

EDITORIAL NOTES.

COLLEGES.

Speaking of benefactions to our colleges, attention may be drawn to the Victoria College, which is in course of erection in Montreal. This institution had its origin in the endowment of the Donalda Arts Course for ladies in connection with the McGill University. The endowment was given by Sir Donald Smith, at present High Commissioner of Canada, and now he intends spending half-a-million in maturing the original idea into an institution which is likely to become complete in its efficiency. The scientific side of McGill is well looked after by Mr. Macdonald, the millionaire manufacturer, who, as his means accumulate, is always ready to give a half-a-million now and again to develop his favorite institution as a school of science. The principal of McGill has been doing his best to foster the Arts Course, and it is very likely that in the near future a large endowment for building purposes and other developments will be secured.

The smaller institution of Morrin College, which has for many years been in a kind of moribund condition, and which some people have always been declaring to be unnecessary, has received a new principal in the person of the Rev. Dr. McRae, an ex-Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, together with two new professors from Nova Scotia. The endowment from the Dr. Morrin estate has always been held to be inadequate to carry on the business of a college; but since the Ross estate has yielded a further sum, there has arisen the hope that better things are in store for the College. With McGill so near, however, the institution can hardly ever be expected to become more than a secondary school, for the education of students from the poorer sections of the Province who

wish to prosecute their studies at the least expense possible. There is a possibility that the divinity classes may be re-opened, with the local clergymen as professors.

ANNUAL EXAMINATION.

The Department of Education last year made several changes in the programme of studies for our secondary schools and also in the order of examinations. Among these changes perhaps the following were the most important: viz., that Grammar and Rhetoric, Arithmetic, History and Physics might be taken one year, and the remaining subjects for Junior Leaving or Junior Matriculation, in a subsequent year, at the choice of the candidate.

To obtain fairly respectable standing in the subjects of Grammar and Rhetoric and Arithmetic requires considerable maturity of intellectual power which can be had only on condition of age. Therefore it follows that if candidates pass the required standard in the above subjects, they will undoubtedly be able to handle satisfactorily more difficult papers in other branches, for example in those of Algebra. Is this the explanation of the unusual difficulty of the Junior Leaving and Matriculation Algebra paper this year?

Were the examiners instructed by the Department to give an object lesson by means of the Algebra paper?

This is the only or the best excuse we can make on their behalf for the unexampled severity of the paper. That there should be mistakes in it or in any examination paper is *inevitable*.

The papers are set by men chosen for the purpose; if they make a blunder, as confessedly in this case, there is no arrangement that we know of can change a fact. The sub-ex-