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## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Address of Professor Hodgson, President of the Educational Section of the Social Science Congress, England.....	165	French Feuillettonistes.....	176
Choosing an Occupation for a Young Man.....	169	Where Our Emigrants Go.....	176
Teachers in Elementary Schools.....	170	Biographical Sketches.....	177
Practical Education.....	171	Educational Gleanings.....	177
Educating Girls.....	172	OFFICIAL NOTICES: Appointments of School Commissioners, Member of Gaspé Board of Examiners. Revocation of Order in Council. Erections of School Municipalities. Diplomas Granted by Boards of Examiners...	179
The House We Live In.....	173	Reviews.....	180
Education in the United States.....	174	Advertisements.....	180
POETRY: An Ode.....	175	Meteorology.....	180

### Address of Professor Hodgson, President of the Educational Section of the Social Science Congress, England. (1).

The subject of education, at all times vast and difficult, is at this time, if not more extensive, at least more complex than ever, and is proportionally difficult of treatment. It is hard to steer between the Scylla of commonplace and the Charybdis of controversy; and yet whatever in this subject is not true is disputable and disputed. What visions of battles in the air (like Kaulbach's Hunnen-Schlacht) are conjured up by the mere enumeration of the topics now everywhere discussed. Education, private and public; primary, secondary, and tertiary; voluntary or State-aided and State-controlled; literary or scientific; "classical," so called or "modern;" secular or religious, that is, more properly, theological; technical or general; endowed or unendowed; free or compulsory; gratuitous or paid by fees; common to both sexes or peculiar to each sex—such are some of the watchwords of the warfare which rages, and is likely long to rage, among persons all deeply interested in education, and all eager to promote it according to their respective views.

(1) This address was delivered on the 4th inst., at Norwich, and was listened to with marked favour by a crowded audience, eliciting at its close the highest encomiums of Lord Houghton, President of the Association, and other speakers.

Of those who openly or secretly disparage education, of those who (as I once heard Archbishop Whately express it) embark in the good ship "Education," on purpose to delay the voyage, it is needless here to speak. The ends and the means of education, its principles and its details, its scope and its machinery, its methods and its organization, its objects and its subjects—all furnish points of divergence in opinion—divergence proportioned to the magnitude of the interests at stake, and to the very earnestness with which these are maintained. To avoid controversy, then, is impossible, even though, for good reasons, I shall not touch upon the 25th clause, the Conscience Clause, and other burning questions of the day. It must suffice for the speaker sincerely to disclaim all wish to give offence, and for the hearer, as far as possible, to put aside all readiness to take it. The late Professor Edward Forbes told me once that in transcribing into his album passages from books he always selected not those with which he agreed, but those from which he differed, and for this reason—that the latter were much more likely than the former to test the soundness of his previous convictions, and to suggest fresh lines of thought. And so, I trust those who hear me, if I shall be unfortunate enough to say what they disapprove, will not hastily condemn or at least reject it, but give it a patient consideration. I have no fear that more weight will be attached to it by any than it may deserve. On the other hand, it is equally impossible to avoid commonplace, and for this reason, were there no other, that much of what is in words admitted to be true—much that seems even to be a truism—is not cordially and practically accepted as a truth. Confessed or avowed by the lips, it is not really adopted by either head or heart, inasmuch as it does not influence conduct—the only valid test and evidence of belief. Thus we do really believe that fire will burn us, for we avoid contact with it; but we do not believe that vitiated air will poison us, because, as a rule, we do not take much precaution against inhaling it. And what Bunsen says of "separation between knowledge and action," that it "is unsound and enfeebling," is true of all want of harmony between professed belief and practice. The remedy is reiterated and varied exposition; for, in the experience of us all, it