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Common Schools of Susquehanna Co. Annual Report of W. W. Watson, County Superintendent.

Educational Progress.—Some progress has been made the past year. We have at least learned the educational condition of the county, which is important to know before entering upon a safe progressive movement.

There are seventeen graded schools, or seventeen departments in such schools. There are, in fact, but four schools graded, and part of these imperfectly. An effort has been made by the teachers and myself to get up a course of study for the graded schools, that shall bring them upon a more permanent graded system. So far the effort has met with good success. The schools at Susquehanna Depot and Great Bend have been graded upon the plan proposed. The one at Susquehanna Depot had not before been graded, the buildings are poor and disconnected; some opposition arose on the part of the citizens, but, notwithstanding this, the grades were well sustained and the schools made fine progress. Much credit is due to directors and teachers of Susquehanna Depot. The one at Great Bend was doing well before adopting the grades, and has done better since. The building is too small for the increased number of pupils, but with the enterprise of the place, we expect a better one the present year.

The remaining two, one at New Milford and the other at Montrose, have long been graded and succeeded well. With proper effort, it is believed, five well regulated and flourishing graded schools can be reported next year.

There are 261 school houses in the county, or that number is reported as such. About 94 do not form part of the school property. A large share of those, under the head of "unfit for use," were built by private enterprise. The greater part of those built by directors are fine buildings, though some are far behind the age, a disgrace to the districts in which they are located, and a waste of the public money. Some boards of directors have made decided improvement, both in the external and internal arrangement of their buildings; others have retrograded.

In one hundred and forty one schools the Bible is read as a part of the morning exercises. Sometimes the teacher reads a chapter, which is followed by prayer, alternately. How important it is that, while the intellectual part is cultivated, the moral is not forgotten. School's have been visited, more or less by the directors, in nearly every district. In some cases, the secretary visited the schools regularly every month. Such a plan is always attended with good result. Twenty five teachers attend or have attended Normal schools. We need more such. It is an admitted fact, that teachers should not only be educated in the branches to be taught, but also in the theory and practice of teaching.

There seems to be a revival of interest in education, especially among the teachers who are anxious to qualify themselves better for the important and responsible duties before them. May they receive proper encouragement.

EDUCATIONAL WORK DONE BY SUPERINTENDENT.
Upon entering upon the duties of the office it was found there was too much to be accomplished in one year. A stranger to many of the teachers and directors, but with an earnest desire for the improvement of our schools, the task was begun. If so much was not accomplished as was hoped for, it may be attributed to other causes than a lack of desire and anxiety on my part. Nearly every day was spent in official duty, as a reference to the monthly reports will show.

Fifty one public examinations were held. The number of applicants examined, four hundred and forty five. The number rejected, eighty nine. Many were without experience. One hundred and fifty five directors, and a large number of citizens, were present. Three hundred and fifty six applicants received provisional certificates, with an average grade of 25.64. No professional certificates were granted. Others were licensed, by request of directors, who had been examined and certificates withheld, and a few were endorsed from Bradford county, making the whole number licensed over four hundred, aside from upwards of fifty granted by my predecessors in the spring of 1866.

The annual series of examinations commenced October 18, and continued until November 20, holding 6 a week, and one for each school district. During the winter visitation it was found necessary (in order to save the State appropriation) to hold examinations nearly every Saturday to license such teachers, as had been employed, who had not certificates. We have assurance that such a violation, on the part of the directors, will not occur again.

The oral method was used in all the branches, except orthography, written arithmetic and false syntax. The examinations were elementary in their character; abstract principles were wholly discarded; no difficult, puzzling questions were asked. The aim was to ascertain the ability of the applicant to teach what is to be taught, and at the same time awaken a lively interest in the studies pursued in the public schools. This course had a

good effect, for many who had taught a number of terms found themselves poorly qualified in the most important part of a teacher's education, and at once went to work to post themselves. It did not stop here; the ideas were carried into the school room, and pupils were benefited. The whole number of schools visited was two hundred and forty five, with an average time of 2-7/8 hours spent in each. A number of schools were visited twice, some three and others four times; hence, the whole number of visits more than equal the number of schools.

