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DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF TEACHERS.

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GEO. U. HAY, P. E. R. Editor
WM. S. CARTER, A. M. Associate Editor

All remittances should be sent in a registered letter, addressed "JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, St. John, N. B."

In Science of November 5th is a communication from Dr. Bailey, of the New Brunswick University, relative to the great depth of Lake Temiscouata, which empties by the Madawaska into the St. John. Dr. Bailey spent some time about the Lake during the past summer in connection with the work of the Canadian Geological Survey, and from three soundings made near its southern extremity, depths of 225, 400 and 800 feet were reached, and it seems probable, adds Dr. Bailey, from the statements of reliable parties, that even this depth is at some places considerably exceeded. The surface of the Lake is, by the measurement of the aneroid barometer, 400 feet above tide-level in the Bay of Fundy, so that it has a depth fully 100 feet below tide-level. Dr. Bailey's communication is called forth by a report of the remarkable depth of Crater Lake in Oregon, which depth, to judge from its name, is no more than one might expect from its volcanic origin. But in the case of Lake Temiscouata there is nothing of a volcanic character, and the whole depression is evidently the result of simple erosion. If this should prove to be the deepest fresh water lake in America, Dr. Bailey's contribution to geographical science is a most important one.

TEACHING ENGLISH.

We ask the attention of all progressive teachers to the utterance below from the *Reading Herald*. Is it not time that the stupid and worse than useless practice of requiring pupils to commit to memory pages of a grammar should be abolished? Is it not a matter of reflection to the common-sense teacher, when after years, perhaps, spent in drilling his pupils in analysis, parsing, and memorizing pages of text-books on grammar, that the obstinate pupil will stand up in his place and pronounce judgment upon his method thus: "It ain't no use for me to learn them things?" and yet if he is attentive such solocisms will daily and hourly salute his ears. Where does the fault lie? Is there not a very large grain of truth in the following:

"The society for the prevention of cruelty to children ought to give Superintendent Ballet, of this city, a medal for his action in abolishing text-books on grammar from some of the lower grades of the public schools. In recommending this reform, he said: 'The work of training children to speak and write good English can be done much more effectively without a text-book than with it in the lower grades of our schools.' In that sentence he hit the nail with approximate exactness. He would have hit it exactly square if he had left off the part which we have put in italics. The way to learn to speak and write the English language correctly is to speak and write it. It must be taught by example and practice, and while grammars may hinder they cannot help to any degree commensurate with the waste of time, patience, and energy which they cause. All the grammars in the world will no more teach a child to speak and write correctly than a

book on swimming will teach him to float on the water. Turn the rascals out, Mr. Ballet. Teach English, but don't torture young minds with grammar."

AGRICULTURE IN SCHOOLS.

EDITOR JOURNAL OF EDUCATION:—Within the past few years there has been a reduction made by Government in the amount expended for education. I think this a step backward. Our predecessors have reared a splendid system of common education. We should complete it by enlarging it so that our pupils would be fully equipped for the pursuits of life. Cost may be urged, but I think as long as money can be found for other purposes, such as bridges and railways, and agricultural societies, it could be raised to complete our system of education.

For the larger scholars of the Province there are no inducements to continue at school. Especially those who do not intend or are not able to take a college course. There is provision made for those who wish to take a Degree in Arts and who are able to sustain the expense, but for the great majority of the older pupils of this Province who do not wish to take an art course or who are not able to, there is no provision. This is not right. It is not in the best interests of the Province. Three-fourths of the male pupils intend or are forced to become tillers of the soil. Now, Mr. Editor, for this large number of pupils what provision is made? I consider it the duty of the Board of Education to provide some means by which these pupils may learn something about their life business. I am aware of the difficulties of this but I believe it to be absolutely necessary to the interests of our agricultural population. Something might be done by the Board of Education prescribing for use in the country schools a book on the principles of agriculture. D.
Bristol, Car. Co., Nov. 8, 1886.

