

The Journal of Education.

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THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.

ANOTHER School Year will soon begin. We hope to learn in due time that few, if any, of the School Sections of the Province failed at the recent annual meeting to make generous prospective provision for the support of Education. We by no means favor an extravagant expenditure on Schools; and if the fault were a common one, we would feel justified in denouncing it in no measured terms. Hitherto, the manifestation of a spirit of cheese-paring economy in dealing with educational matters has been more prevalent, even in quarters abundantly able to devise liberal things. We sincerely trust that each assembled body of rate-payers has determined to do all that is required to secure for the children of the Section a good School, including in this provision clean and comfortable apartments, respectable outfit, and the salary of a competent teacher. In many localities the sum voted for the sustenance of Schools cannot be absolutely large. We are glad, however, to have been put in possession of information which betokens on the part of some communities but poorly endowed with this world's goods a truly enlightened regard for the education of their youth. One of the brightest chapters in our educational history is that which records the struggles and sacrifices of weak and sparsely-peopled sections for the maintenance of efficient schools. No county in the Province is without the inspiring example of this spirit of zeal and enterprise, and to it we respectfully refer the people of Sections which, during the past and current terms, have excused their criminal indifference and lethargy by an alleged, but unreal, inability to sustain schools. Let all concerned in the promotion of this great cause—trustees, parents, teachers—determine to make the School Year about to begin, a year of conspicuous progress.

IN the JOURNAL for April attention was directed to an important amendment of Section 53, Chapter 32, "Of Public Instruction," made at the last Session of the Legislature. This Section of the Educational Act regulates the apportionment of the County Fund, and in its amended form reads as follows:

"One-half of the amount provided to be raised annually, as aforesaid, shall, at the close of each half year, be apportioned to the Trustees of schools conducted in accordance with this Chapter to be applied to the payment of Teachers' salaries; and each school shall be entitled to participate therein, at the rate of twelve and a half dollars per term for each licensed Teacher employed, and the balance of the County Fund shall be distributed among the schools according to the average number of pupils in attendance, and the length of time in operation, but no school shall receive an allowance for being in session more than the prescribed number of days in any one half-year."

This new principle of apportionment will apply to the ensuing School Term. By it each School, however small, is recognized by a grant based on the number of legally licensed Teachers employed. Class Room Assistants, however, even when holding licenses, will not, under this principle of distribution, give Trustees a claim on the County Fund in respect to their employment. It is estimated that on an average of the Counties, about forty-five per cent of the County Fund will be thus apportioned. The remaining fifty-five per cent will be distributed, as the whole fund heretofore has been, on the basis of attendance. It must be distinctly understood that the entire County Fund will continue to be paid to the Trustees, and that no part of it is to be regarded as a distinctive grant to Teachers. In this connection we would call attention to the practice believed still to be maintained in certain quarters by underhand and collusive methods of Teachers undertaking to accept as remuneration the sectional

share of the County Fund apportionment. This practice is contrary to law, and leads to manifest evils. Teachers are placed in a false position. Sections which obtain grants without taking on themselves the burden of local assessment are allowed to practise a gross imposition on others. *No pains will be spared to secure the disallowance of returns connected with this illegal practice.*

THE attention of Boards of Trustees is respectfully directed to the subjoined comment of Council of Public Instruction on section 30 of chapter 32 "of Public Instruction," defining duties of Trustees:—

The Board of Trustees should at its first meeting after the Annual School Meeting, fix the time and place for its regular meetings during the school year, if the requirements of the section render such meetings desirable. When this is done, no other notice of any regular meeting will be required to be given to the Trustees. Whenever a special meeting is necessary, each member should be duly notified of the same.

A majority of the Board of Trustees is competent to transact business only when all the members have received notice of the meeting.

The Trustees act in Educational matters for the people of the Section, and their responsibility is of course to some extent measured by the facilities and means placed at their disposal by the Annual Meeting. At the same time it should not be forgotten that the state of Education in a community will very largely depend on the efficiency with which these officers discharge their duties. The maintenance of Schools should not be considered a mere formality, to be attended to in no matter how perfunctory a manner, but a patriotic duty, on whose energetic and faithful performance the prosperity of one of the greatest of public interests is contingent. The employment of competent Teachers is a matter of prime importance, too important, indeed, to be nullified by that spirit of local favoritism which sometimes, unfortunately, is permitted to operate to the serious detriment of Education. Given a Teacher of the right stamp, the Trustees should use both their corporate and personal influence to strengthen his hands and confirm his authority. Much care should be exercised to secure the services of a Secretary of business habits. Proper effort should be put forth to provide in connection with School Houses and grounds, the requisite conditions of physical well-being and comfort. The state of too many school premises is simply disgraceful. We are pleased to know that the Inspectors generally are exerting themselves to effect an improvement in this direction by faithful counsel and a prudent use of the authority with which they are invested. "Cleanliness is next to godliness."

It is a gratifying fact that nearly one half of the candidates obtaining first and second class licenses at the recent Examination also obtained certificates of professional classification at the Provincial Normal School. This proportion of trained Teachers is much in advance of that of any previous year in the history of our Educational System.

TRUSTEES should not fail to place on their Teacher's desk a copy of one of the Unabridged Dictionaries. Messrs G. & C. Merriam of Springfield, Mass, publishers of Webster's Unabridged, offer the last edition of that valuable and complete work of reference to School Officials at a reduction of one-third from ordinary retail prices. When ordered by the case of a dozen books, a further reduction of fifty cents per copy is allowed. This brings the cost of the book in usual binding to \$7.50 per copy. This latest edition contains a *Biographical Dictionary* of ten thousand names, and a *supplement* of nearly five thousand new words and meanings. The book is a wonderful repository of linguistic information. In general fulness, as well as in accurate copiousness of definition and etymology, it is unrivalled. Professor Hadley's lucid sketch of the English Language is not its least valuable feature.