



JOHN GEORGE HODGINS, M.A., LL.D., F.R.G.S.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION FOR ONTARIO.

JOHN GEORGE HODGINS, M.A., LL.D., F.R.G.S., Deputy Minister of Education for Ontario, was born at Dublin, Ireland, on August 12th, 1821. He came with some relatives to Canada when in his twelfth year, and received his education at Upper Canada Academy and Victoria College, Cobourg. In 1856, he received his degree from the Victoria University. He likewise graduated in the faculty of law in Toronto University, from which institution he received, in 1860, the degree of LL.B., and in 1870, that of LL.D. Dr. Hodgins was called to the Bar of Ontario in the last mentioned year. It is not, however, as a lawyer but as an educator, that the attention of the readers of the *EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL* is directed to him in this brief biographical sketch.

In 1844 Dr. Hodgins began his connection with educational work, and since that time his career has been marked by the most patient industry, by unflagging zeal, and above all, by a genius for organization, and for keeping the educational system commensurate with the needs of the public. In 1846 he became Secretary of the Board of Education for Upper Canada, which body was afterwards designated the Coun-

cil of Public Instruction. To the responsible position of deputy head in the Department of Education he was gazetted in June, 1855. Never has a public man, in this country, of whom we have any knowledge, sought with greater conscientiousness to fit himself for the trust reposed in him, than did the newly appointed deputy. He spent, at his own expense, in 1845, after receiving his first appointment, a year in Dublin, familiarizing himself with the details of management in the office of the National Board of Education in Ireland, and in mastering the methods in the Normal and Model schools. But, as we might well surmise, Dr. Hodgins was not one who would rest satisfied with methods adopted by others, however excellent. The condition of things in this country differed widely from the state of affairs in Ireland; and what the new officer set himself with heart and soul to do, was to apply so much of the details of the Irish national system as was adapted to this country, and with his able chief to round and perfect the system. How well that was done is now a matter of history.

The late lamented Dr. Ryerson, shortly before his retirement from the office he had so long and ably filled, thus wrote to the Hon. Edward Blake: "He (Dr. Hodgins) is the most thor-

oughly trained man in all Canada for the Education Department; and is the ablest and most thorough administrator of a public department of any man whom I have met." Dr. Hodgins had been laboring most cordially with Dr. Ryerson for nearly thirty-three years, hence the value of this tribute will be readily seen.

Dr. Hodgins is an extensive writer on educational topics, and for over twenty years was the chief editor of the *U.C. Journal of Education*. He is the author of "Lovell's General Geography," "First Steps in General Geography," "School History of Canada, and of the other British North American Provinces." He published likewise the "Canadian School Speaker and Reciter," the "School Manual," "Lectures on the School Law," "Sketches and Anecdotes of the Queen," and "The School House and its Architecture." In 1871 he and Dr. Machatti were deputed by the Ontario Government to visit the United States and report upon the subject of Technical Schools of Science. This led to the establishment of the "College of Technology," and subsequently to the "School of Practical Science." A very noted work of his too, was a "Report of the Educational Features of the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia."

Dr. Hodgins was the chief editor, as well as one of the gentlemen under whose supervision "The Story of My Life," by Dr. Ryerson, was published. He is also the author of several papers on the life and labors of that great educationist. There is one admirably written memoir of him by Dr. Hodgins in the *Canada School Journal*, and also a pamphlet on the "Ryerson Memorial Fund," from the same sympathetic and capable pen.

In social life, Dr. Hodgins is genial; and he is a gentleman of great culture. In benevolent or Christian work he is in the front rank whenever the occasion arises. He has been honorary secretary of the U. C. Bible Society since 1860, and honorary lay secretary of the Anglican Synod of the diocese of Toronto since 1870, except for one year; from 1867 to 1874 he was director of the Prisoners' Aid Society, and superintended its work in the Toronto Jail and Central Prison; and he was president of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society in 1875. Dr. Hodgins married in 1849, at Dublin, Ireland, Frances Rachel, eldest daughter of James Doyle, Esq., of Cloyne, County of Cork, by which union he has four sons living. The eldest—a graduate of the university and a member of the Bar—is in the Department of Justice at Ottawa; the third is a barrister in Toronto; the fourth is following the profession of a mechanical engineer; and the fifth is an undergraduate of Toronto University. The second son is dead. In 1861 Dr. Hodgins was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London, in 1879 he received the decoration of the "Order of the Palm Leaf," from the French Ministry of Public Instruction; in 1885 he was appointed Honorary Secretary of the International Congress of Educators at New Orleans, also one of the educational jurors at the exposition held in that city. He was also elected a "Corresponding Fellow of the Academy of Sciences," New Orleans; and in the same year he received from the Governor-General, Lord Lansdowne, a confederation medal, in appreciation of "Services as Public Officer and a Man of Letters."