

their nomination, to cause a valuation roll to be drawn up "by three competent persons who shall act as assessors," and his roll is to remain as the basis of the assessment roll until the rural municipal authorities establish another. It will be seen that these formalities are of a nature both simple and expeditious.

DIVISION OF PROPERTY.

Section 40 is intended to resolve decisively a question which has occasioned dispute in the past: I refer to the disposal of school property in the case of the division of a school district, caused by the creation of a new district or of a new municipality. The present law provides that the portion in which the school house is situated shall retain the property, and, that, if it was constructed at the common cost, such portion shall pay to the other party an amount determined by a valuation of the relative real property of the two parties interested. In the case of a minority declaring dissent, the majority retains the building subject to making payment according to the same rule. In both cases the procedure is the same; the Commissioners cause a valuation of the building and land (if the land was not a donation) to be made by three arbitrators, and proceed without delay to apportion the amount to be paid, and to levy this, as in a case of school rates according to law. After the valuation, if the interested parties do not agree, there is the right of appeal to the Superintendent.

THE EXECUTION OF JUDGEMENTS AGAINST SCHOOL MUNICIPALITIES.

Section 14 of 40 Vict., chap. 22, makes applicable to School Municipalities the procedure prescribed for the execution of judgements against rural municipalities. Whenever School Commissioners are prosecuted by law, they ought, in the first instance, in view of an adverse decision, to set aside a sum sufficient to pay the debt claimed and costs. In case this precaution has not been taken, and if the Commissioners lose the cause, they must impose a special rate to satisfy the judgment and to cover capital, interest, and costs. The Superintendent is empowered to authorize the levying of this special rate. If the occasion should arise, I would recommend your having recourse to this method, as being simple, inexpensive and expeditious; for in the case of a judicial condemnation you would be liable to the exercise, by the holder of the judgement, of his right to take out a writ of execution against the moveables and real estate of the School Corporation, and also to the levying of a special tax by the Sheriff if the sale of the property should not produce money sufficient to satisfy the judgement. This last process would entail considerable expense.

These dispositions of the law are advantageous both to the municipalities and to the creditors. In fact, when a school corporation wishes to negotiate a loan in order to establish a library, build a school house, or purchase ground, it is important that it should be in a position to furnish, legally, adequate security to the lender, in the absence of which usurious interest might be exacted to the injury of the rate-payers. It is for the School Commissioners to be prudent in profiting by the facility for borrowing which the law accords, and not to render themselves liable to be sued.

SUITS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT.

You will see by Section 37 that the Superintendent, when the commissioners neglect to pay a teacher, is

authorized to assume the teacher's claim as a personal debt to himself, and to sue the commissioners. If the teacher's remuneration be insignificant, at least this should be paid faithfully, and the law ought to extend protection to him. I desire to intimate that I shall not tolerate the practice, which has obtained in some parts, of paying teachers by means of Secretary-Treasurer's notes, or by orders on storekeepers. Such a practice is at once ridiculous and reprehensible, and I will assist you in putting an end to it. I say I will assist you, because I do not suppose that the School Commissioners, or School Trustees, themselves can be parties to such transactions. There arise too frequent difficulties between you and the secretary-treasurers, particularly in respect of the rendering of accounts. In virtue of Section 36 of the new law, the Superintendent, when you delay to proceed yourselves, has the right to prosecute, at your expense, the secretary-treasurers who are in default, or to intervene in such causes in order to watch or to accelerate the proceedings. This is a wise law, since frequently there is a lack of courage to take proceedings in such cases for fear of displeasing some one; but the Superintendent will be not subject to the restraint of such a consideration, so adverse to the interests of the rate payers.

Heretofore, the Superintendent had power to prosecute a Commissioner or Trustee, or a secretary-treasurer, retaining in his hands the books or other property of the School Municipality after ceasing to hold office. In future (Sect. 22) this power is vested in him with respect to "any person whatever" who may be guilty of such retention.

MONTHLY FEES.

The 4th clause of Sect. 65, Consol. Stat. L. C., imposes on you the duty of fixing the monthly fee to be paid, over and above the school rates, for every child of school age; you are not at liberty to neglect the performance of this duty. The fee must not be less than five cents nor more than forty cents per month, and is payable for all children between the ages of 7 and 14 years—excepting those cases of exemption which are specified in sect. 12 of Vict. 40, chap. 22. The law allows however, the attendance of children between 5 and 16 years of age on payment of the monthly fees. This permission may even extend to young people over 16 years of age, on the same condition; but a teacher must not make a distinction in their case, by devoting more of his time to them than to the other scholars.

REWARDS TO SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS.

It is customary to bestow prizes every year on the scholars; it is a good custom, but one which loses all its value if these rewards be given indiscriminately. Their purpose is to encourage the scholars in leading them to hope that their assiduity and labour will be justly appreciated. But you will comprehend that this end will not be attained if that which should be an exception becomes the general rule. It is well to give prizes to the deserving; but you take away their charm if you distribute them among the idle and negligent the same as among the assiduous and careful, and it would be better than this not to give them at all. The inspectors have instructions to give no prize, in the name of the government, where such a practice prevails.

I should desire that you would give a special prize, in every school, to the scholar who has made most progress in the lessons on Agriculture. Coming from you such a reward would have a special value in the eyes of the scholars.