

violation of the next preceding sections of this Act, and to impose a fine not exceeding five dollars for the first wilful offence, and double that penalty for every subsequent offence; which fine and penalty shall be enforced as provided in the one hundred and seventy-seventh section of this Act;

(a) The police magistrate or justice shall not be bound to, but may, in his discretion, forego to issue the warrant for the imprisonment of the offender as in said section is provided.

160. It shall be the duty of the police magistrate, or any magistrate, where there is no police magistrate, to ascertain as far as may be, the circumstances of any party complained of for not sending his child or children to some school, or otherwise educating him or them, and whether the alleged violation has been wilful, or has been caused by extreme poverty, or ill-health, or too great a distance from any school; and in any of the latter cases the magistrate shall not award punishment, but shall report the circumstances to the trustees of the rural school section or division in which the offence has occurred.

It will thus be seen that the duty of the Trustees of every Public School in regard to the "Compulsory" provisions of the School Act, is imperative in itself, and that it is of a three-fold character:—

First.—They are required to employ a suitable person to take a school census of the section, division, or municipality, once a year.

Second.—The person who takes the census must distinguish in the census roll the names of the children who have not been sent to school or otherwise instructed for at least four months of the year then next preceding.

Third.—The Trustees must either:

(1.) Summon before a magistrate the parent or guardian of the children who have not been sent to school or who have not been otherwise educated during those four months, to answer for such neglect; or they must,

(2.) Impose and collect a rate-bill of not more than one dollar per child for every month of neglect.

We have thus pointed out the duty which the law imposes upon every public school corporation in giving effect to the compulsory provisions of the newly consolidated School Act. We trust that they will not fail to perform this duty faithfully and effectively. Should they refuse or neglect to do so, they will render themselves personally liable at the suit of any rate-payer, for the amount of money lost to the school section or division, either from the non-attendance at the school of the absent children, or from the failure of the Trustees to impose and collect the prescribed rate-bill for such non-attendance.

We may mention that Messrs. Copp, Clark & Co., of this city, have provided, at a small cost, blank forms of the required census returns.

I. Public School Teachers' Certificates.

THE TEACHERS OF ONTARIO.

The October number of the *Journal of Education*, the official organ of the Department, gives the full results of the July examination for the licensing of teachers. If we may take this result as a fair criterion of what has been done on similar occasions in this connection before, then it must be confessed that Ontario is not too rich in well qualified teachers. When it is considered that in the full cycle of twelve calendar months only twenty teachers of the first class have been added to the professional list, the evidence is conclusive that the agencies at work are not sufficient to meet the wants of the country. While the population, the wealth, the number of schools, and the number of scholars are rapidly increasing in the province, and the voluntary expenditure by the people for the promotion of this good cause goes on, *pari passu*, with our advancing means, there is no corresponding increase in the number of teachers who show their ability to enter the front rank of the profession. In fact this number of twenty will hardly fill up the vacancies that have been made by the withdrawal from the field of teachers similarly qualified for the work. We believe the statistics published by the Department annually will show, that teachers possessing first-class certificates, in place of increasing with the wants of the country, are rather declining in numbers—evidently leaving the profession for other more lucrative and more agreeable pursuits. This must soon tell upon the Public Schools of Ontario, and convince our legislators, educationists and public men generally,

that the cause requires to be investigated and a remedy applied. From the *Journal of Education* already alluded to we learn, that the candidates for first-class certificates numbered 46; for second class 709; and for third-class 3,109; the candidates who succeeded in obtaining first-class in all three grades, were only 20; second-class 185 males and 90 females,—276 in all; and third, 654 males and 979 females—1633 of both sexes. Nothing more than this is necessary to prove that the education of the youth of the Province is rapidly passing into the hands of incompetent and inexperienced teachers. When it is considered that the remuneration of teachers is so exceedingly small—so ridiculously small—when compared with the attainments required for a first-class certificate, and the responsible nature of the employment, there is one cause, and a very efficient cause, made out to account for the depletion that has to be annually recorded as taking place in the ranks of our best qualified teachers. The insecurity of their position, the incessant changes that are made by the school trustees in rural sections, and the avidity with which many of these will avail themselves of the services of inferior teachers, who are willing to accept of any salary that is offered, are additional reasons why good men should carry their merchandise to some better market. A remedy might be found for some of these evils, were the present system of leaving the trustees of each section, the independent arbiters of the teacher to be selected and the salary to be paid in their respective districts, brought to an end, and the system of township boards introduced in its stead. One board acting for a whole township could and would correct many of the glaring evils that exist under the present system. With a larger body of trustees to deliberate, with a wider field of action before them, with greater independence of petty local influence and with an increase of corporate powers in some respects, we might expect to see more intelligence displayed and more liberal views prevail in the management of their educational affairs. The smaller sections would not have to put up with an inferior teacher through the dread of a heavy tax to be laid upon the residents, and the grumbings of those who are unwilling to pay it. When legislation for a whole township, and when the sphere of their duties was widened, their powers and responsibilities increased, one might expect, in most cases, that the best man available would be selected for the office of trustee. The change would be beneficial for the teacher in respect to all the grievances we have pointed out, and the public interest would undoubtedly be promoted by the change. Our Public Schools never can be what they ought to be, and what the Legislature of Ontario designed they should be, until the proper means be taken to supply the Province with a sufficient number of well qualified teachers, and stop the leak by which the country is losing the services of those we have. To meet the former want the number of Normal or Training Schools in the Province will have to be increased. Every means must be taken to increase the number of such schools, and render as effective as possible those already in existence. Many were of opinion that the three years of probation allowed by the law for the teacher, holding a third-class certificate, to prepare himself to take a higher grade, would have resulted in stimulating the younger members of the profession to exert themselves, and follow out a consistent course of self-improvement. There is some reason to fear that the success of the scheme has been but partial, and therefore nothing remains but to fall back upon the other agency,—that of additional Normal Schools. Even three Normal Schools will scarcely be sufficient to turn out the number of first and second class teachers wanted, and with nothing lower than these, except as mere pupil teachers, ought any board of trustees to be satisfied.

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ISSUE OF SCHOOL CERTIFICATES, 1871-1875.

One gratifying fact attesting the wisdom and value of the School Bill passed under the auspices of the late Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's Government has been demonstrated in the great success which has attended the mode of examining and licensing Public School Teachers which it prescribes. Formerly every County Board of Examiners could frame their own questions for first, second, and third class certificates. They could then, each for themselves, fix the value of the individual answers to the individual questions proposed. This system involved three palpable defects, apart from the injury inflicted upon the country and the injustice to individual teachers. First, the questions were prepared by thirty-five or forty Boards, without the slightest reference to uniformity—although the legal value of the certificates given was uniform throughout the country. Secondly, even if the character of the questions proposed made an approach to uniformity, yet the answers received in each county, and to every variety of questions, made no pretensions whatever to reaching, or even aiming at, a uniform standard of merit. Thirdly (and the most fatal defect in the system of all) was