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SUMMARY.—**EDUCATION:** Mental science, a study of importance to the elementary teacher, read before the Teachers' Association in connection with the McGill Normal School, by Professor Hicks. — School days of Eminent Men in Great Britain by John Timbs F. S. A. (continued from our last). — Suggestive hints towards improved secular instruction, by the Rev. Richard Dawes. (continued from our last). — Thoughts on language by Prof. Nutting (continued). — **OFFICIAL NOTICES:** Examiner appointed. — Jacques-Cartier Normal School. — McGill Normal School. — Notice to School Commissioners and School Trustees. — Diplomas granted by the Jacques-Cartier, McGill and Laval Normal Schools and by the Catholic Boards of Examiners for the districts of Montreal and Quebec. — Meeting of the Jacques-Cartier Normal School. — Association of Teachers. — Donations to the library of the Department. — Teachers wanted. — Situation as teacher wanted. — **OBITUARY:** Obituary, the late Professor de Fenouille. — Public examinations of the Lower Canada Normal Schools. — Public examinations in our Colleges and Academies. — Proceedings at the distribution of prizes at the McGill Normal School. — Seventeenth meeting of the Teachers Association in connection with the Laval Normal School. — **ADVERTISEMENTS.**

EDUCATION.

Mental Science; A Study of Importance to the Elementary Teacher.

Read before the Teachers' Association in connection with the McGill Normal School by Professor Hicks, McGill Normal School.

We hear much at the present time of the fitness of the Teacher for the office he has undertaken, but many I am afraid when making remarks on this subject only have in mind the acquisitions he may have made of general knowledge, and specially of those branches of general knowledge which he is called upon to trade in the schoolroom. The great efforts that have been made in England and the Colonies during the last twenty years by the establishment of Training Schools, and the diffusion of right educational principles, have done much towards sending out what we term in ordinary discourse "educated men," and those exaggerated tales of ignorance, which used to be told with more of mockery than of sorrow that such things should be, are no longer the jest of the vulgar, and will soon be forgotten. To those who are unacquainted with what is meant by the word "education" this may be considered satisfactory, and little may seem to be required, besides applying to one of our Training Schools for a teacher worth a diploma and supplying the necessary funds for salary, apparatus and books, to enable the whole machinery of the noble work to move to the satisfaction and profit of all concerned. Those however who have made education a study, who have witnessed the effect of mind upon mind in the schoolroom, who have been convinced by experience that there is a power in the position of the teacher which exerts itself by daily and hourly influence either for good or evil, must own that something more is required than the preparation afforded by devotion to book learning, however deep and well chosen. The teacher has to do with the mind of man, that most mysterious of God's works, that source of our purest

pleasure and gratification. This mind of man although capable when expanded and strengthened by judicious training and right development, of producing results of an extraordinary nature, of diving deep into hidden things, requiring patient investigation and research, is yet like the body, slow in its growth, and dependent for future strength upon fostering care and right direction. As teachers, we never realize the importance of our work until we make ourselves, (at least to some extent) acquainted with the wonderful nature of this part of our being. We are all willing to confess that it requires training, that if improperly managed it may become not only stunted in its growth, but defective in its operations. We see around us instances—How many indeed!—of those whose mental faculties are as it were enveloped in a cloud, so thick, that all the blessings which we enjoy from more extended mental vision are to them, as far as this world is concerned, forever denied, yet how few of us give that attention to mental science, which will enable us so to classify the various faculties of the mind, that we may see clearly the extent of work we have in hand when we undertake the mental culture of those little ones whom it is our privilege to train in the way they should go. It must not, however, be supposed that I intend here to recommend those who are training for the office of teacher to enter deeply into a study which has given rise to much unprofitable controversy and which in its investigations can only reach to a certain bound, beyond which all is misty and not to be pierced by mortal eye. To those who have the time, the study of deep works on the human mind will, there is no doubt, be pleasurable and profitable; but it is a study requiring great care, much time and attention and a careful weighing of different opinions; and it is principally as a means to aid him in his work that the teacher requires it, he may be content with such moderate knowledge of its principles as may be obtained from some standard work, carefully read in connection with the usual subjects forming the course he may go through when preparing himself for his work.

Our teachers of Elementary Schools, more perhaps than any others, have need of knowledge of the human mind, and the methods to be pursued to ensure its right culture and healthful growth. The Infant Schoolroom receives the child from the parent at a time when the mind is beginning to expand, and before the whole of its faculties have been brought into active operation. The teacher has an opportunity of watching the first budding of the human intellect, the developing of each faculty as it manifests itself; and the numbers assembled together of children of similar age give opportunity of comparison which could not be obtained perhaps, under any other arrangement at present existing. I need hardly say that the teacher who pursues his occupation with a knowledge of the human mind, who has made himself aware of the great responsibility resting upon himself where he is entrusted with a little immortal being with a mental principle in him which needs great judgment in its management, and which may be made a blessing or the opposite to its possessor, will be more likely to succeed in his career, than one who goes blindly and heedlessly to