Our correspondent brings up an important question—the teaching of agriculture in country schools. Agriculture has become a science, requiring on the part of those who would succeed in it, energy, intelligence and business capacity of the highest order. This is too often lost sight of in directing the minds of the young in the choice of a profession. Many studies may be turned to account by the skillful teacher, and may be made to do service in country schools as an assistance to the young agriculturist; for example, the lessons on plant and animal life, on minerals, on the elementary substances—oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen, with reference to the combination of these in soils, plants, etc., the elements of physical geography and other topics. Then, again, a contributor to the *Journal* has shown how school gardens may be of the greatest service in teaching the first principles of agriculture. Some of the teachers of our country schools have given so much of the studies above referred to a practical turn by teaching them with reference to agriculture. We should like to hear from them as to their methods and the success they have met with.

A book on the first principles of agriculture might be introduced into our schools, and in the hands of skilful and practical teachers be made the means of imparting sound preliminary instruction in farming, a branch which, as our correspondent implies, seems to be totally neglected in our country schools.

The Toronto *Educational Weekly*, which has just come to hand, has an able editorial on the introduction of agriculture as an optional subject in the public schools of Ontario. It publishes two interesting letters on the subject; one from Mr. Macdonald, a writer on educational topics, and the other from Mr. Brown, a practical farmer. It says:

"Mr. Brown argues that instead of barring the way into the professions, instead of throwing obstacles in the way of entering the church, medicine, or law, inducement should be held out to tempt our young men to undertake agricultural occupations

by raising the standard of the rural schools. In this view there lies concealed a profound truth. It is merely another way of saying that farming may be made intellectually as high a profession as the other so-called professions, and that the schools should recognize this fact.

But that which we are more particularly anxious to lay stress upon is, not that agriculture, pure and simple, should be taught in our schools—this perhaps is far too much to expect, even if it were possible to come to any definite conclusion as to what should be included in agriculture pure and simple, but that our children should early in life be made thoroughly familiar with all those natural phenomena and all those elementary natural laws upon which all agriculture is founded. They need not be taught such things as the relative values of different sorts of artificial manures, for example, but they might be taught the philosophy of manuring generally. They need not be taught the rotation of crops; but they might be taught what changes take place in soils by the growth of crops. In short, as Mr. Macdonald has pointed out, farming in these days is eminently scientific, and since the larger proportion of our growing youth are farmers' sons, they should be taught, not only that farming is a science, but also some of the elementary facts of this science."

GLOUCESTER TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

The Gloucester Teachers' Institute was reorganized at Bathurst on Thursday last, and very interesting sessions were held on that and the following day. About forty-five teachers were present. The following were elected officers: President of Institute, D. M. McIntosh, Vice-president, Peter Doucet, Secretary-Treasurer, Peter J. Paulin, Accountant, Joseph Lanteligne, additional members Committee of Management, Miss Sadie Connacher and Miss Mary Alexander.

Mr. F. M. Cowperthwaite gave a very excellent reading lesson to a class of his own pupils, and Mr. Peter Doucet read an able paper, brimful of good thoughts and suggestions, on School Management. Mr. D. M. McIntosh's paper on the benefits of mathematics was well received. He showed the value of mathematics in bringing out the memory, reasoning powers, etc., of the student.

Mr. Crockett gave an address on Thursday evening to a full house. He contrasted the system of education of to-day with that of twenty years ago. Three years ago there were five hundred teachers holding local licenses, to-day, not one English speaking teacher, and very few Acadian.

At the Friday morning session Mr. Joseph Comeau read a good paper on Reduction, illustrating the method of teaching it, which was followed by excellent papers on geography by Miss Connacher and Miss Alexander.

Miss Alice Perley read a good paper on How to teach History.

Friday afternoon session was devoted to examining specimens of drawing, writing, etc.

Mr. Peter Doucet, of Petit Roche, exhibited some excellent specimens; also the Grammar School of Bathurst, of which Mr. F. M. Cowperthwaite, A. B., is Principal; from the school of Mr. P. G. Paulin, Carriquet, and from the Superior School, St. Peter's Village, Mr. D. M. McIntosh, Principal.

The Chief Superintendent, Mr. Crockett, attended the sessions and did very much to render them pleasant and profitable by his good advice, and by his taking part in the discussion of the several topics before the Institute.

SEVERAL papers and articles crowded out of this number will appear next issue.

This first number of a new evening paper to be called the *Standard*, will be issued in St. John on some date between the 25th and 30th of this month.