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We publish in this morning's issue a petition from the inhabitants of Montreal to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly on the subject of Public Education. The subject of Education is one of the most important, particularly in a rising youthful community such as that of Canada, to which the energies of the statesman, the efforts of the journalist, the pen of the Christian, can scarcely be directed.

"They go in ships and come out ones" but, notwithstanding, these superficial and conceited persons are recommended as Schoolmasters in the towns and villages; and thus they are made to supercede or elbow out men of real, or at least greater, talents, whose modesty keeps them in the background, waste the time of their pupils on useless subjects of instruction, and thus they pour a flood of superficiality over the whole country, which even the learned themselves are unable to stem. A boy who has got a smattering of every thing, and who, in the course of his six months attendance at the Normal School, has been "cramped" so that he can answer a few questions put to him by a pedantic knight of the fern, at a public examination, can scarcely ever again be brought to study any subject thoroughly or methodically. We have known students of this description hammering away at a simple equation before they could state, much less explain, a question in simple proportion, talking very learnedly about major and minor propositions before they knew the difference between a noun and a verb, and making a bold push at the Greek alphabet—for they seldom go much farther—before they had learned any Latin, and professing to be great judges of English composition before they had gone beyond the verb in its grammar. Such persons have always some little artificial puzzle or grammatical conundrum, upon the solution or explanation of which they value themselves highly, and cause plain people to suspect that they have dealings with a certain personage never to be mentioned to ears polite. As for mineralogy, conchology, chronology, astronomy, chemistry, &c., they have all these at their fingers' ends, and will lecture you a full hour upon any of them at any time, never using a word of less than four syllables during the whole talk. It is indeed wonderful after all that one small head can carry all they know. There is sometimes danger in these dull lectures, however; we were once accidentally present when a normal school gains undertook to enlighten upon the subject of Chemistry; in the course of his manipulations we had nearly lost our eyes, and entirely lost a new silk waistcoat, by the bursting of a bottle; and we know a gentleman who was once set on fire, and nearly reduced to a smoking ruin, by the dexterity of another chemist of the same school. Young women are also made to learn these branches of study at the normal school, and perilously dangerous logicians they do become sometimes; we confess we do not like to see girls of sixteen and eighteen years of age walking through the streets with staid under their arms filled with algebric equations, and their heads stuffed with nonsense about the volcanoes in the moon, we think they would be much better at home learning to stitch neatly, or clean starch neatly—but perhaps we are too fastidious. There is another danger, who, though they might have the necessary mental attainments to learn the sciences, are so constituted, that they would not understand a word of the language; still even if they did understand a sentence or

two of English uttered in the course of a speech, their minds are so utterly uninformed, their faculties so obtuse, and their apprehensions so blunt, that they are utterly incapable of comprehending its tendency or true import. Let any one with his eyes open make an excursion through the French Townships, and note how these people live; what kind of dwellings they possess, how they dress, and what the construction of their agricultural implements. It is not merely their ignorance of reading and writing to which we exclusively advert; the Indian in his wigwag, or equally uninstructed in these arts, but compare the comforts of the Indian, the comparative Indian village, the cleanliness, the order, and the adaptation of means to an end which every where appears—compare this, we say, with the struggling, ragged, rickety boarding, noisome, dingy, and tatterdemalion appearance of a French settlement. The Indian's instruments of the chase may be rude, but they are well adapted for his mode of life, and they are handled with dexterity; besides, when he becomes acquainted with more refined modes of life, he readily adopts them; but the habitus is hermetically sealed against improvement of any kind; with intelligence and enterprise every where around him and before his eyes, he remains the same; like the birds of the air, he builds his nest in the same manner from age to age, and continues to plot on as his fathers did before him, seemingly unconscious of the world's progress, or the world's enlightenment. Political agitation, so far from retarding him or freezing him down to this torpid state, would rather have a tendency to rouse him from his slavish apathy, and tempt him to exclaim in his petty dictators, "Am I not also a man?" A single ray of light beaming from the pure fountain of political or religious freedom would rouse him from the debasing vassalage of ignorance in which he is bound hand and foot, and would prompt him with irresistible force to vindicate his unalienable right, as a British subject, to all the freedom which the term British implies. But Mr. Chauveau, and such as he, know well that it is to the ignorance of their constituents that they owe their influence; and that were the French inhabitants as intelligent and as well educated as the British, a pretty considerable number of chattering stragglers would be swept out of the House of Parliament, rendering the Provincial Legislature more English in its dialect, as well as in its proceedings, and that they would be reduced to the obscurity and insignificance of their original profession. If Mr. Chauveau will first labor to remove the mists of error, bigotry, and superstition, which cloud the minds of these benighted people—if he will use his influence in establishing schools in which a liberal education can be obtained—if he will share in advancing the means of promoting for them a more civilized mode of exercising the common customs of civil life—if he will have them taught to sew and reap, how to grind and make bread, he may then from his place in the House refer with safety and honor to the condition of his countrymen, but not till then.

