

Victorine Rhéaume, Joséphine Riel, Marie Sinotte, M. Jean-Louis Tissidre, (E & F) :—Miss Maria McCarthy;

Second Class (F) :—Miss Adèle Corbeil, Célanire Désallier, Elise Inkelle, Edwidge Jodoin, Louise-Auxilie Lalonde, Mathilde Laverdure, Olympe Maillé, Julie McGowan, Philomène Ménard, Joséphine Page, Julie Plamondon, Adrienne Rousselle, Marie Ulcine Roy, and Martine Touchette.

F. X. VALADE, Sec'y.

OTTAWA.

Session of November 3, 1873.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA, *First Class (F) :—M. Louis Tassé (E) :—Miss Ellen Doyle.*

Second Class (E) :—Misses Mary Ann Burke, Annie Burke, Bridget Burke, Elizabeth Duncan, Agnes Ellen Noakes, Mary Jane Ryan, (F) :—Miss Marie Chabot.

JOHN R. WOODS, Sec'y.

RICHMOND (PROTESTANT.)

Session of November 4, 1873.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA, *First Class (E) :—Miss Mary A. Silver.*

C. F. CLEVELAND, Sec'y.

THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

QUEBEC, DECEMBER, 1873.

Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Province of Quebec for the Year 1872 and part of 1873. (1)

This report, dated October 15, 1873, has been submitted to, and received the approval of, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, and been printed by order of the Legislative Assembly.

The Minister naturally states that only a very few months having intervened between his appointment as Head of the Education Bureau and the preparation of his report, it is not to be expected that he could enter fully into the question of education, as to its absolute condition in the Province or its comparative position compared with other countries. In the short time that has been permitted him to carefully examine the question, aided by the experience of the Inspectors of Schools, assembled in Conference in Quebec in August last, he is of opinion that the results of the school law and the progress of Education are satisfactory. There has been a steady increase in the number of schools and scholars, and the standard of education has been very perceptibly raised in the elementary schools, it being quite a common thing now to teach subjects therein considered, heretofore, only adapted to Model schools.

Credit in great part for this pleasing state of affairs is due, the Minister says, to the energy and ability of his predecessor, the Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, who laboured so assiduously and zealously for many years in the cause of education. The valuable services of the venerable Dr. Meilleur, the first Superintendent of Education, must not be overlooked, as he had done much towards rendering the school law not only acceptable to, but popular with, many municipalities who on its introduction showed some hostility to it. He had also succeeded not only in inducing the ratepayers to properly estimate the advantages of a good common school education but in gaining their cooperation in carrying out the views of the Department,—thus was the way paved for the after-labours of Mr. Chauveau.

Since the introduction of the school law great strides (as may be seen from the table showing the progress of Public Instruction in the Province since 1853) have been made, many and great improvements have taken place, nevertheless, it must be admitted much remains to be done. The great drawbacks (evils perhaps) to the success of the schools of the Province appear to be,—judging by the Inspectors' reports,—non-attendance, irregular attendance and the too early withdrawal of children from school.

The remedy for the first and last of these evils would seem to be a compulsory clause in the School Act, obliging parents first to send their children, of suitable age, to school and secondly not to withdraw them before they had attained to a certain standard or age which it might be fairly concluded gave reason to believe that they had acquired, at least, what would be useful to them later in life, and that their tastes had been so cultivated and their desires so roused that they would continue to study and read after quitting school. Have the children of the Province the opportunity and the means to enable them to supplement their defective school education? The Minister thinks not. Now, is the second class spoken of in a better position to profit of school than the two just mentioned? Certainly better than the first who do not go at all, perhaps better than the second, should even their irregular attendance extend over a longer period of time, to an age when a year or even some months would do much more for them—judgment and reasoning faculties being developed—than years of regular attendance would do for mere children of ten or twelve, no unusual age of many children in the country who finally quit school.

To encourage regular attendance in the schools of the Province, it is the intention of the Minister to establish two classes of special prizes, one for each school and one, much more valuable, for each Municipality. The award and distribution of these prizes will be confided to the School Inspectors.

It is to be hoped that the non-attenders are to be found only in the cities, large towns and great centres of population. Unfortunately, as a general rule, these belong to a class of parents dead to all suasion unless the strong arm of the law. In extenuation of early withdrawal from school, it must be said that the scarcity and high price of manual labour have a large share in this drawback. The same causes, together with the scattered state of the population in many places, the condition of our roads in spring and fall, and the rigors of the climate, may be pleaded to a large extent for irregular attendance. For some of these drawbacks there is no very feasible or practical remedy apparent. The minister agrees with the opinion of his predecessor, however, that the services of children not being required in field labour in the winter they should attend school in that season at all events. It is not necessary to tell parents they owe it to God, to their children, and to society, to not only lose no opportunity, but even to make a sacrifice to have their children educated. The minister would urge upon School Commissioners, Trustees, and ratepayers to establish evening schools in the great rural centres of population. There is no doubt but that the teachers of Model Schools and even good elementary schools would undertake the direction of these classes for a fair remuneration. The history of evening or night schools, to which might be added Mechanic's Institutes and circulating libraries, is too extended for our space. The biographies of many of the greatest benefactors of the world prove how much they owed to these institutions.

Now, after parents have done their utmost to prolong the stay of their children at school, have done the best under all existing circumstances to keep their children regularly at school, still the time comes, even before they can be called fairly educated, when leave it they must.

Are they to be satisfied ever after with what they possess on leaving school, or are they to supplement it by study and reading? If the latter, have they the means? The minister says not and, therefore, proposes to ask the Legislature for a grant of money to enable him to establish municipal or parish libraries, towards the support and expenses of which he confidently believes the ratepayers will cheerfully contribute, when the matter is put squarely before them. If a judicious selection of works, say Compendious Histories (ancient and modern) of the different nations, Treatises on Arts and Manufactures, Agriculture, Horticulture, useful Scientific Works, Travels, Biography, Literature and Morals of a healthy and sound class, &c., were of easy access to the youth of the country, it would supply a pressing want. Who would deserve the name of even an intelligent man if on leaving school he had ceased to read and study? Residents of cities can hardly appreciate their fortunate position in this respect. Fortunately the advantages of these libraries is not a theoretical question as long since proved on the continent of Europe, in the United States and Ontario. Who will say that the teachers of the country can supply the necessary books for their own immediate wants out of the miserable pittance of salaries they receive—and this not regularly paid,—in some instances not all paid or in such a way as greatly depreciates its value. The mechanic who has no tools cannot work,—the

(1) Through an oversight this article was set up in the wrong class of type.