



# JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

Volume XI.

Quebec, Province of Quebec, December, 1867.

No. 12.

**SUMMARY.**—**PEDAGOGY:** The Power and Influence of the Teacher.—English Composition, (continued).—What a Teacher should, and what he should not do.—A Few Hints on the Education of Daughters, by a Lady.—**OFFICIAL NOTICES.**—Diplomas granted by the Boards of Examiners.—**EDITORIAL:** To Patrons and Readers.—Causes of the Emperor Augustus in the Blackas Collection, British Museum.—**MONTHLY SUMMARY:** Educational Intelligence.—Scientific Intelligence.—Neurological Intelligence.—Meteorological Intelligence.—Miscellaneous Intelligence.

## PEDAGOGY.

### The Power and Influence of the Teacher.

ILLUSTRATED BY EXAMPLES.

There is probably no man who will be held to a stricter account for the use of his talents and opportunities than the teacher. This is because few men have less temptation to do wrong, and none have their duties more accurately defined. The teacher is not a child. His duties lie in one special province. His influence is most powerful, and his example is before the eyes of all his pupils. To them he is a wonderful man. Although we are a very democratic people, and our boys are men, in their own opinion, when they put pantaloon on, yet it is true to-day as in the days of Goldsmith,—

And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,  
That one small head could carry all he knew.

This power of teaching and example is one of surpassing influence, and in ways which are sometimes not imagined by the teacher himself. It is not by mere teaching—it is not by example only—it is not only personal conduct; but oftentimes the manners, and oftener what may be called the genius of the man, not of the intellect or learning, but of the *spirit* which dwells in his form. Hence it is that some persons are particularly adapted to be teachers, and others ought not to be teachers at all. The fiery old John Adams was a teacher, and we can well imagine that his pupils must have been fit for the Revolution. Salmon P. Chase, the Chief Justice, was a teacher; but we fancy his pupils were taught more of dignity, and staidness, and law-abiding, than the boys who came from the school of revolutionary Adams. It has happened to us to know something of many distinguished teachers, and as we recently wrote something on the value of oral teaching, we shall now give a few practical examples.

Albert Pickett, a name memorable among teachers, told us that when a boy he went to an academy in New York, I think, and was taught by a master who was one of those men who make their mark by force of character. He mentioned several distinguished men, among whom, I think, were Irving, Paulding, and Verplanck. At any rate, he named a number of men who, in after years, made a large part of the literary men of New York, who went with him, or near his time, to that school. Now, there were members of other academies and schools in New York—but where are the results? Thousands of practical business men no doubt came from them,—but where is the fire-lit flame of genius? Now, how came this about? The natural world furnishes analogies for many things in our social constitution. The flint gives fire, but not till the iron strikes it. Now, the boys who come to school, however much they may rollick and play and talk, are spiritually as dull, as hard and sparkless, as that flint. They will make good, hard pavements for the world's use—and that is what most of them do. But where is this hidden fire? Where is the lightning which the flint holds? The truth is, that fire will never come out till something shall strike it like iron, and bring forth its sparkling flash. The Scripture says that as iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a friend his friend. The lightning of the soul, like that of the clouds, comes forth by contact. Now, after the mother, the teacher is the first being in this world who really comes in contact with the young mind. When that happens, it may result in two modes of contact. One is, the usual mode, in which the minds of teacher and pupil move on together, without striking, in a sort of intellectual parallelism. The teacher sets something for the child to do, and gives a rule by which it is to be done. This is no strike and no impulse on the young mind. If he understands the rule, and has common sense, he will do it, and in time, by diligence, learn the "three R's"; nay, he will even learn what a verb and noun is, and that a verb governs a noun, but will never know what governing is, nor what, in the world of nature, is the relation of verbs, nouns, and adjectives. We perceive, then, that if the boy is ever to be more than a ploughman or shopman (good enough trades), he must be struck by something which will bring out the fire. Now, the teacher won't do this unless he does two things: first teaches the *reason* of things, and then excites the child or youth by stating an idea or a thought which is new and striking. But we need not dwell on this; for here the *tact* of the teacher is greater than his talent. Let us take some other examples.