



JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

Volume II.

Montreal, (Lower-Canada) January, 1857.

No. 1.

SUMMARY.—**EDUCATION:** The Teachers task, by C. C. Colby.—The Monetary Crisis, a warning to mothers and daughters.—**SCIENCE:** Notes on the Natural History of Canada.—The star nosed mole.—The common weasel.—The pine marten.—**OFFICIAL NOTICES:** Appointments.—Jacques Cartier normal school.—Board of Examiners for Stanstead.—School Commissioners and Trustees.—Annexation to school municipality.—Diplomas granted by the board of Examiners of Stanstead.—Situation as teacher wanted.—Donations to the library of the Department.—**EDITORIAL:** Superior education.—Laval normal school.—Public lectures at the Jacques Cartier normal school.—Teachers' association in annexion with McGill normal school.—Educational convention at Sherbrooke.—Eastern townships' educational association.—First conference of the teachers residing within the district of inspection of Mr. Inspector Archambault.—The Lower Canada Educational Almanach.—**MONTHLY SUMMARY:** Educational intelligence.—Literary intelligence.—Scientific intelligence.—**OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS:** Table of the apportionment of the superior education fund for the year 1857, under 19th Victoria, chap. 14th.—Statement of monies paid by the Department of public instruction in 1857.—Statement of monies paid in January 1858.—Statement of the correspondence of the Department in 1857.—**ADVERTISEMENT.**—**WOOD CUTS:** Illustrations to notes on the Natural History of Canada.

EDUCATION.

The Teacher's Task.

We have much pleasure in transferring to our columns the following extract on the above subject, from a lecture delivered before the Teacher's Association at Stanstead by Mr. C. C. Colby, and published at the request of the association in the *Stanstead Journal*.

The Common School Teacher of to-day has a more accurate and extensive knowledge of all that is worth practically knowing than the proudest philosopher of antiquity, yea, than all the philosophers, sophists and sages of antiquity, and half of their successors in modern times combined. In Rhetoric he can confute Aristotle or Quintilian, he knows more of Mechanics than Archimedes, more of Astronomy than all the Ptolemes and modern Astrlogers, not excluding Galileo and Copernicus, of Chemistry, than all the Alchemists and gold seekers of the middle ages, of Gravitation, than Newton, of Electricity, than Franklin or Dufay. And all this various knowledge and tenfold more he is called upon to impart to the young and uninformed minds and memories of those entrusted to his charge. He must also keep himself in the infinite number of new discoveries and improvements which are being developed with such marvelous rapidity in our day. Being possessed of the requisite knowledge he must also have a capacity of imparting it. In order to this, the first and most indispensable requisite is a clear, distinct and accurate apprehension on his part of the several branches which he professes to teach. If his own ideas upon a given subject are vague, hazy and undefined, he may be assured that corresponding impressions will be formed in the minds of his pupils. If an artist would graphically delineate a landscape or a human face he must first have a clear and vivid conception of the lineaments which he would portray. If his own conceptions are confused and indistinct the result of his efforts will certainly be a heterogeneous daub and not a portraiture.

It is so with the teacher in a greater degree, for the unfortunate pupil of a careless and inaccurate teacher not only fails to acquire a proper understanding of the subjects presented to his mind, but what is more to be regretted, he positively acquires those loose habits of mental effort which disqualify one from close thinking and reasoning upon any and all subjects. The teacher must be attentive and zealous in the discharge of his duties, otherwise the pupil will assuredly become listless and indifferent. He must be patient, yea, he must emulate that most exemplary model of patience who ever passed through sore trial and affliction, and whose name is ever suggestive of that lowly virtue, otherwise his impatience will be reciprocated by impatience and irritability. The appearance of every object whether seen by the bodily eye or the mental vision, depends much on the point of observation. The boys in the fable who stoned the frogs prided themselves upon the exhibition of manual dexterity and close mark-manship regarding not the suffering inflicted, while the frogs looked upon the boys as persecuting, wanton murderers. The humorists and fiction writers assuming the pupil's point of observation, have ever dealt with the poor pedagogue most unmercifully. They have caricatured him in every conceivable aspect which could provoke ridicule, inspire contempt, disgust, aversion or horror. They have satirised his pedantry, eccentricities, exposed his ignorance, drawn dismal picture of petty tyranny, and grave oppression practised under cover of authority. They have ever portrayed him as a Squire, a Thwackum, a Squeers a Dominic Sampson, or other ridiculous or odious character. But seldom do I recollect have they taken the teachers' point of observation, and pointed us to the petty annoyances and vexations, or to the severe trials and disappointments by which the teacher's life is harassed and made at times more miserable than human nature can patiently bear. But wisdom enjoins patience in the most trying circumstances. Duty exacts it. If parents are indifferent, he must be patient; if scholars are unruly, turbulent, fractious, he must be patient; if his rules are suspended by ignorant and meddling managers, if insubordination is encouraged by the natural guardians of his scholars, if he has to encounter at every step open resistance, sullen obstinacy, or insensate stupidity, he must still be patient; patient he must be through all the trials, discouragements and vexations incident to the irksome, worrying, nerve-grating character of his daily routine, or prudently quit his occupation. Lesser heroes than the faithful school teacher have been lauded to the skies for their virtues, but he has been more often the victim of misrepresentation, the butt of ridicule and the subject of indiscriminating censure, than the recipient of praise or even of appreciation. Unless the young man can fortify his mind with a strong determination to bear with equanimity not only the graver anxieties but also the minor vexations inseparable from a vocation, which, although eminently calculated to draw out and engage the best feelings and sympathies of his nature, is equally liable to poison and embitter them, he had best at once abandon a mode of life which he cannot prosecute with satisfaction to himself or advantage to others.