

good enough for a school house. It is not many years ago that the same feeling prevailed here; but better buildings with brighter surroundings are gradually taking the place of the "old red school-house"—sometimes not even red or of any well-defined colour. A few of these, however, are still left for the historian of education for the future to look upon.

Noted Days in October.

By Miss E. ROBINSON.

On the 4th of October, 1226, there died one of the most famous men of the Middle Ages—one of the noblest and most attractive of those holy people who have won the title of saint. This was the great St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the order of Franciscans. When St. Francis was young, he was very gay and fond of pleasure, but with a quick intelligence and fine tastes. When he was about twenty-five, he had a bad illness, and this turned his thoughts to living for others instead of for himself alone. He began to give away everything that he had, and to care for the poor and sick, especially for lepers and others who had loathsome diseases that made most people hold aloof from them. He wished to live, as nearly as he could, the life that our Lord had lived on earth, and little by little he won over other people to imitate him. He gathered a band of disciples round him, at first only seven or eight, and sent them out, telling them: "Preach peace and patience; tend the wounded; relieve the distressed; reclaim the erring; bless them which persecute you, and pray for them that despitefully use you." Ten years after the band had increased to five thousand, and before the end of the century the followers of St. Francis had spread themselves over the whole of Christian Europe, and had sent missionaries to every part of the known world. Their strictest rule was that of poverty; they were to possess nothing of their own. St. Francis himself laboured in different countries as a missionary, and everywhere he gained disciples. At last, worn out by toils and sufferings, he died in his cell near Assisi. As death drew near, he tried to say the 142nd psalm, and at the words: "Bring my soul out of prison," he breathed his last. St. Francis was filled with the spirit of the words: "The Lord is loving unto every man, and His mercy is over all His works." Not only did he love his fellow-men, and show his love in deeds of mercy and kindness,

but he was passionately fond of all God's creatures.

He praised God for "the sun which shone above; for the day and for the night; for his *mother* the earth, and for his sister the moon; for the winds which blew in his face; for the pure precious water, and for the jocund fire; for the flowers under his feet, and for the stars above his head;—saluting and blessing all creatures, whether animate or inanimate, as his brothers and sisters in the Lord.

In a well-known book called the "*Froietti*," that is, "*The Little Flowers of St. Francis*," many marvellous stories are told of him, some of them too wonderful to be believed, but all bearing witness to the beautiful depths of love in his character, and to the influence for good that he exerted. The poet Longfellow has put into verse the famous legend of the saint's preaching to the birds in his poem called "*The Sermon of St. Francis*."

St. Denis, the patron saint of France, is commemorated on the 9th of October. For hundreds of years this saint has been believed by many people to be the same as the Dionysius who is named in the 17th chapter of the Acts, and who was converted by the preaching of St. Paul. And though it is maintained that this belief is a mistake, the popular story will be given here. Dionysius was an Athenian philosopher who, while our Lord was on earth, went to Egypt to study astrology. There he observed the three hours darkness which overspread the earth at the time of the crucifixion, and was much troubled, and meditated long and deeply. When St. Paul preached at Athens, Dionysius heard and believed; he was baptized and became a bishop, and later was sent to preach the gospel in France. An old narrative says:

St. Denis arrived at Paris, the capital of that country an exceeding great and rich city, full of inhabitants and well provided with all the good things of this earth; the skies were bright, and the lands fertile, and it seemed to Denis another Athens. So he resolved to fix his residence there, and to teach these people who were learned and happy and rich in all things but those which concerned their salvation, the way of truth and righteousness. Therefore Denis preached to them the gospel and converted many. This displeased Satan, the enemy of the human race, who stirred up enemies against him.

So St. Denis was persecuted; and when he refused to worship the Roman gods, his head was struck off with those of his companions. Their bodies were left to be devoured by wild beasts; but the legend says that St. Denis arose, and, carrying his head in his hands, walked two miles, to the site of the Abbey which bears his name. It was the story of this miracle which called forth the well-known witty saying: "*La distance ne vaut rien; ce n'est que*