

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

FOR THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

BOOK NOTICES, &c.—We continue to receive the monthly numbers of Scribner's "Magazine." We are happy to see that this justly popular periodical continues to merit the well-earned confidence of Magazine readers. The matter is instructive and entertaining.

The Rhode Island "School Master," published in Providence, R. I., the "University Monthly," the "Educational Monthly," the New York "Teacher," the "Journal of Education" for Ontario and Quebec, and the "Journal of American Education," are received. These works are valuable contributions to the cause of Education, and if possible should be in the hands of those engaged in Educational work; especially are they commended to Trustees and Teachers.

We have received from Messrs A & W Mackinlay a copy of Routledge's Pronouncing Dictionary of the English Language, edited by Nuttall. This edition of the above named Dictionary is very convenient as to size, in good binding, and is sold at the low price of sixty cents. The cheapness of the work and facility by which it may be obtained take from all our School Sections every excuse for not having in the Section School a good Dictionary of the English Language.

THE SCHOOL LAW.—We have not been able to supply the Manual of School Laws and Regulations to Trustees and others who have applied for it. Early in the year the first edition was exhausted and we delayed printing a second till the Education Law, as amended at the last Session of the Legislature, could be officially published. To meet immediate demands we are about to issue a temporary unbound edition of the Law which will be ready in a few days. Inspectors and Trustees will be supplied with this until a new edition of the School Manual can be prepared.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES.

An efficient Board of Trustees is essential to the successful working of our Section Schools. The County Inspector is expected to make at least one official visit each school term. Such being the case the management of the school must be mainly in the hands of the teachers, and their responsibility for its success should in no way be lost sight of. An active board of trustees working in harmony with the teacher, and taking a constant watch-care of the school will rarely fail in having good work done by the teacher, or in making the pupils value the advantage of a good school, as well as inducing the parents of pupils to take more interest in the education of their children. The Law requires the Trustees to "visit the school at least four times in each year, and to be present, when practicable, at the semi-annual examination and the visitations of the Inspector."

When Trustees assume the duties of their office, they recognize the obligation enjoined on them in the above Section of the Law, yet we are assured that, in not a few instances, Trustees rarely enter the school. We know of cases where Trustees have continued in office the entire term of three years without making one visit, deeming the hurried and irregular visit of the secretary sufficient.

When such is the case, it cannot be a matter of surprise if the teacher becomes indolent and indifferent in the discharge of his, or her, duty, or that parents of children themselves not over ambitious concerning education, should become careless as to the attendance of their children. The regular visits of interested Trustees is of great value and importance to the Section School, and rate-payers who desire to have an efficient school, should at the annual meeting for electing Trustees, keep this in view, and be sure to elect, as Trustees, men who will take a little time, and be at a little pains to visit the school as the law directs. Sections may be sure that each visit will go very far to keep school affairs in good order, as the visiting Trustee becomes thereby more intimately the adviser of the teacher; and the rate-payers have an additional guarantee that they are not spending their money in vain.

Let us direct the attention of Trustees to another important duty imposed on them by the Act for the support of Public Schools. "It is the duty of Trustees to expel from school any pupil who is persistently disobedient to the teacher, or addicted to any vice likely to injuriously affect the characters of other pupils; or to suspend any such pupil until there shall be indications of reform."

This section is important, and has a direct bearing on the discipline of the schools; but evidently Trustees are altogether unprepared for the duties here enjoined unless the school is frequently visited, and the general conduct of pupils noted.

Not unfrequently teachers complain that in the school, one or two very rude and insolent boys disturb the entire school, and are a constant cause of perplexity and embarrassment, while they manage to escape the discipline which the teachers aim to establish. In this way some of our best female teachers, especially when teaching miscellaneous schools, are discouraged, and the value of their work much diminished. It is an almost universal fact, that rude and ungovernable pupils are the children of parents who exercise no home authority and know little of the government of the family. Such parents are always loud and most unreasonable in their complaints, when their pampered, spoiled, and disagreeable children are brought under a little wholesome authority, and are ready to make war on the teacher who presumes to "touch my darling." When such is the case, and teachers well know that such cases often occur, the regular visits of the Trustees are most valuable, as then the teacher has just at the required time the requisite support; and the insubordinate pupil, and the more culpable parents, are made to understand that there is authority in law, and power to enforce it for the general good, and that the teacher will be sustained and protected in the faithful discharge of duty.

Let us direct attention to another important duty enjoined upon Trustees, by the School Law. "The duty of Trustees shall be to contract with and employ a licensed teacher or teachers for the section, and, where necessary, licensed [or unlicensed] assistants, for a period of not less than five months, or, if the section be poor, not less than three months."

At the beginning of the school year when a new Trustee is assuming his responsibilities, generally the first question is "what kind of a teacher shall we engage, or who can we get to teach." It is not, how shall we arrange our school affairs so as to obtain the very best teacher possible? Why do not all Trustees make this enquiry? A majority of the board have had one and two years experience in the school, and ought to be familiar with the necessities of the section; but they are not, and hence the enquiry for a higher school, and a higher class teacher never occurs, and for the reason the Trustees have neglected the regular visiting of the school as the law enjoins. Trustees who see little of the school, and know but little about its work, are poorly prepared to exercise a sound judgment on the school necessities of the section. A Trustee cannot possibly form a correct opinion as to the interest of a school, what its necessities are, and what are the duties of rate-payers and trustees, till from personal inspection the entire requirements of the section are all before him. We happen to know a few sections where Trustees do visit at short and regular intervals, and in this way manifest an interest in the progress of school matters; in such sections almost always first class teachers are employed, and liberally paid; in these sections the Inspector finds unmistakable evidences of progress. We also know some sections where Trustees are sadly remiss in the duty of visiting, and as a consequence the report of the Inspector is always unfavorable—teacher and school are uniformly inefficient. Again, Trustees are to provide school privileges, free of charge, for all persons resident in the section five years of age and upwards, who may wish to attend school, and, when authorized by the school meeting, improved school accommodations; such accommodations to be provided, as far as possible, in accordance with the prescribed arrangements.

This duty is important and Trustees should see that every poor child of the required age in the section is provided with school accommodation. Let it not be forgotten that every child over five years of age, however poor, or whatever may be his or her place in society, has an equal right with the children of the rich and influential in our public schools. Trustees will best un-