

SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased by order in council of the 28th February last, (1877), and in virtue of the powers conferred upon him by 48th and 136th clauses of chap. 15 of the Consolidated Statutes of Lower Canada, to make the following appointments of school commissioners, to wit:

County of Drummond, Grantham.—Mr. Joseph Senneville, *vice* Mr. Isaie Grangé, who has definitely left the municipality and not replaced by election.

County of Drummond, Wendover and Simpson.—Mr. Arsène Brassard, *vice* Mr. Alexandre Côté, who has definitely left the municipality and not replaced by election.

County of Gaspé, l'Étite Pabos.—Messrs. William Sutton, Richard Sutton, John Kyse, Daniel McNeil and William Garrett. New municipality.

County of Rimouski, Notre-Dame du Sacré Cœur.—The Reverend Mr. Charles Guay and Messrs. Pascal Parent, Pierre Parent, Joseph Pineau, son, and François-Xavier Pineau. This appointment had already been made on the seventeenth of August last, but the municipality was not then legally constituted, and it is proper to renew the same.

County of Vaudreuil, Saint Lazare.—The Revd. Mr. Thomas Brassard and Messrs. Louis Campeau, Ephrem Montpetit, Cyprien Gastonguay and Joseph Montpelier. New municipality.

School-Room Crowding—Brown's Dream.

At the close of a March day, Dr. Toby was returning from his round of visits. His patients that day were mostly children. Scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, ophthalmia in various forms, had taxed his skill and touched his sympathies. His way lay past Brown's, and he determined to call. He hoped to hear Brown's lively comments on the events of the day, and so succeed in driving away the recollections of the scenes of suffering he had witnessed—scenes doubly distressing to him because, he believed them to be, in a great measure preventable.

Contrary to expectation, he found Brown taciturn, sober, blue. He rallied him on his gloominess, when Brown exclaimed; "Now, doctor, I know you'll laugh and tell me to avoid late suppers; but the fact is, I have had a dream and cannot shake off the impression it has made. It has set me thinking," and Brown thrust his hands into his pockets, dropped his chin upon his chest, and gazed steadily at the fire in the grate.

"It wants an hour to dinner, and I have no engagement, so let me hear the wonderful dream," said the doctor. Brown seized the poker, stirred the fire until it glowed, and thus began;

"It seemed that I stood before the gate of the Golden City and knocked for admission; a voice cried out, 'Who's there?' 'Brown,' said I. 'Too indefinite;' and the form of St. Peter appeared above the gate with a large book in this hand, in which he seemed to search. 'Occupation?' he asked. 'Merchant,' I replied. 'Brown merchant;' said the good saint, running his finger down the page; 'not here,' and he seemed about to close the book. 'School trustee,' I added, in a hesitating tone. He turned again to the book. Running his finger down the page, he said, 'Brown, Trustee of P. S. No. 505.' 'That's it,' said I, suddenly brightening up, for if my name was there, I thought I had only to walk up to the cashier's desk and draw my dividend. 'Well! what good have you done down there?' said the saint, nodding in the direction of the world. This dampened my ardor. I remembered that I had received on one occasion, three votes for deacon of our church: that I was a director in a horse-railroad; that I put my name on to all subscription papers presented; but none of these seemed to suit the atmosphere of the country in which I was, and so I ventured to say that I had got a school-house built in my ward. The good saint, who had been gazing intently upon a group of children playing on a sunny bank, suddenly turned to me and said, 'What kind of a one?' I wished that I had with me some of the plans we have in our board. They look so fine upon paper, and so confoundedly like a rope walk, or tenement house, when put into brick and mortar. I described P. S. No. 55 to the best of my ability. 'Nothing like it in these parts,' said he: 'how many do you put in a school?' 'That depends,' said I. 'Depends on what?

said he, in a tone of voice that made my knees tremble. 'Upon how many want to come,' I replied. 'What do you do when the rooms are full?' he then asked. 'Make additional ones out of the play-rooms' I answered. 'Where do the children then play?' he inquired, in a tone I didn't like; but I plucked up courage and answered, 'They don't come to school to play but to learn.' I said 'this all the bolder because it wasn't original with me.

"When these are full, what do you do then?' he asked, in tone that indicated that he thought me cornered. 'Put them in wardrobes and under the stairs,' said I quite readily. 'What then?' said he, with a sternness that made me wish I hadn't been quite so fluent with my answers; but I remembered that I had never advocated putting children in the coal hole or astride of the ridgepole, so I answered. 'Put them in church basements;' and I emphasized the word church, hoping to turn his thoughts from school-houses, that are used five days in the week, to churches, that are used but one day in the week. But I didn't succeed. 'What then?' said he, impatiently. 'We promote and fill up again.' The good saint made a gesture of despair. 'What kind of teachers do you give these little ones, crowded into dark basements, huddled into wardrobes, stifled under stairways? Good ones, I hope; those with judgment and experience, and full of love for them.' I was sorry that he touched on this subject, for I thought he would pardon my sins in the school houses, for I was but one out of many. But in the matter of teachers I feared that I had not so much to plead in excuse, so I answered: 'Your reverence, when I go to Boston and am asked this question, I say yes, but as your city doesn't lie in that latitude, I may as well confess that I do no such thing. I put in young girls sixteen years of age, who can't define judgment, much less possess it, with no experience; pupils themselves yesterday, teachers to-day, with the destinies of eighty or a hundred little children in their hands; heads so filled with balls, parties and novels, that there is little room for love of children—these are they to whom I commit the children in dark basements, crowded wardrobes and stifled closets!' and, doctor, I dared not look the good saint in the face, but stood with bowed head before him. Presently he said 'Look!' I looked, and beheld a great multitude of children whom no man could number, sporting on the plains of the Golden City. 'There are they whom scarlet fever, diphtheria, pneumonia have taken from your ill ventilated, fever-breeding school-rooms, under the charge of children themselves. Think how many desolated homes, blighted hopes, those children represent. These are the children you have helped to—' There was a crash, the golden gate vanished, and in letters of fire I read these words: 'Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these, ye did it not unto me.' I awoke; Mrs. Brown was opening the shutters, and the rays of the morning sun fell on my face. Doctor, I have seen those children all day long, and did not dare to go the school this morning;' and Brown fixed his gaze intently on the fire.

There was silence for some moments, broken at last by the doctor, who said, "You have seen the children released from their bodily sufferings; I to-day have seen them writhing under their pains. Ill ventilated and overcrowded school-rooms are the remote causes of a large amount of this suffering. Both public and private schools are equally guilty. We wonder at the stupidity of our fathers, who provided seats without backs for their children, but gave them plenty of fresh air and of room. Posterity will condemn us, who provide comfortable seats, and deprive our children of air and of room. Your plan of putting six or eight children on a bench, so closely seated that they can hardly move, is horrible. Itch, lice and sore eyes travel along the whole line." "No such children are allowed in my school," said Brown. "Nothing but a minute daily examination can determine that," continued the doctor. "And have your young and inexperienced teachers, who, with a fatal blindness, are placed over them, the time, tact and judgement to make this examination?" Brown did not reply, and the doctor went on. "As a citizen of this commonwealth, each child has a right to his individuality; to a separate and distinct seat; to at least six square feet of space, over which he is master and for which he is responsible. Citizens of a republic can be made in no other way. All this abominable arrangement of settees, galleries and extra seats must be relegated to the dark ages." "Doctor, you are crazy. On this plan P. S. No. 505, with its two thousand pupils, would become a one-horse affair of about five hundred," said Brown: "and from being chairman of the first school in the city, I should