

24. *St. Zolique* has 5 schools, attended by 254 pupils. This is one of the parishes which, in proportion to its population, give instruction to the largest number of children. The male and female teachers possess the qualities required for teaching with success. I am happy to say that the Curé, the Reverend Mr. Lasnier, accompanies me to each school in his parish. His enlightened zeal contributes much to the prosperity of the schools. 20 prizes distributed. Accounts in good order.

25. *Coteau Landing*.—The dissentient school is now kept by Miss Jane Perry, who is perfectly competent. She receives liberal encouragement from the ratepayers. 40 pupils. 8 prizes. The school accounts are better kept by the present Secretary than by his predecessor.

26. *St. Ignace*.—The model school, kept by Mr. Cardinal, is flourishing; the progress is most satisfactory. Reading, writing, the rules of grammar and arithmetic are taught with system and success. I cannot give as favorable a report of the schools kept by Messrs. Hotte, Gareau, Lacroix and Miss Lefebvre. 243 pupils attend these schools. 8 prizes distributed. School accounts in arrears but more satisfactory than formerly.

27. *Soulanges (Cedars)*. There are five schools in operation here including the convent school. The classes of the convent, under the able direction of the Sisters of the Congregation, leave nothing to be desired. The *St. Féréol* school would be in a more flourishing condition, if it were not for the incompetency of the assistant teacher. The village school does not now shew the emulation which once made it one of the best schools in the county. The school at the Cascades, as now kept, is a nuisance. I was sorry to find that the commissioners had, on an inadmissible pretext, re-engaged the master. The school kept by Mr. Lanthier is flourishing and progressive. I distributed 5 prizes in this school as well as in the convent classes. The school administration is worthy of all praise on account of its exactitude in compelling the regular payment of taxes, and the absence of arrears. 260 pupils. Accounts perfect.

*City of Montreal*.—The city of Montreal, which enjoys a well deserved reputation for its charitable and benevolent societies, also attracts the attention of strangers by the zeal and devotion of its inhabitants to the cause of good solid education. I shall not here speak of the establishments of *St. Sulpice*, the Jesuits, the Normal School, and the academies; I shall merely present a succinct recapitulation of the schools and academies under the control of the commissioners.

1. The day school of the Ladies of the Congregation of Notre Dame.—The education here given is perfect.

2. The orphan's school of La Providence receives nearly 80 pupils. It is impossible, without emotion, to view this large family of unfortunate children who, but for this Asylum, would be exposed to become the victims of misery and crime. There is also the deaf and dumb school conducted with ability by the Sisters of La Providence, and attended by 40 pupils.

3. The Commercial School, kept by Mr. Archambault, whose ability and application are unlimited. Messrs. Desplaines and Garnot, his assistants, are good teachers. 200 children attend this school, at which English and French are equally well taught. A priest of *St. Sulpice* has charge of the religious department.

4. Six elementary schools, conducted by Messrs. McQuillan and Matthews, Mrs. Burns, Mrs. O'Keefe, Mrs. Sanguinet, and Miss Répine Poitras. These schools have each their peculiar merit, but I cannot say too much in favor of that taught by Miss Poitras.

All the teachers, both male and female, hold diplomas. Everything that constitutes a good elementary school,—reading, writing, mental and practical arithmetic, geography, and history,—are taught with ability.

I am happy to be able to say, that upwards of 740 pupils this year attend the schools which are under the direction of the commissioners, and with a recapitulation I shall close my present report. The Municipalities are judicious and enlightened, the schools are well disciplined and are conducted with success. The male and female teachers are attentive and are provided with certificates of competency. The Secretary-Treasurers are active, intelligent and honest.

Extract from the Report of Mr. Inspector DORVAL.

COUNTIES OF BERTHIER, JOLIETTE, MONTCALM, AND L'ASSOMPTION.

