

THE
EDUCATIONAL RECORD
OF THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

No. 2.

FEBRUARY, 1900.

VOL. XX.

Articles : Original and Selected.

CONDITIONS OF GENIUS.

BY MISS H. D. OAKELEY, WARDEN OF THE ROYAL VICTORIA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, MONTREAL.

(Concluded.)

It appears then that modern democracy cannot claim that it must be generative of genius, since in essential points it is a new and unprecedented phenomenon. If, leaving comparison, we look at it as it now is, the first thought that confronts us is that of the great disappointment of the American Republic. Surely a rush of genius might have been looked for, from this seventy millions of people, living under a Government which has now had for a century and a quarter democratic freedom, and life in accordance with Lincoln's splendid maxim, "Every man is good enough to govern himself; no man is good enough to govern another, without that other's consent."

It has not come. Are we to accept the thesis in which Tocqueville concentrated the passionate conclusion to which his observation of America had brought him—the thesis in which he asks mankind to make a choice? On the one side is the condition secured by democracy, of widespread comfort and general intelligence, together with the absence of extremes of misery and vice, the absence also of the finer qualities of mind and character, the lack of dazzling works of heroism and genius. On the other is the