

Inspector G. W. Mersereau, M. A.

The subject of this sketch, Mr. George W. Mersereau, M. A., is Inspector of District No. 1, N. B., embracing the Counties of Restigouche, Gloucester and Northumberland. He was born at Blackville, N. B., July 9th, 1852. His father was at one time a prominent lumberman on the Miramichi, and still lives at Doaktown. He traces his descent from General Joshua Mersereau of the King's Guard in France down through John Mersereau of Maugerville, who came to this country from Staten Island, New York, about 1783, and who was one of the first four justices of the Court of Common Pleas appointed in New Brunswick.

Inspector Mersereau gained his early education in the schools of his native place and began to teach in 1869. After a term at the Baptist Seminary in Fredericton, he entered, in 1873, the New Brunswick University, winning the scholarship for Northumberland County, and three years later graduated with the degree of B. A. He took his grammar school license the same year, making the remarkably high average of 92.33 per cent of marks attainable. He was principal of the Bathurst grammar school from the year of his graduation, 1876, until November 1883, when he was appointed inspector of schools for District No. 7. On the resignation of Inspector Philip Cox (now Dr. Cox) in

1884, Mr. Mersereau was appointed in his place, mainly because of his knowledge of the French language. In 1884 Mr. Mersereau was made one of the provincial examiners, a position he still holds, and in 1890 he took his M. A. degree in course.

Notwithstanding the large area covered by Mr. Mersereau's inspectorate he usually succeeds in visiting all his schools, even those in the most remote districts, making his summer visitations on a bicycle, and if the roads are blocked by winter storms he can betake himself with equal facility to snow shoes. His genial disposition and dignified and courteous bearing, combined with excellent mental qualifications and a constant aim to advance in every possible way the profession of teaching, have gained for him many warm personal friends, not only in his own inspectorate but throughout the province. At educational and other meetings he is always listened to with attention, and is a ready and convincing speaker. Besides attending to the somewhat exacting duties of a large inspectorate, he takes a lively interest at the Teachers' Institutes, is a Sabbath school worker, a member of the Baptist church, a prominent Freemason, and holds a captain's commission in the active militia, in which he is an enthusiastic officer, as might be inferred from the instincts which he has inherited from his soldier ancestor, coupled with a commanding personality.

What Teachers May Do.

Everywhere schools are found which are needing what many term luxuries, but which are really necessities. The teachers seem to take it for granted that there is no way to obtain what they want, and the pupils know no better. It cannot be expected that they should. Boards are slow to realize the need of much that every live, progressive teacher feels to be necessities, and if boards do realize it they seldom have the money to spend for such things. Now, as in many other cases, the only way to do a thing is to do it. Wishing never accomplishes much; it is action which counts. If teachers would but make up their minds to have what they want, they could have it nine times out of ten. I will explain my meaning by a little personal experience.

In January of my second year here, I placed a piano in our high school room. I had long wished to do so, but pupils and teachers could not be brought to see how it could be done; the board could not aid us, and there was not a cent on hand. Nevertheless, one fine morning the eyes of all were gladdened, and astonished as well, by the sight of a beautiful upright piano behind the principal's desk. Many were the exclamations of surprise and delight, and anxiety also, especially when I informed them that I expected them to pay for it. I was very severely criticized by some citizens for under-