

The people, then, regarding the assessment in a bad light, and the promised results having entirely failed, seek to rid themselves of it. How do they do it? by the only means which the law gives them,—that of selecting commissioners having the same ideas as themselves, trying, like them, to prove that the result anticipated by the Legislature in the principle of assessment is fallible.

Your Committee can thus see why commissioners are generally named who are either incapable or known to be opposed to assessment. What do these commissioners do? They follow the letter of the law: they pass by the schools at certain periods; assess the people, and do not levy the assessment, or put it off until their time of office expires, thus leaving the odium of levying it on their successors.

It is easy to see that the assessment, not being paid in time, the teachers suffer from the want of their emoluments, and become disgusted with a profession which is so badly paid. Hence the choice of cheap and consequently incompetent teachers. There is no competition; the salaries are too limited; masters are chosen in the municipality, and advantage is taken of his necessity, to procure his services for a small sum, and of his patience, to make him wait six months for the full payment of his salary. A young girl of fifteen or sixteen years of age, so to speak, is taken from the benches of a small school, and sent with a certificate of morality to the office of the Inspector of the County, and returns with a master-of-arts' certificate. Can the cause of instruction advance under such management?

*Messire Papineau*.—It is perfectly ridiculous to see the persons whose duty it is to look after the progress of pupils, and to furnish them the means of advancing in the instruction which they receive, incapable of reading or writing, and without any knowledge of the sciences which are taught. How can they favor or judge of a subject which is entirely unknown to them? One might as well call upon a man blind from his birth to decide on the effects of light.

*Messire Bélanger*.—The law works without opposition, but instruction is not generally sufficiently practical; the sagacity of the children is not sufficiently exercised. Thus they quickly forget the little they know. A child reads five or seven years, without its ever being thought necessary to ask him whether he understands what he reads. Hence his distaste for books. The causes which have retarded and still retard education, are too many different books, consequently too many different classes, and loss of time—want of method, want of books and papers.

*Messire Provancher*.—No, the system does not work, because most of the schools want books and other necessities. The salary offered to teachers is too limited to induce sufficiently qualified persons to accept the offer. The nearly absolute want of necessary things in the schools in several school-districts, is the cause that children, often attending schools for whole years, learn hardly anything more than the letter of their catechism.

*Messire Déziel*.—The first and the principal cause which retards instruction in the municipality, is the want of education in the School Commissioners. The second is the want of method in teaching; and the third, the want in the schools of maps, globes, and some of the most essential books.

*Messire Lapointe*.—The schools are without books; no maps nor any of those things which are indispensable for the development of intelligence. The schools are empty.

*Messire Bedard*.—The system does not work in our municipality.

*Messire Ls. Parent*.—The law has ceased to be in operation for several years.

*Rev. — Johnston, Aylmer*.—The whole system works badly. The teachers are not paid. Proper books are not to be found in the schools, and general dissatisfaction seems to prevail. I cannot say how far the Superintendent or the