

## DIAGNOSIS OF BRAIN POWER.

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The Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education for Ontario, occupied the Chair, and called upon Rev. Dr. Milligan to open the meeting with prayer.

Rev. Dr. Milligan offered prayer, after which the following cablegram was read from the National Union of Teachers of England and Wales, now in session in Manchester, England :—" Your fellow members of one profession and one Empire send greeting and good will."

The Chairman delivered a short address, in which he congratulated the teachers on the splendid success of the meetings, and then, with complimentary remarks, introduced Colonel Baker.

Hon. Colonel Baker, Minister of Education, British Columbia, said :—We all owe a debt of gratitude to the Hon. Mr. Ross for having collected together, from all parts of this great Dominion, such an important assembly of teachers and others who are interested in the evolution of the human mind, in order that we may interchange our ideas, and, let us hope, advance our cause. We should hail with keen pleasure any organization which has for its effect the bringing prominently before the public that important section of society, the teachers of our public schools, because it is a class which, from the very nature of its calling and the magnitude of its responsibilities, should command our deepest respect and solicitude. The teachers of our public schools are the human instruments which mould the brains, and to a large extent the characters, of the children who are placed under their charge. They are indirectly arbiters of the national character, and it is, therefore, difficult adequately to measure the amount of honour and dignity which should be properly awarded to these architects of human nature. I may mention as chief of their responsibilities the force of example, which is one of the most subtle and far-reaching forces which shape our social existence, and we cannot attach too much importance to it; indeed, there are few of us who realize the extraordinary power which is exercised over us by the example of those by whom we may be surrounded. In illustration I may mention the common case of a man who is accustomed to drink only at his meals, but who becomes thrown into the society of others who take their drinks at odd times, when he gradually, and almost imperceptibly to himself, drops into the same habit—here then the force of example grows into a force of habit, and when that is extended to a number of individuals it becomes a force of custom which it is exceedingly difficult to change; and so it is with every other habit, and there is not one of us who is uninfluenced by the nature of his surroundings.

But if this is the case with the adult, how much more so with young children, whose brains are in a receptive state of growth, ready and eager to absorb impressions from surrounding objects?

Therefore it becomes the first duty of society so to order its educational system that it may be enabled to select the most honourable, the most able, and the most refined of its units as teachers of the young.