

One sad peculiarity in the history of our Colleges which our readers must have already noticed in that of the Laval University is their frequent destruction by fire. It is so with almost every public building in Canada. There is hardly a church of some importance which has not been rebuilt three or four times; and the country has suffered in an intellectual as well as in a financial point of view to an immense extent by the repeated conflagrations of our houses of parliament, national libraries and national archives. The cause is obvious. The cheapness of timber in this country is such that, with the exception of the outside walls, every building is almost exclusively composed of combustible materials. This may answer for private individuals who can compensate their losses by paying a premium to an insurance company; but the case of public institutions having invaluable books, documents and collections is a very different one. In the United States most of the public collections have been placed in buildings where a stick of wood is not to be found, and among others, the library of the state of New York in Albany, has been made altogether fire proof at an additional expense of about one third of the cost of an ordinary building.

The floors are paved with tiles, the beams, window-sashes, &c., are all iron, and the shelves are a kind of porcelain like that in use for the ornamental parts of the Russian stoves in this country.

However, Burnside Hall, having been built on the principle universally adopted in Canada, there was no reason why its libraries and collections should not share in the common fate, and on one cold winter evening, in a few hours the greatest part of them was reduced to ashes. This was on the 2d of February 1856. The government immediately placed the old High School (Belmont street,) at the disposal of the directors, and the classes were continued in that building almost without interruption. The activity displayed by the Board of governors was such that on the 7th of October a new Burnside Hall was solemnly inaugurated.

It is a brick building on the site of the old one, at the corner of Dorchester and University streets. It is two stories

high, 106 feet in length by 60 feet in breadth with a projection in the rear, and an adjoining building for the secretary's office and porters residence. Its style is plain but symmetrical and in its internal arrangements and furniture it is well deserving of the attention of persons engaged in the direction of educational institutions. The lower story consists of a large hall seated with single chairs and double desks, on the modern plan, for 200 pupils, and five large recitation rooms. This part of the building accommodates the High School department. The second floor contains a convocation hall, capable of seating 300 persons and used for the public meetings of the University and for popular lectures, four large class rooms fitted up to seat the classes of the faculty of arts, and a library and museum. Every room in the building is provided with ventilating flues terminating in two large Emerson's ejectors, in the roof, and heat is supplied by two of Chilson's furnaces in the basement.

(To be continued.)

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INFANTS' SCHOOLS

A lecture made before the Teachers' Association in connection with the McGill Normal School, by PROFESSOR HICKS.

The Infant School and its system, although intended for the training of a large number of children assembled under one roof,

must not be considered as only deserving the attention of those professionally engaged in instructing the young. They have claims upon all. The mother who desires to train up her children mentally and morally in such a manner as to ensure, in a great degree their future happiness, the sister who has her duties to perform towards the younger branches of the family, the father, brother, indeed all may profit by investigating the principles upon which infant instruction is based. Infant teaching, then, is based upon the fact that the dispositions, or impulses of the mind are accessible in early life to training, and as the neglect of these leads invariably to grave errors, the sooner we begin this education judiciously the better. Precept, although full of importance, will not always protect the young from evil example, which operates in a contrary direction, it therefore becomes important to add something to strengthen the precept, and that we find in good moral and religious training, which forms the second prominent feature in every well conducted Infants' School. As far as intellectual training is concerned, one of the first faculties of the mind brought into play is perception, or that power of the thinking part of our being by which cognizance is taken of objects presented to the senses. By the aid of the senses we ascertain the shape, colour, size, &c., of objects, and it is the training of the judgment in making use of these senses that constitutes one great feature of our infant system.

The third part has reference to the physical training of the child, and as this forms so obvious a portion of the daily routine of the