The first work of the superintendent was visitation, as the schools were nearly all in operation, and the whole time was spent at this until they closed in August. Notwithstanding the busy season of the year, very many of the visits were accompanied by one or more directors.

A Normal department was formed in the graded school in New Milford, and a Teachers' class in the Montrose graded school. My time was wholly spent in the above schools, until the opening of the annual examinations in October. A goodly number of teachers were in attendance. Instruction was given in the theory and practice of teaching, and class drills in the several branches to be taught.

When the schools opened again in November, visitations were renewed. After about a month's work it was found impossible for one to visit all the schools, and at the same time do justice. I, therefore, employed an assistant, Mr. J. M. Crawford, a successful teacher and earnest worker in the cause of education. He worked with me one month, during which time about 90 schools were examined.

Twenty six schools were not visited, in consequence of their being closed at the time of visiting in the sections in which they are located.

It is but a small part simply to call upon each school and note the necessary statistics to be taken; if that were all, it would be a dry task indeed. The schools should be thoroughly examined; the teacher's method of instruction, discipline and the progress of the pupils ascertained. The superintendent should examine classes, give different methods of teaching by actual practice; point out errors and give credit where it is due. One hundred and twenty six schools were visited, and upwards of one thousand classes examined.

There is but one regularly organized district institute in the county, and no county institute. As there was no county organization in existence, it was thought best to defer it for a time. A county institute will be organized, agreeably to the supplement of the school law early in the present school year.

The want of a county institute was made up in part, at least, by holding a number of educational meetings in different parts of the county. Some earnest work was done by the teachers.

EDUCATIONAL WORK DONE BY OTHER AGENCIES.
This county needs more help from other educational agencies. Too little is done through the pulpit and press. Both are in sympathy with the common schools but there is lack of real earnestness.

Good directors are indispensable to the success of the Pennsylvania school system. Many of them have a heart in the work, nothing but clogs in the wheel of progress, and should never be directors. The latter are few—we believe growing less. There is but one district superintendent. He is beneficial; and when that office shall be filled with qualified teachers, it may be of material aid. It would be as consistent to make a master mason of a blacksmith, as for a man to superintend teachers, who is not a teacher himself.

There are no academies, seminaries or colleges in the county. The Normal school, at Mansfield, has done us but little good yet. A few teachers have attended that school, and we hope more will do so in the future. More educated teachers are needed—educated for the work of teaching. We report thirty two private schools. They are helps, but temporary and uncertain. A County Normal school is needed—one that will accommodate the great body of teachers.

OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF IMPROVEMENT.
The obstacles in the way of improvement may be included under the following:

1. Unequal taxation.
2. The division of the schools into summer and winter terms.
3. The gratuitous labor of directors, and, as a consequence, a lack of responsibility.
4. A lack of uniformity in text books.
5. Poor school houses.
6. Low wages paid to teachers, and, as a consequence, poor qualifications.
7. A want of appreciation on the part of the people.

Conclusion.—If we had a school fund sufficient to support our schools, and do away with the present unequal taxation, all opposition to and obstacles in the way of improvement would soon vanish. It is not just that the citizens of one district should pay thirteen mills on the dollar, and receive but four months' schooling; while those of another pay, but four mills on the dollar, and receive seven months' schooling. Such is the case; and we would earnestly recommend legislation

upon this subject. A certain rate of taxation should be made uniform throughout the State, and a fund raised sufficient to keep the schools open at least eight months in the year.

Most of the schools are divided into summer and winter terms—the summer term opening the last of May or the first of June, and continuing through the months of July and August. The schools dwindle down to a small number of small pupils, making a waste of time and money. It is believed it would be better were our schools closed during this time, and open in the fall.

Too many of the duties of directors are left optional—they should be compulsory. Directors should be paid like any other officer, and held responsible for every duty devolving upon them.

