

porated village, who has paid his previous year's school tax in such municipality, whether a resident or non-resident, has a right to vote at any lawful school meetings in the ward or municipality in which he pays rates; but supporters of separate schools have no vote.

11.—*Test of right to vote, in case objection be made?*

"In case an objection be made to the right of any person to vote at an election in any city, town or village, or upon any other subject connected with school purposes therein, the returning officer presiding at the election shall require the person whose right of voting is objected to, to make the following declaration:

"I do declare and affirm that I have been rated on the assessment roll of this city (town or village, as the case may be), as a freeholder (or householder, as the case may be), and that I have paid a public school tax in this ward (town or village, as the case may be), within the last twelve months, and that I am legally qualified to vote at this election."

"Whereupon the person making such declaration shall be permitted to vote."

12.—*Penalty for making a False Declaration of a Right to Vote.*

"If any person wilfully makes a false declaration of his right to vote, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction, upon complaint of any other person, shall be punishable by fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the Court of Quarter Sessions; or by a penalty of not less than five dollars, or more than ten dollars, to be sued for and recovered with costs before a justice of the peace, by the school trustees of the municipality for its use."

13.—*Mode of Proceeding in Contested Elections in Cities, Towns and Villages.*

"The judge of the county court shall, within twenty days after the election of a common school trustee in any city, town or incorporated village within his county, receive and investigate any complaint respecting the mode of conducting the election, and confirm it or set it aside, and appoint the time and place of holding a new election, as he may judge right." (See clause (4) of sec. 6 of this chap. p. 118.)

14.—*Penalty on Returning Officer for wrong doing at School Elections.*

"If the returning officer at any election of a public school trustee be convicted before the county judge, of disregarding the requirements of the law, or acting partially in the execution of his office, he shall be fined a sum of not less than twenty dollars, nor more than one hundred dollars, at the discretion of such county judge."

15.—*Costs of Contested Public School Elections.*

"The expenses of any school election contest shall be paid by the parties concerned in it, as may be decided by the county judge."

16.—*Number of Trustees in each School Board.*

The number of public school trustees to be elected in a municipality at each first election is as follows:—

- (1.) Where wards exist: two for each ward.
 - (2.) Where no wards exist: six for the municipality.
- Number of public school trustees to be elected annually:
- (1.) Where wards exist: one for each ward.
 - (2.) Where no wards exist: two for the municipality.

17.—*How shall Retirement of each Trustee be determined?*

After the first election of a board of trustees they shall, at their first board meeting, determine by lot how they shall individually retire from office. The number to retire in each case is as follows:

- (1.) Where wards exist: one annually.
- (2.) Where no wards exist: two annually—the six trustees on the board having first been divided by lot into three classes of two each.

NOTE.—Although a trustee, as above explained, retires from office on the second Wednesday of January in each year, yet, in case of failure, from any cause, to elect his successor, he holds office and legally acts as trustee until such successor is elected. The same rule applies in case of the resignation or removal of a trustee.

18.—*Who may be a Public School Trustee?*

- (1.) Any "fit and proper person," resident or non-resident, ratepayer or not.
- (2.) (After a first election) any retiring trustee.

19.—*Who may not be a Public School Trustee?*

The law excludes the following persons from the office of public school trustee:

- (1.) An inspector of public schools.
- (2.) A teacher in a high or public school, or collegiate institute.
- (3.) A trustee or supporter of a Roman Catholic separate school.

20.—*How may the Office of Public School Trustee be vacated?*

- (1.) By decision of the county judge, on a complaint being made to him against the election. (See note to section 17 of this chapter.)
- (2.) By refusal to serve.
- (3.) By resignation of office.
- (4.) By death.
- (5.) By removal from the municipality.

NOTE.—Although the school law relating to the refusal to act, resignation, removal, and neglect to make the declaration of office, on the part of rural school trustees, is expressed in almost every case in general terms, yet it is doubtful whether it strictly applies to trustees in cities, towns and incorporated villages. See sections 3 and 4 of chapter 1, part 1, of these lectures, pages 9 and 10.

21.—*Personal Responsibility of Public School Trustees.*

NOTE.—A good deal of what is said on the subject of the personal responsibility of the rural school trustees (which is fully discussed on page 3, 11-14 and 38 of the first part of these lectures) may be held to apply to trustees in cities, towns and villages generally. Yet as the circumstances of the two classes of trustees are different, what is special in its application to the two classes can be easily determined by the parties concerned. See also provisions of the 22 Vic., ch. 126, on page 123.

QUALIFICATIONS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TRUSTEES.

BY THE REV. WM. COCHRANE, M.A., BRANTFORD.

(CONTRIBUTED TO THE STRATFORD BEACON.)

With good reason we boast of our Public School System, as admirably adapted to the wants of our country, and as far in advance of the educational arrangements of the old world. Its non-sectarianism—its accessibility to all classes of the population, and the thorough character of the training furnished, give it a deservedly high place in the affections of our people. The rapid growth of our country during the vast few years and the wonderful progress made in all that constitutes permanent stability, is due, indirectly at least, to the moral influence of our public schools.

Our normal schools are also keeping pace with the demand for a higher standard of ability in the teacher. Talents and attainments which a few years since could easily have secured a first-class certificate, can now with difficulty secure a second. The appointment of County Inspectors of acknowledged eminence in educational literature and the varied systems of training—men who have in many cases secured degrees in our leading colleges and universities—in room of the old and unsatisfactory system of Local Superintendents, who did their work for the most part in a perfunctory, free-and-easy manner—has already made its results apparent in the increased efficiency of our schools.

But there is great room for improvement in the management of our schools. The trustees elected in many cases to sit in judgment upon the qualifications of teachers and to arrange the programme of studies, and superintend the practical working of our public school system, are totally unfit for such a position. We do not exaggerate when we say, that several schools in Ontario have trustees as thoroughly incapable of discharging the duties assigned them as a common labourer would be, in the position of Prime Minister of England, or Commander of the Royal Navy!

According to our idea, the public school system of Canada is the most important branch of our civic economy, and the men who are placed as trustees occupy a position of influence second to no other official in the land. The appointment of members of Parliament and of our Local Legislatures, and the election of aldermen and councillors, are considered matters of prime importance, no amount of effort is considered extravagant, in order that certain men may be elevated to such honours. Their character—their abilities—their knowledge of politics, are all enquired into. It is expected also that they can and will let themselves be heard, in regard to important questions that must come under their notice, and call for their individual opinion and action. In spite of all this, nonentities do creep into town councils and Parliament; but the chances are that men of some degree of intelligence and common sense prevail.

All this diligence, however, is unknown in the selection of school trustees. But little interest is taken in the matter at all by the general public. Parents whose children attend school, and who above all classes in the community should bestir themselves to secure well-informed, unprejudiced and honourable men, to manage our educational interests, are supine and indifferent. It is not until by a gradual deterioration—extending over years—in the character of our schools and the efficiency of our teachers, the lowest possible point is reached—that the public mind is aroused to investigation and effort. And then it is found that certain men have quietly year after year had themselves elected trustees—as thoroughly incompetent for their work as a drayman would be in the Chair of Astronomy or Chemistry in University College!