

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

CANADIAN EDUCATION AT PARIS.

WE have been favoured with an inspection of an elaborate illustrated report of the French Commission to the Centennial at Philadelphia in 1876, by the kindness of Dr. Hodgins, Deputy Minister of Education in Ontario.* It would obviously be impossible to do more than glance lightly at the contents of this elaborate and exhaustive work in the brief space at our disposal. The volume contains nearly seven hundred pages, and is divided into thirty chapters, each of which was compiled by one or other of the six Commissioners. M. Buisson, the Chairman, in addition to other special subjects, deals with the Free School system, the co-education of the sexes, religious and ethical instruction, and High Schools, and sums up the report in his *Resumé et Conclusions* at the end. Matters of organization are treated of by M. Laporte, in four admirable chapters, on administrative organization, including school authorities, and classification of schools, financial organization, and school organization proper—one chapter on city or town, and another on rural, establishments. Under this head are grouped the rules, plan of studies, conduct and manners, directions to teachers, the employment of school-hours, methods of instruction, and finally the discipline and incentives to emulation. M. Berger's subjects are school-houses and school furniture (fully illustrated), early education—infant schools, Kindergartens and primary schools, and instruction in grammar and drawing. In a later portion of the work the same gentleman deals, in two chapters, with normal schools and teachers' examina-

tion, with school inspection. Reading, writing, geography, history, arithmetic, mathematics, including book-keeping, algebra, geometry and geometrical drawing, physical science, song and music, and gymnastics, each forms the subject of an exhaustive chapter. Private schools and auxiliary institutions also come in for special attention.

The great pains taken by this Commission in the matter of statistics is exceedingly note-worthy, and the engravings, *fac-similes* of school lessons, and views of school-houses, are unexceptionable. In attempting an exposition of the American school system, Canada naturally appears somewhat dwarfed by the over-powering shadow of its great neighbour. Nevertheless, ample justice is done to the Dominion whenever opportunity offers. Two of the Commissioners visited Canada, and examined, for themselves, some of its towns and rural districts in Ontario, and the two chief cities of Quebec, "where they received a welcome of which they preserve the most grateful recollection." Our urban school-houses "of pressed brick, with stone pilasters and slated roofs," are specially referred to, and the admirable work of Dr. Hodgins on "School Architecture," receives particular attention. "On the different matters relating to the choice of sites and materials, to the arrangement of the buildings, and to the best models of benches, blackboards, etc., one may find here the most complete instructions. We have nothing so complete in France to direct those who desire to establish in the country school-houses in all respects suitable. Mr. Hodgins is well acquainted with all that has been done in the United States, and he has selected with discretion all he has fallen in with, which appeared better or susceptible of improvement." M. Berger goes on to the subject of light,

* *Rapport sur l'Instruction Primaire a l'Exposition Universelle de Philadelphie en 1876. Présenté au Ministre de l'Instruction Publique au nom de la Commission envoyée a Philadelphie, par F. Buisson, Président de la Commission. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1878.*