

On Monday, Nov. 3rd, a school was opened in the Little Mountain District. There is an attendance of fifteen scholars; the teacher is Miss C. Robinson.

At a recent meeting of the Protestant Board of School Trustees for the City of Winnipeg, the following amongst other resolutions were adopted:—

Moved by Mr. Briggs, seconded by Mr. McNea, that the Inspector, Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the School Management Committee, be a Committee to report on the efficiency of the teaching in the different departments of the Public Schools, and that they report to this Board.—Carried.

Moved by Mr. Luxton, seconded by Mr. Campbell, that the promotion examinations in the public schools be held during the three days preceding Christmas, and that the Inspector and two of the School Management Committee be a Committee to conduct such examination.—Carried.

The Rev. W. Cyprian Pinkham, Superintendent of Education, has been unanimously elected to represent the Protestant Section of the Board of Education, on the Council of the University of Manitoba.

Mrs. A. E. Cowley, Principal of the St. John's College Ladies' School, has resigned her position.

The annual concert at St. John's College, to commemorate its opening under the present Bishop of Rupert's Land, took place on 31st Oct. It was a very successful affair.

ST. BONIFACE COLLEGE.

The commencement of this establishment can be traced back to 1818; for a school was founded then by Rev. J. N. Provencher in his own residence at St. Boniface, and was incorporated as a college in 1871. Rev. J. N. Provencher, who became the first bishop of St. Boniface, was the first that opened a regular school in the country. Having hardly room for himself in his small house, he, nevertheless, gathered half-breed children and taught them reading and writing. Some of his scholars were even taught classics, and with such success that Rev. S. J. N. Dumoulin, in a letter dated March 10th, 1824, and lately republished, could state that "several children were already advanced in Humanities."

The present buildings have been erected by His Grace the Most Rev. Alexander Taché, Archbishop of St. Boniface, about twenty-five years ago, and now a new, fine, substantial college building is in course of erection, and will be ready for occupancy in September, 1880.

The St. Boniface College is affiliated with the University of Manitoba.

There are three distinct courses of studies established in the College, the Theological, Classical and Commercial, besides a Preparatory Department.

The Theological course embraces Dogmatics and Moral Theology, Sacred Scriptures, Canon Law, Ecclesiastical History and Liturgy. This course is completed in four years.

The Classical or Collegiate course embraces English and French Languages and Literature (Poetry and Rhetoric), History, Geography, Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Latin and Greek, Astronomy, Geology, Botany and Zoology, Mental and Moral Science and Political Economy.—In Mathematics, Algebra, Geometry, Solid and Spherical Trigonometry, Conic Sections, Differential and Integral Calculus—Music, Drawing and Religious Instruction. This course is completed in six years.

The Commercial course embraces the English and French Languages, Arithmetic, Penmanship, Book-keeping, Epistolary Correspondence, English and French Composition, Elements of Natural Philosophy, History, Geography, Geometry, Algebra, Mensuration, Music, Drawing, Telegraphy, and Religious Instruction. Also Lectures on Commercial Law. This course is completed in three years.

The Preparatory course embraces Spelling, Reading and Writing in English and French, Geography, History, English Grammar, French Grammar, Arithmetic, Intellectual and Practical, Familiar Science of common things, and Religious Instruction. This course is not completed in less than four years.

The Faculty of the College is presently composed of eleven Professors; and the Corporation is composed of His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface, of the President of the College, the Parish Priest of St. Boniface, and some other members.

New Discovery in Photography.—A German paper states that a German named Karl Steinback has made an important discovery in photography, in which a mirror image of a person is fixed, in the natural colors of nature. Possibly this statement will be accepted *cum grano salis*.

Official Department.

CIRCULAR FROM THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION TO COUNTY INSPECTORS, RURAL SCHOOL TRUSTEES, AND RATEPAYERS IN RURAL SCHOOL SECTIONS, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE FORMATION OF TOWNSHIP BOARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL PURPOSES.

1. Amongst the improvements in our Educational System advocated by Dr. Ryerson in 1870 and carried into effect by the legislation of 1871, was the giving of facilities for the establishment of Township School Boards. In his report for 1870 he gives an elaborate statement of the reasons for further extending facilities for forming such Boards. Subsequent experience has fully confirmed their force; and in the School Act of 1877 I introduced provisions to facilitate their formation and working, and also for withdrawal and re formation into sections in case the Board system should be found unsatisfactory.

One provision of the Act of 1877 is that at the annual meeting in any year of the School Sections in a Township the question of forming a Township Board may be submitted in each section for the decision of the meeting, and whenever, in any township, at any such annual meeting, two-thirds in number of the School Sections so decide, the Council of such Township shall thereupon pass a By-law to abolish the division of the Township into sections and establish a Public School Board accordingly.

In advocating this and other changes, Dr. Ryerson well observes that those who have carefully studied the subject of popular education in all its bearings, and have looked closely into the educational history and the progress and failures of other countries, know full well that our school system would fall behind that of other countries, and become stationary, unless it embodied within itself from time to time the true elements of progress and provided fully, on an efficient scale, for the educational wants of the youth of the country.

In this consideration the question of the area of the School District is an essential one, materially affecting the satisfactory and beneficial working of the schools.

The origin of School Sections is to be found in the Law passed by the State of Massachusetts in 1787, which authorized the division of townships into Sections for school purposes.

After 80 years of experience, in 1869 this same State passed a Law abolishing the system of Sections and making the area of the School District continuous with that of the Township. Their experience had demonstrated the mischief occasioned by this system, which, as described by Horace Mann, was "the most unfortunate Law on the subject of Common Schools ever enacted by that State."

The original model set up in Massachusetts was followed by all of the New England States and several States in the North and North-west, and by us in the Province of Ontario. The Township was, however, adopted as the area of the School District in the more newly settled States, such as Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio and Missouri; but after an extended trial of the Section system many of the older States have reorganized with the Township as the School District. Dr. Fraser, Bishop of Manchester in his review, of the American system in his report of 1867, states that "the original object of the law as to School Sections was innocent and praiseworthy, but that the result has shown that it creates a most powerful impediment to the satisfactory and efficient working of the system."

The Reports of this Department from 1863 to the present furnish abundant evidence not only of the disadvantages of the Section system, but of its injurious effects, which could have no place under a Township Board. Thus in the Report for 1871 Dr. Ryerson summarizes the following disadvantages of the Section System, and the advantages of the Township Board:—

"1. THE DISADVANTAGES.

"The following enumeration of some of the prominent obstacles which are in the way of the greater efficiency of our schools under the Section system is worthy of attentive studying. They are a summary of what has been stated at length in the preceding pages:—

The evils are:—

1. Total lack of efficient supervision.
2. Constant change in the schools as supervised.
3. Very many badly qualified teachers.
4. Constant change of teachers.
5. Lack of interest in schools on the part of teachers and trustees.
6. Employment of relatives and favorites, often without any regard to proper qualifications.
7. Too small schools in many sections.
8. Too short schools in small sections.
9. Employment of immature and incompetent teachers in small sections.
10. Miserable school-houses in many sections.
11. Irregular attendance of pupils.
12. General lack of facilities to aid the teachers.
13. No schools in many sections.