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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1905.

Calendar for Next Week.

OCTOBER

- 8—Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost. The Maternity of the Blessed Virgin.
9—Monday—St. Denis and Companions, Martyrs.
10—Tuesday—St. Francis Borgia, third General of the Society of Jesus.
11—Wednesday—Votive office of St. Joseph.
12—Thursday—Votive office of the Blessed Sacrament.
13—Friday—St. Edward, King.
14—Saturday—St. Callixtus, Pope, Martyr.

THE FOSBERRY SCHOOL

The Free Press of Sept. 28 had a long leading article based upon an editorial of the Neepawa Press, complaining that the Fosberry School, near Ste. Rose du Lac, was inspected by Mr. Roger Goulet, who levied exorbitant taxes upon the ratepayers. The argument which our city contemporary deduces from the alleged facts loses all its force as soon as those alleged facts are proved to be fictitious. This we purpose doing.

Quoth the Neepawa Press:

"A school question has developed in the rural municipality of Rosedale, to which we wish to draw the attention of the Provincial Government and all those advocates and supporters of National Schools who have manifested such deep concern over the educational clauses in the Saskatchewan and Alberta constitutions."

Considering that the Fosberry school is conducted strictly along the lines of all bi-lingual schools, this question has developed nowhere but in the brain of the jaundiced writer.

"The school district of Fosberry comprises parts of Rosedale and Ochre municipalities and is situated in the latter."

The Neepawa Press writer cannot even state this simple fact correctly. The school district of Fosberry comprises 1280 acres in Rosedale, 4484 acres in Ste. Rose du Lac, 1760 acres in Ochre River. The school is situated not in Ochre, but in the municipality of Ste. Rose du Lac.

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"A majority of the residents speak the French language and belong to the Roman Catholic Church. The school is nominally "national," but is conducted quite differently from other schools for which taxes are collected from the ratepayers of Rosedale and it is not inspected and reported on by the same man that supervises other schools in this district."

This, being a bi-lingual school, cannot be inspected by the regular district inspector, Mr. Maguire, because he is not sufficiently familiar with the French language. Fosberry school is conducted in strict accordance with clauses 215-224 of the Public School Act as amended by the Laurier-Greenway regulations of 1897. It is a bi-lingual public and neutral school, and not a Catholic school, as the Neepawa Press tries to make out.

"Protestant children attending this Fosberry school have not received the instruction prescribed for national schools."

If they have not, that is their own or their parent's fault. The instruction prescribed for national bi-lingual schools is faithfully given in the Fosberry school.

"Some of them have been required to travel a greater distance to attend Canadaville school, in order to secure the education for which their parents and neighbors pay."

The children who have thus to travel are those whose parents cannot abide the sound of the French language. It is national prejudice, not a thirst for learning, that actuates these haters of everything French.

"The gentleman who inspects Fosberry school and demands taxes from Rosedale ratepayers to support it is named Roger Goulet, of St. Boniface. The regular school inspector for this part of the Province is T. M. Maguire."

Quite true for once, The regular inspector of bi-lingual schools is Mr. Roger Goulet, of St. Boniface, appointed by the Provincial Government to succeed Mr. Rochon, who was the first inspector of these schools. Mr. T. M. Maguire is not competent to judge of the use made by the pupils of the bi-lingual authorized text books. With the explanation of these plain and obvious facts the covert insinuation that there is some irregularity falls very flat. The bi-lingual schools were organized with the laudable object of teaching the English language to children whose mother tongue was not English.

Polish and German children may take advantage of this excellent system; and in their case the inspectors must know their language. For the Fosberry school the inspector must be familiar with French as well as English. Mr. Goulet, one of the most distinguished graduates of Manitoba University, meets these requirements perfectly.

"Where Fosberry school differs most from other schools to the maintenance of which Rosedale ratepayers contribute, is in the matter of expense. The average annual cost of schools in Rosedale is about \$600; the amount asked by Inspector Goulet for Fosberry school this year is \$1,557.00. The sum required from Rosedale ratepayers, whose total assessments amount to \$3,600, is \$264.88, of which \$81.66 is rated as a general school tax, and \$182.22 as a special school tax.

"Now, it so happens that before Inspector Goulet, of St. Boniface made his demands on Rosedale municipality for this \$264.88, the council had levied rates for the year. The general school rate is 7½ mills, which (after allowing the 10 per cent. discount for prompt payment) will bring in \$24.30; but as Mr. Goulet asks for \$81.66, the balance, \$57.36, must be paid over out of the general funds of the municipality. Rosedale council has levied a rate of 60 mills on the dollar as a special school tax in Fosberry district to raise the \$182.22."

This array of figures appears formidable to those who do not know the facts, especially when accompanied by the iteration of the title, "Inspector Goulet, of St. Boniface," in order to excite race prejudice. The writer strives to create an impression that this special tax for the present year is intended to meet the current, ordinary expenses of an ordinary year. But the fact is quite otherwise. On his latest inspection tour Mr. Goulet found that the Fosberry school room was too small for its 53 pupils, and that a second teacher was needed if the children were to be properly trained. The trustees agreed with him and accordingly determined to engage another teacher and to enlarge the school. Hence a special high tax for the special needs of this special year. To please the fanatics who refuse to send their children to the Fosberry school, should Inspector Goulet tolerate an overcrowded and therefore badly ventilated school with too many pupils for one teacher? If he did the fanatics would turn on him and rend him as incompetent and medieval.

"What makes the situation more aggravating is the manner in which Fosberry school district was organized. It was not done by petition, but by some hocus-pocus proceedings which were subsequently 'legalized' by the Provincial Government in the year 1900 or 1901. At any rate the first thing the Rosedale ratepayers knew of their predicament was when a bailiff appeared in 1901 and seized their goods and chattels to compel payment of the moneys required by the school board."

The Neepawa Press writer, who, as we have shown, is an adept in the suppression of inconvenient facts, says nothing of the original organizer of that school district, who was none other than the gentleman on whom alone he bestows the title of "regular school inspector," Mr. T. M. Maguire. The Provincial Government was obliged to pass a special law to regularize what had been badly done. What else could the Government do?

"This condition of things is an unbearable imposition on the Rosedale ratepayers included in Fosberry school district. Their total taxation for this year is ninety-one and three-tenths mills on the dollar—we might say ten per cent.—on the assessed value of their property. They cannot stand such taxation and redress must come. They must be liberated from Fosberry school district; else they must abandon their places and go where no such ruinous taxation can be imposed."

This amounts to saying that the district is too poor to pay the special tax called for by necessary school improvements. And this poverty cry is raised in a particularly prosperous district in a remarkably prosperous year. We may be sure there would have been no complaint, but on the contrary cheerful contribution to the sacred cause of education, had fanaticism not blinded some of the ratepayers.

"That such imposition, robbery, persecution, or whatever it may be called, can be carried out by process of law in this country, is a shame and a disgrace to the Government upon whom the responsibility rests."

These final words of the Neepawa Press article, which we have reproduced entire, as it appeared in the Free Press of this city, reveal the animus of a fanatical writer. He brands as persecutors those who prevent him and his from condemning people of a race he hates to inferior educational conditions, he calls robbers those who cling to the last shred of their rights, ruthlessly trampled under foot by him and his.

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