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## Articles : Original and Selected.

### HOW TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF OUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.\*

The question asked implies on the face of it that our elementary or district schools, as they are called, are not as efficient as they might be or even as they should be. Let us then, in the first place, try to point out where, in our judgment, these schools are defective, and, as we pass along, possibly the remedies will suggest themselves. First, the district school house is far from what it should be, both as to convenience and comfort. Located close to the dusty highway, on some barren, sterile, rocky corner of somebody's farm, the site donated to the school board because it was good for nothing else; not a tree or shrub (we would not presume to add or flower) to beautify or render the place attractive; with no playground but the public road and outbuildings that are a disgrace to decency and civilization. So much for the outside of the district school house. The interior cannot better be described than in Whittier's immortal lines:—

“Within the master's desk is seen,  
Deep scarred by raps official,  
The warping floor, the battered seats,  
The jack-knife carved initial.  
The charcoal frescoes on the wall,  
The door's worn sill betraying  
The fact that creeping slow to school  
Went storming out to playing.”

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\*A paper read by J. A. Tomkins, Esq., Sec.-Treas. of the School Commissioners of Granby, before the Teachers' Convention at Montreal, October 22nd, 1891.