I have the honor to transmit my sixth annual report on the state of the common schools and education generally, in my inspection district. The figures which represent the number of pupils in the primary

elementary schools have not this year been subjected to any notable change, as we find a surplus of only 107 over those of the same class last year. Although I have an edition of one model school this year, I have ten pupils, or one-twentieth, less. This deficit is still greater in the colleges and convent schools. Their total numbers united, compared with last year, shew a diminution of 112, or one-eighth of the whole. This diminution in the number of pupils attending the higher class of educational establishments may be attributed, I think, in a great measure to the failure of the last crop. The explanation is less easy in the case of the primary schools, as the same cause produces no effect; or in other words, whether the crop be good or bad, elementary education costs the same price.

If I have no reason to be satisfied with the increase in the number of pupils attending elementary schools this year, I may still be pleased with their general progress. If we institute a comparison between the statistics of 1861 and the number of the population of the four counties which are comprised within my inspection district (72,885 souls according to the census of 1861), we shall find, in round numbers, that one-seventh of the population attend school, 1 in 12 can read, 1 in 17 can write, 1 in 19 learns arithmetic, 1 in 12 learns orthography, and 1 in 40 learns geography.

"Children of 6 years of age and under 15 form the sixth part of a population, and should attend school."—(*Ducpetaux on primary instruction in Belgium*, 1838.) We have not therefore accomplished in this respect all that can be done in this district. Nevertheless, when I consider what we were before 1846, and that after 14 years of public schools, we are, as regards the number of children attending those schools, further advanced to-day than Scotland and the 8 cantons of Switzerland were in 1834, or Holland and Pennsylvania in 1835, I really think that without exaggeration the results are very encouraging. Unfortunately with us, this seventh part of the population who attend school do not do so with sufficient regularity, or do not attend school for a sufficient length of time. The consequence is that even in the best schools the pupils only acquire incomplete notions, which they are likely to forget when they leave school altogether. The misfortune, next to incompetent teachers at £15 per annum, is certainly the want of assiduity in our schools, which I regard as the only insurmountable obstacle in the way of their utility. I have read therefore with much interest, but with more curiosity than faith in its success, (1) "a plan proposed in England by which it is attempted to compel negligent parents to send their children to school, and that this plan had been the subject of a great conference in England." This would certainly be a great discovery for us, because, as long as we have only the system of monthly payments to compel the ratepayers to send their children to school with regularity, we cannot expect any great change.

All the teachers of my district, both male and female, hold diplomas, with the exception of the female teacher of *St. Gabriel* dissentient school.

I must now allude to a practice which has been introduced among teachers and which is very injurious to them. It frequently happens that the commissioners, who are displeased with one of their teachers, three months before the expiration of the school year, notify all the teachers in the school municipality, regardless of the estimation in which they may be held, that their engagement will then close.

The commissioners act in this manner, as they say, in order to avoid jealousy among the teachers, but in reality it is pusillanimity on their part which prevents them from taking upon themselves, summarily and openly, the responsibility of acting rigorously, when it is necessary to do so. In all cases this proceeding interferes materially with the peace of mind of the teacher who has performed his duty, and it creates uncertainty and anxiety, while he should be relieved of every such feeling, to enable him to discharge his duty as he should.

The salaries of teachers have this year been subjected to a considerable reduction. I had really hoped that an increase of salary would have been granted, so as to enable me to obtain some pupils from the Normal School. I can only report the employment of two, viz: one at the academy of Berthier, Mr. A. Demers, who holds an academy diploma from the Laval Normal School, and Mr. Paquin, at *St. Barthelemy*, who holds a model school diploma from the Jacques Cartier Normal School. Generally speaking, the commissioners do not visit the schools often enough.

There are in my district, 5 model schools, 2 colleges, 2 academies for boys, 13 academies or superior schools for girls. The amount furnished this year by the ratepayers appears to indicate well-sustained zeal on the part of the municipalities. It is true that it only exceeds that of last year by \$-02 70, but there was extra taxation for building in three municipalities only, viz: Rawdon, Lavaltrie, and *St. Bar-*

(1) *Journal de l'Instruction Publique*, Lower Canada, number for June 1861, page 106.