

ventilated. More than 24 of them are provided with geographical maps and black boards, and all suitable requisites. St. Michel, Nos. 1 and 2, St. Charles, St. Thomas, L'Islet, and Berthier, hold the first rank in this respect.

I must also admit, to the credit of most of the municipalities in my district, that the accounts are well kept, and that the secretaries-treasurers perform their duties efficiently. In some localities, however, the people do not attach sufficient importance to this office, and highly competent parties have been set aside to make way for others who offered themselves at a lower salary. I am also sorry to say that in many of the municipalities, the election of Commissioners is not what it ought to be. Until it be made a condition that no candidate shall be considered eligible without giving proof that he is possessed of a certain measure of education, there will always be a great many very inferior schools, and complete success will never be attained. The new law which empowers the superintendent to deprive refractory municipalities of their share of the grant, has done an immensity of good. Even the most disaffected of the Commissioners no longer dare resist the injunctions of the department in face of the responsibility they would incur. I would again insist on the necessity of adopting school regulations, and a uniform selection of books, powers which are vested in the council of public instruction, and hence the necessity of appointing said council.

In many of the municipalities, there is still a great deal of delay in paying the teachers. Some of them pass the whole year without receiving anything of their salaries. One of the inconveniences resulting from this is, that the teacher is compelled, for want of ready money, to purchase, at exorbitant prices, from the store-keepers, or else to pay high rates of interest. It would be advisable to let the scholastic year commence on the first of May. In this way, the teacher would enjoy the use of the land attached to the school, which now remains vacant whenever the section is about to change its teacher, for men are naturally not over anxious to sow in order that others may reap.

There is no lack of good teachers in my district. Those municipalities which are managed by enlightened Commissioners, are never without good masters, because they are paid a salary proportioned to their services. Quite the contrary is the case when the Commissioners are ignorant persons: the schools are given out at the lowest bid, and, as female teachers are always readily procured at low salaries, the schools are left entirely in the hands of young girls, 17 or 18 years old, who, as a general rule, impart little or no knowledge to their pupils.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these obstacles, education makes marked progress from year to year. Farmers and fathers of families have a better idea of the importance and the value of education, and the necessity of having their children instructed. They are more willing to make the necessary sacrifices for this great object.

A few words now as to each of the different municipalities in this district.

**Beaumont.**—This municipality has a model or primary superior school and three elementary schools. They are all very well conducted by teachers holding diplomas, and capable of rendering important service. A marked improvement has taken place in the management of the affairs of this municipality. The old dissensions have disappeared and made way for a love of progress. The Commissioners, with Mr. Poirier for president, have repaired the old presbytery, and established the model school therein. It is a spacious and comfortable building. The secretary-treasurer, Mr. Letellier, keeps his register and books of accounts with much care. There are, it is to be regretted, debts and arrears, the result of five years of dissensions and law-suits, now at last brought to an end.

**St. Michel No. 1.**—In this municipality there is a fine industrial college and an academy for girls. There are four professors in the college, and it is attended by nearly 200 pupils. Mr. Candide Dufresne is the director of the institution. The boarding-school, belonging to this establishment, is exceedingly well conducted. An elementary class has also been established, for the benefit of such pupils as are not sufficiently advanced to enter the higher classes. Among the sciences taught in this institution, are vocal and instrumental music, drawing, horticulture, and English. St. Michel is also provided with an institute containing a reading-room, which receives a good number of home and foreign newspapers and periodicals, and a library containing already several hundred volumes. The prosperous condition of this model municipality, standing as it does in the first rank of those within my district, is due to the zeal and sacrifices of the Commissioners, among the rest the following gentlemen, who have acted for the last eight years:—Rev. Mr. Fortier, Mr. Forgues, registrar, and Mr. Lanier, *seigneur* of the

parish. Mr. Toussaint, at present a professor in the Laval Normal School, who was four years the director of the college, contributed powerfully to this impulse.

**St. Michel No. 2.**—In this municipality, which includes the three last concessions of the parish of St. Michel, there are three elementary schools, kept by competent female teachers holding diplomas. The Commissioners have built three school-houses of suitable dimensions; they are all well furnished, and provided with desks, good tables, geographical maps and black-boards. The classes are attended by a very large number of children, who make good progress, and, as soon as they are sufficiently advanced, go to complete their education at the two leading institutions of the parish. The teachers' salaries are from £25 to £30, besides fuel. It is evident from the above, that this municipality, which in 1854 had not one school, competes in zeal with municipality No. 1, of the same parish, which I have just mentioned, and which consists of the range *du bord de l'eau* and the village.

**St. Charles.**—This municipality has two model schools, one for boys and the other for girls. It has of late lost the good harmony that formerly prevailed. This is the more to be regretted as things were in a pretty good train. Besides the two primary schools, there are seven elementary schools, all of them good, and conducted by females holding diplomas, and possessed of the requisite aptitude. The Commissioners have nine good schools-houses, one of them being two stories high and 80 feet long. Mlle. Couture, the mistress of the model school, is a highly competent person. Her pupils have made great progress. She keeps a boarding-school. She has trained several good female teachers for our different municipalities. Her School is attended by nearly 100 pupils. The model school for boys, is kept by M. Declercq, formerly a professor in the academy of St. Thomas. M. Declercq is a thorough master of the French, English, and Latin languages, and has already had several years' experience as a teacher. The present secretary-treasurer, Mr. A. Boulanger, keeps his accounts very correctly.

**St. Gervais.**—This municipality has an academy for girls, a model school for boys, and 10 elementary schools. The girls' academy is conducted by the Ladies of the Congregation. They have received a grant of the old presbytery, which has been repaired, and now offers every possible convenience. It is about 100 feet in length with attics. The primary superior school for boys is conducted by Mr. Larue, who received his diploma as a model-school teacher, last year, from the Laval Normal School. Of the other elementary schools six are well kept and intrusted to competent teachers, holding diplomas; two are middling, and the remaining two, inferior. The accounts of the secretary-treasurer are in a good state, and his registers are well kept; but the amount of arrears is large. Education has not reached the degree of progress that might have been attained in this important municipality, and this is to be attributed, in the first place, to the fact, that there were, at the beginning, too many schools, and in the second place, to the practice which prevails of changing the teachers too often; the latter has greatly retarded the pupils by obliging them to go over again the matter they had learned in previous years. The salaries of the female teachers are very small so that many of the schools are left to inferior teachers.

**St. Lazare.**—This municipality is very poor, it was not organized in conformity with the school law until 1854. It has now five schools, two of which are good, but in the other three only a very little amount of instruction is imparted. They may, however, be sufficient for the wants of the locality for some time yet. The Rev. Mr. Dufour, Curé, displays great zeal; he has acted as president of the Board of Commissioners for several years, and renders important service. A school-house has lately been built in the vicinity of the church; this is highly creditable to the rate-payers, taking into account the limited resources at their disposal.

**St. Raphael.**—It is only since 1854 that the school law has been carried out in this parish. Nevertheless they have a model school for girls, and a primary elementary school,—two of the latter being good, and two inferior. Mlle. Thibault, who conducts the model school, is one of those teachers rarely met with, who teach rather through a spirit of vocation and devotedness than merely to earn the means of subsistence. The children under her care have made great progress, and many of her pupils have in their turn become good teachers themselves. St. Raphael is a very poor municipality, and it is only by making the most generous sacrifices that its schools are maintained. A new school, highly creditable to the zeal of the rate-payers, has just been built.

**St. Valier.**—In this municipality there are five schools, one of them good and four inferior. The parish is very rich, but unfortu-