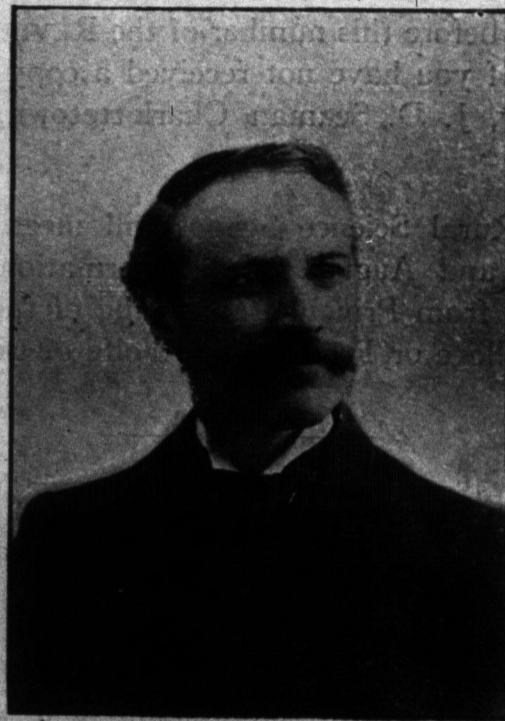


THE LATE DR. JOHN BRITTAIN.

After a four months' illness Dr. John Brittain, professor of Nature Study in Macdonald College, Quebec, passed away, in the 64th year of his age.

The late Dr. Brittain's life was devoted to teaching. He was born on a farm near Sussex N. B., November 22, 1849, and began to teach when he was seventeen years of age. He conducted schools in different parts of King's County and at St. Martins N. B., taking his second class license at the Normal School, St. John, in 1868 and his first class in 1874. It was at the Superior School, Petitcodiac, of which he had charge for



eleven years, that his powers as a teacher began to be noticed. He interested his pupils in Nature study of which he was one of the first teachers in these provinces to perceive the advantages. Regardless of cost he secured the latest and best scientific books, and devoted his leisure moments to the study of plants, insects, birds, the stars, formations of soil, etc. Indeed there was no branch of natural science in which he did not attain a marked proficiency, and he gave himself up to the study of some of these subjects with an almost passionate earnestness, making his pupils fellow-workers with him and companions of his daily excursions into the fields and woods. Nor did he neglect literature. His mind was a storehouse of the thought of the best writers of English, and rich was the intercourse which his most intimate friends enjoyed with him in literature and the study of nature.

It is plain to see that a teacher who taught the rudiments of learning with a thoroughness that was natural to Mr. Brittain, who flashed into the daily lives of his pupils, the brightest gems of literature, who relieved the monotony of country life by giving a new interest to the surroundings of the boys and girls was destined to leave a marked impression on the educational life of the country.

It is not to be supposed that the light of such a teacher could be hidden. Many of his fellow-workers came from far and near to get a new inspiration into Nature study and to go away with a fresh view of the dignity of teaching. He was soon called to other and more important fields, first to the Normal School of New Brunswick, where he taught natural science for fourteen years and led the pupil teachers to introduce Nature study into their schools. When Dr. James Robertson was selecting teachers to take charge of the Nature work and school gardens introduced by Sir William Macdonald into the eastern provinces, Dr. Brittain was the choice of that clear sighted educationist, first to take charge of the school garden work in New Brunswick and in 1907 to become the director of Nature study in Macdonald College, which position he held up to the time of his death.

The late Dr. Brittain was an excellent authority on the birds and plants of New Brunswick. The results of his observations were, however, embodied in his teachings and in his text-books for school, two of which have been published—Nature Lessons for the Common School and Elementary Agricultural and Nature Study, rather than in any special contributions to science on these subjects. His collections of birds and plants are preserved in the Museum of the Provincial Normal School at Fredericton. He reorganized the department of chemistry in the University of New Brunswick before taking up his work at Macdonald College, and the University conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Science.

As a teacher Dr. Brittain was earnest, inspiring, tactful, and his influence has been most marked in leading to better and more improved methods of teaching. He loved his work with a devotion that sacrificed other considerations to its successful prosecution. In manner he was quiet and unassuming and a great favorite with his pupils and fellow teachers.

The late Dr. Brittain was married in 1871 to Miss Charlotte Bonney. The family consists of