years, while comparatively few never teach. The mute and solemn asterisks tell us too, that many have finished their life work and joined the great majority of the world's philanthropists in the shadowy land. The vacancies will be more than filled. The number who received diplomas in the spring of 1862, were twenty-four, twenty years later the number was eighty-six. There is need for many more. In the returns of School inspectors, we frequently find it stated that schools under the charge of Normalites surpass all others. From an impartial standpoint, we have little hesitancy in saying that the Provincial academies and model schools conducted by teachers trained in the Normal, are more successful than those under the charge of B. A's. This statement will not reflect discredit on the course in Arts in this and other Canadian universities when we consider that, but a small proportion of the total number of pupils attending the academies study either Latin or Greek, the greater part of the work consisting in advanced courses of the subjects taught in common schools—subjects not included in an Arts course but which hold a prominent place in the *curriculum* of the Normal. Besides, it would be folly to suppose that our average graduate with no experience in teaching and possessing only a mass of undigested facts hurriedly obtained from "Morrison's Art of Teaching" before presenting himself at the McGill Normal, to obtain its highest certificate, could successfully compete with the teacher, who had spent three years in training for his profession. It may be held by some that the function of the academies is to prepare young men for college. Were this granted we would say by