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The above is a short abstract of a debate in which the subject of discussion was violently and eagerly opposed by the Government, though the expense would be in no degree compensated by the advantage of adopting the measure. In the course of the debate a Member reminded Mr. Hincks (Colborne) that he could find means to squander in trips to Washington, excursions through the Welland Canal, bribes for road jobs, or useless commissions to pamper partisans, but he would grudge the paltry sum necessary for giving the municipalities the information of what was done in the House, and the guide for their own Council proceedings. Mr. Chauveau's reasons for the ignorance of the French in Lower Canada, namely, political agitation, reminds us somewhat of Washington Irving's reasons for giving the name of Stony Stratford to a certain town in England; he tells us that it is so called because it abounds in butteries. Mr. Chauveau must look beyond political agitation for the diminished ignorance which prevails in the Seigneuries of Eastern Canada, in which the greatest mass of the people are not only uneducated, but opposed to improvement of every kind. The only political disturbing influence ever introduced among them must have seceded from through the instrumentality of such men as Mr. Chauveau himself. Certainly the blame, in this instance at least, does not lie at Mr. Merrin's door, who, though they might have the necessary mental attainments to learn the sciences, are so constituted, that they would not understand a word of the language; still even if they did understand a sentence or

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On Thursday last, the 5th instant, on the motion of Mr. Holmes, the House went into Committee on Printing. The Hon. Member stated that it had been decided by the Committee to recommend that distribution of Journals be made to the Municipalities of Upper and Lower Canada presently existing, or that might afterwards be erected. Mr. Smith, of Frontenac, voted against the motion; he saw no use in the proposed distribution of the Journals. He remembered that in Upper Canada, some years ago, extra numbers of the Journals were distributed among Members, and these might be seen lying about in different houses, entirely useless. It would be folly to spend £1000 in any such way. Mr. Laurin (who spoke in French) opposed the motion. Mr. Hincks said, that what was really wanted was a cheaper system of printing the Journals, so that any one could get them. To distribute the entire Journals, would oblige the House to print the same number of every document, whereas a great deal of what was printed was perfectly useless. Messrs. Latier and Lafontaine opposed the Report, and Mr. Holmes replied, that the Queen's Printers would not print the Journals at less than 100 copies. Mr. Maskaenie, in connection with this question, enlarged on the necessity and advantages of education, and remarked, that he was surprised any opposition should come from the Attorney-General East, when he remembered that 80,000 of that gentleman's fellow-countrymen sent a Petition to England, amidst the taunts that were produced by the fact that 70,000 signed crosses. He asked if Ministers were afraid of information. Mr. Chauveau said there was no objection to distribute useful information, but there was great objection to distribute such useless information as it was constantly moving for. He had made a very ungenerous allusion to the crosses signed to a certain Petition, but the hon. member should remember that if the people of Lower Canada had been kept without education, it was partly due to the misfortunes of the days of tyranny, and partly to the fault of persons in Upper as well as Lower Canada, who had constantly encouraged useless agitation. The motion for the Committee to rise and report progress, was then carried.

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ARRIVAL OF THE STEAMSHIP PACIFIC. The American Steamer Pacific arrived at Montreal on the 2nd inst. The British Steamer Niagara had arrived at Liverpool on the 27th inst.

WANTED TO CHARTER