In most of the districts, teachers "board around." This may have been good in the primitive stage of society, but it should now be done away. Teachers should not be obliged to visit and live on charity. Time out of school should be spent in preparing for the next day's duty.

In some cases teachers are employed by the directors; in others by a committee appointed by the neighborhood, and fuel is furnished, and the schools generally looked after by the patrons or nobody; in others all the work is done by the directors. The results are strikingly different. There is a want of system. The time has come when the matters pertaining to our public schools should be as thoroughly done as that of any other branch of business.

One hundred and thirty two schools have a uniformity of books, leaving one hundred and thirty nine, in which the books are not uniform—a serious obstacle in the way of improvement. It does but little good for the directors to adopt a uniformity of books, unless they be actually made uniform in the schools.

Many of the houses are poor, totally unfit for use, without apparatus or furniture. Schools kept in such buildings must remain in the back ground, until they are abandoned, and better ones put in their place.

We cannot say that opposition to the Pennsylvania school system is dead, but it is becoming prosperous. There are three classes who oppose free schools: 1. Those who educated their children before the present system. 2. Those who are independent of free schools, and would rather see the poor in ignorance, than receive an equal opportunity with themselves. 3. Those who are uneducated and ignorant of their interests. Such are to be pitied rather than censured.

I trust I shall be pardoned for speaking thus plainly. I have felt it a duty, early in my term of office, to point out the facts as they are. We must know where we are, before improvement can be expected. I would not leave the impression that the majority of the people are opposed to the school system. It has its living, earnest supporters, such as would be an honor to any cause.

The people of this great State will not forget that popular education and free institutions are twin sisters, and that upon the success of one depends the other. If we neglect the education of the people, America will be deprived of half her glory.

With thanks for the kindness and support of directors, teachers, and people generally, we will commence another year, with earnest hope that more good will be accomplished.

An Incident of the Dickens Readings.
An incident worth mentioning occurred in Carroll Hall on the second night of the Dickens readings. Ben. Butler entered after the performance had commenced, and walked down the centre aisle while Dickens was describing one of the most interesting scenes in his selections from David Copperfield. Perhaps Benjamin was unavoidably detained, or perhaps he wished to make his appearance at the time when he could attract that amount of attention which he thinks is due to his eminent abilities and great public services. There are those who adopt this as one of the ways of keeping before the people, some of them men of marked zeal in religious affairs, who never enter the church till the congregation is well seated, and then walk straight to the front pew. If General Butler hadn't his mind's eye on this idea on the occasion referred to, his motives were misapprehended, that's all.

Well, the hero of Bermuda walked down the aisle the observed of all observers, and took his seat in a very select and advantageous part of the hall. The first selection was soon concluded, and Mr. Dickens retired as is his wont for ten minutes of rest and refreshment. The rustle and bustle consequent upon a relaxation of attention followed. There were whisperings among the older folks, and stirrings among the younger, in the midst of which up rose Butler from his seat, either to observe or be observed, hard to tell which, though I incline to the latter belief. There was no mistaking that bold head, or that strabismic eye. It was Benjamin F. Butler, and nobody else.

The intermission, like all things on this earth, had its end, Dickens reappeared and the readings were resumed. This time it was a selection from Pickwick—the famous Bob Sawyer party scene. It was very funny, as we all know, and the laughing was, at times, immoderate. There was a point, however, at which the laugh became very much like a vulgar roar, and wasn't the funniest part of the reading by any means. Mr. Dickens felt a little persecuted, I thought, for a man of his nice perception knows exactly where the fun comes in, and we all know there is such a thing possible as a laugh at the expense of an actor which is always more vivid than that provoked by the play. Dickens evidently thought he had blundered. But he hadn't. He had simply read the following colloquy between Hoping and Noddy—and the audience had just seen Butler, and every one knew he was present.

"I request that you'll favor me with your card sir."
"I'll do nothing of the kind, sir."
"Why not, sir?"
"Because you'll stick it up over your chimney piece, and delude your visitors into the false belief that a gentleman has been to see you, sir."

