

of travelling for the conveyance of merchandize, will give this grand route a decided importance with regard to the communication with Western America, and make it a serious rival to the Canal of the State of New-York. The great river itself will soon be crossed near Montreal by a railroad bridge; its length will be two kilometres (about 6,156 feet.) A colony which executes similar works to avoid the expense of transshipment, is certainly enjoying a fine state of prosperity."

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* * * Parties in correspondence with the Educational Department will please quote the number and date of any previous letters to which they may have occasion to refer, as it is extremely difficult for the Department to keep trace of isolated cases, where so many letters are received (nearly 500 per month) on various subjects.

THE ANNUAL ELECTION OF TRUSTEES.

We have so frequently referred to the highly important duty which devolves annually upon the school electors in each School Section of Upper Canada, that it may not be considered necessary to repeat it. Still, an anxiety to impress upon the minds of the people the absolute necessity of circumspection in the discharge of their duty at the approaching annual school meetings, induces us again to refer to the matter.

The successive School Acts have invested the office of Trustee with great authority, ample powers, and a corresponding responsibility and dignity. No man should aspire to this office who does not fully understand and appreciate the spirit in which it should be exercised. Intelligence, integrity and a large liberality should invariably characterise him; so that in his official intercourse with the Teacher, the inhabitants of the Section and the children of the school, he could command their personal respect, and the ready assent of all parties to any measure designed to promote the interests and prosperity of the Section.

On the other hand, the inhabitants of a School Section should exercise great discrimination in the selection of these important officers. The Trustees possess the sole authority to select and employ the Teacher of the Section, to impose the rates, build the school-house, direct and manage the library, and, in short, perform all those executive duties of the School Section, on behalf of the inhabitants, which pertain to the office. While, in the performance of these important duties, the Trustees should, when once in office, be cordially sustained by the inhabitants, great care should be exercised in their first election. It must be obvious to every one, that to take little interest in the annual meeting, and to exercise little discrimination in the selection of the Trustee representative of the Section, and afterwards to display a disproportionate sensitiveness at every act of the Trustees, and an indiscriminate opposition to every measure involving the necessary expenditure of money, is not the way to remedy the evil complained of, but rather to increase it, by creating ill-feeling in the Section, and embarrassing the Trustees in the lawful performance of their duty. The duties of Trustees are clearly defined: they must keep open their school for at least six months of the year; they must provide a qualified Teacher, and pay him a liberal salary; they are responsible for

the books in the library, and the maps and apparatus in the school; they must keep the school-house and premises in a proper state of repair, besides incurring other necessary expenses on behalf of the inhabitants and for the Section, in which they can only have no more personal interest than any of their neighbours. If they do not faithfully perform all these duties, they either subject themselves to a fine, or incur personal responsibility. They must discharge their liabilities, and are therefore bound to exercise all the corporate powers with which they are invested for the fulfilment of their contracts and engagements. These facts should not be lost sight of, but a careful consideration of the matter should lead to a deeper interest in the schools generally, in the ordinary examinations, and in the annual meetings of the Section. This would promote a more united action on the part of the Trustees and people in sustaining and perpetuating those invaluable institutions for the enlightenment and social elevation of the County—the Common Schools, not unaptly termed the Colleges of the people.

TO LOCAL SUPERINTENDENTS AND TRUSTEES.

Early in the present month the blank forms of half-yearly and yearly returns were sent to local Superintendents for distribution among the rural School Sections. Local Superintendents should see that each Section is promptly supplied with a form. Any additional copies which may be required, can be obtained from the Department.

The half-yearly returns should be sent to the Local Superintendent during the first week of January; on the 12th of January the last half year's instalment of the School fund, (which is, by the 27th section of the School Act of 1850, made available whether collected or not,) will be payable to teachers, upon the check of the Local Superintendent; and any treasurer refusing to pay such lawful order, after that date, can be sued for the amount by the teacher holding it. The Trustees' annual report is required by law to be read at the annual school meeting, on the 9th of January, and then sent to the Local Superintendent, on or before the 15th. If delayed after the 31st of January, Trustees are liable to a fine of \$5 for each week's delay.

The blank forms of reports for Grammar and Common School Boards of Trustees, and for Local Superintendents, &c., will be sent out in due time, without further application on their part.

The school registers were despatched some time since, as intimated in the *Journal* for October.

A copy of the new edition of the Common School Acts will be sent early in January, to the Trustees of each School Section in U. C.

TO TEACHERS.

It should be borne in mind by teachers (as intimated in the *Journal of Education* for May, 1854, page 86), that in order to avail themselves of the Superannuated Common School Teachers' Fund, it will be necessary for them annually to transmit their subscriptions, beginning with 1854, to the Chief Superintendent of Schools. No teacher, now engaged in teaching, will be entitled to share in this fund who does not thus contribute to it annually. Subscriptions should be sent in as early in the year as possible.—See Chief Superintendent's Annual Report for 1854, pp. 234—237.