

Quebec when Canada was invaded by the Americans, 1775?" "Which are the two oldest buildings in Montreal, and date of erection?" (*sic*). "What was the name given by the French to the River Thames?" "What is the origin of the name Manitoba?" "Who invented *green tints* for bank-notes, and why was that colour used?" "Who was the first settler within the limits of the Town of Sherbrooke," etc. The propounder of these questions had either no proper conception of his duty in directing attention to important events in our history, or he had a very low opinion of the mental calibre of the readers of the *Canadian Spectator*. We look in vain for questions upon the land tenure of Upper and Lower Canada, upon the system of laws that is peculiar to each, upon the results that followed from the British conquest, and from political changes; and upon the effect of the various treaties that bore upon Canadian interests. In truth, many of the questions are utterly unworthy of the excellent answers given to them by Mr. Miles, and although our readers will not be able to make much use of the questions in the school room, they will be assisted in many minor and obscure points by the information contained in the answers.

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A COMPLETE MANUAL OF SPELLING. By J. B. Morell, LL.D. Toronto: The Canada Publishing Company. Montreal: Dawson Brothers.

THOSE who are familiar with Dr. Morell's English Grammars will find that his admirable qualities as a compiler are well illustrated in the manual before us.

He arranges the spelling exercises on a thoroughly philosophical, and at the same time practical, plan. The various vowel sounds are first dealt with by copious examples, followed by test exercises, then come chapters on diphthongs, these are followed by others on double consonants, silent letters, etc.

So long as our language presents so many anomalies in spelling, such books as this will be necessary to put into the hands of scholars. It becomes an important aim then

to economise their time and labour by classifying similar words as much as possible, so that by comparison as well as by contrast correct spelling may be learned. This Dr. Morell has aimed to do, with a great deal of painstaking, effort, and, we think, with success. As an evidence of the former we may mention that after most of the lists of words he adds some of a peculiar and exceptional type, and each list is followed by a dictation exercise upon the whole of the words in it. He gives a fair list of Latin roots with examples, but a very meagre one of Greek. He does not burden his book with too long a list of difficult words, and is wisely guided in his selection by those used in the Civil Service papers. He might have improved this list by separating the words into syllables, and marking the accent of each word, and the pronunciation of the more difficult ones. While we commend this book to the attention of our readers as one of the best manuals of spelling a large experience has made us familiar with, we must express a decided concurrence with the opinion expressed by the author in his preface, that "Much reading and a good deal of writing, copying, or, better still, writing from dictation, are the true means to enable a person to spell with faultless accuracy."

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PRACTICAL PENMANSHIP. By W. D. Prior. London: George Routledge & Sons. Toronto: The Canada Publishing Company.

THIS little manual is written by one who has had many years' experience in teaching writing. Every page testifies to this, and although we cannot agree with some of the opinions expressed, we find much in the book that will be of use to the learner as well as to the teacher.

The writer strongly advocates the front position in sitting to write, and fortifies his opinion by shewing the dangers resulting from turning either side to the desk. As the latter are the favourite positions in this country, his remarks are worth reproducing. "Constant pressure of the side against the desk-edge interferes with the action of the diaphragm, and ultimately causes a greater