

PROTESTANT BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF QUEBEC.

2nd Class Elementary Diploma (E.)—Miss Agnes Elizabeth Hall.
Sept 1, 1863, (adjourned meeting).

D. WILKIE,
Secretary.

BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF QASPÉ.

1st Class Elementary (E.)—Miss Mary Ann Savage.
May 26, 1863, (adjourned meeting).

1st Class Elementary (F.)—Miss Elizabeth Rail.
2nd Class Elementary (F.)—Messrs. Léandre Dagneault, Charles Leclerc, Thomas Soucy; Misses Zélire Belliveau and Elizabeth Thibodeau.
1st Class Elementary (E.)—Mrs. Eliza Ann Savage.
2nd Class Elementary (E.)—Mr. Henry A. LeTouzé.
Aug. 4, 1863.

P. VIBERT, JR.,
Secretary.

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Appointment of Teachers.

Although we have published many official notices and editorial admonitions intended to guard against defective engagements between School Commissioners or Trustees and Teachers, we regret to find that, to the great embarrassment of the Department of Public Instruction and of the municipalities themselves, the same errors in this matter are each year repeated.

We may here state without further preface that the odious practice of offering the schools to the lowest bidder, which certain mean-spirited and ignorant School Commissioners have adopted, will not be tolerated by the Government; and anything calculated to favor such a system will encounter the most strenuous opposition on the part of this Department. It was also with a view of counteracting the tendency to diminished salaries, unfortunately prevailing in many localities, that most of the legislative and executive provisions which bear on the subject, were made.

The necessity of giving a three months' notice previously to discharging a teacher is now generally admitted, and few municipalities willin'ly incur the risk of having to pay indemnities through neglect of this formality; yet an important fact, and one which we have pointed out on several occasions in this journal, seems to have escaped attention; it is this, that all attempts to defeat the object which this formality is meant to attain, are futile. In some cases it is attempted to set aside this provision by formal stipulation to that effect in the original contracts with the teachers; while in others, general notices of dismissal are given all the teachers employed, whether the intention is to retain them in their places or not; but these expedients are alike reprehensible and useless. It is not for the advantage of the teacher alone that the notice is required, but in the interest of education generally. The teacher who abandons this right and the commissioners who compel him to do it alike commit an infraction of the regulation—an infraction which in the case of the latter is punishable by the forfeiture of the grant. As to the expedient of a general notice, the sole object being a reduction of salaries, the department will consider it as unworthy of notice and null in every particular.

In some municipalities unlicensed teachers are still retained on the condition that if they fail to obtain a certi-

cate by a certain time, their engagement shall be null and void. We may remark while on this subject that the engagement of a teacher who has not received a diploma is not legally valid; and although such a teacher is entitled to full compensation for services actually rendered, he cannot claim indemnity if discharged before the end of his engagement. He is bound to *know the law* as all others, and it is not the intention of the law that the schools be conducted by unqualified teachers. In circumstances like these the Department has not shown itself exacting towards teachers who have been able to obtain certificates in time to be reported as qualified in the first semi-annual return; but so much indulgence cannot be promised for the future. The retaining of unlicensed teachers on the promise that they shall become qualified is, besides, often a great injustice to those who have already undergone the test of an examination. It is sometimes also a pretext for evading the law—an accident, illness or bad weather conveniently intervening to prevent the fulfilment of the promise to undergo an examination before a Board. These are so many difficulties against which the Department and the municipalities have to contend.

We trust that this year will be the last during which conditional engagements of this kind shall be entered into. Legally qualified teachers have alone the right to be appointed by School Commissioners and Trustees—all others should be simply dismissed. The desired reform can be the more readily carried out as the new Boards of Examiners are now in full activity and there are more duly qualified teachers in Lower Canada anxious to work than schools in which to employ them.

It may not be out of place to state here that the Programmes of Examination adopted and published by the Council of Public Instruction have had an excellent effect; and we learn from different sources that the candidates come much better prepared. Attention has also been drawn by these Programmes to many branches which had hitherto been too much neglected, while the elevation of the standard of our elementary schools is in a great measure due to the same cause. Thus, sacred history and the history of Canada are taught with more care in schools of this class than was formerly the case; while in the model school a more advanced course of algebra is followed. We would inform candidates that almost all the boards are very strict—as they ought to be—in the matter of the preliminary test of dictation, and that many examinations were summarily terminated as soon as it was found that the spelling or handwriting was unsatisfactory.

Permanency.

Under this heading will be found, in another part of this journal, an article copied from one of our most valued exchanges—the *Illinois Teacher*—much of which is quite as applicable to Lower Canada as to the State for which it was immediately intended. Coming in support of our own remarks on the subject, it indicates that the evil complained of is felt more or less throughout the continent but has not escaped the attention of those who watch the progress of education, and that a remedy is being sought out. It will be seen by the report of the Teachers' Convention for the District of Bedford that the frequent changes of teachers in that part of the country are found to exercise a very unfavorable influence over the schools. The Department leaves nothing undone to counteract the evils of this pernicious system, which the illiberal action of many of our Boards of School Commissioners has undoubtedly caused, yet the question whether some more definite legislation on this point, or more stringent regulations are not required still remains to be decided.