"Sir, a friend of mine shall wait on you in the morning."
"Sir, I am very much obliged to you for the caution; and I'll leave particular directions with the servant to lock up the spoons."

The laugh, Mr. Dickens, which so exceeded all bounds as to perplex you, was due solely to a connection in the popular mind between General Butler and spoons! "Mack," Wash. Cor. Cin. Com.

Special Message of the President to the Senate.

To the Senate of the United States:
I have received a copy of the resolution adopted by the Senate on the 21st inst as follows:

"Whereas, the Senate has received and considered the communications of the President, stating that he had removed Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, and had designated the Adjutant-General of the Army to act as Secretary of War *ad interim*, that under the Constitution and laws of the United States, the President has no power to remove the Secretary of War, and designate any other officer to perform the duties of that office *ad interim*."

This resolution is confined to the power of the President to remove the Secretary of War, and to designate another officer to perform the duties of the office *ad interim*, and by its preambles is made expressly applicable to the removal of Mr. Stanton, and the designation to act *ad interim* of the Adjutant-General of the Army. Without, therefore, attempting to discuss the general power of removal as to all officers, upon which subject no expression of opinion is contained in the resolution, I shall confine myself to the question as thus limited: The power to remove the Secretary of War. It is declared in the resolution.

"That, under the Constitution and laws of the United States, the President has no power to remove the Secretary of War and designate any other officer to perform the duties of that office *ad interim*."

As to the question of power under the Constitution, I do not propose at present to enter upon its discussion. The uniform practice from the beginning of the government, as established by every President who has exercised the office, and the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, have settled the question in favor of the power of the President to remove all officers, excepting a class holding appointments of a judicial character. No practice nor any decision has ever excepted a Secretary of War from that general power of the President to make removals from office.

It is only necessary then that I should refer to the power of the Executive, under the laws of the United States, to remove from office a Secretary of War. The resolution denies that under these laws this power has any existence, in other words, it affirms that no such authority is recognized or given by the statutes of the country. What then are the laws of the United States which deny the President the power to remove that officer? I know but two laws that bear upon this question. The first, in order of time, is the act of August 7, 1789, creating the Department of War, which, after providing for a Secretary as its principal officer, proceeds as follows:

"Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That there shall be in the said department an inferior officer, to be appointed by the said principal officer, to be employed therein as he shall deem proper, and to be called the Chief Clerk in the Department of War, and who, whenever the said principal officer shall be removed from office by the President of the United States, or in any other case of vacancy, shall, during such vacancy, have the charge and custody of all records, books and papers appertaining to the said Department."

It is clear that this act, passed by a Congress, many of whose members participated in the formation of the Constitution, so far from denying the power of the

President to remove the Secretary of War, recognizes it as existing in the Executive alone, without the concurrence of the Senate or of any other department. Furthermore, this act does not purport to confer the power by legislative authority, nor in fact was there any other existing legislation through which it was bestowed upon the Executive.

The recognition of the power by this act is therefore complete as a recognition under the Constitution itself, for there was no other source or authority under which it could be derived. The other act which refers to this question is that regulating the tenure of certain civil officers, passed by Congress on the 2d day of March, 1867. The first section of that act is in the following words:

"That every person holding any civil office, to which he has been appointed by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and every person who shall hereafter be appointed to any such office, and shall become duly qualified to act therein, is and shall be entitled to hold such office until a successor shall have been in like manner appointed and duly qualified, except as herein otherwise provided; provided that the Secretary of State, of the Treasury, of War, of the Navy, and of the Interior, the Postmaster-General and Attorney General, shall hold their offices, respectively, for and during the term of the President by whom they may have been appointed, and for one month thereafter, subject to removal by and with the advice and consent of the Senate."

The fourth section of the same act restricts the term of offices to the limits prescribed by the law creating them. That part of the first section which precedes the proviso declares that every person holding a civil office, to which he has been or may be appointed by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall hold such office until a successor shall have been in like manner appointed.

It purports to take from the Executive, during the fixed term established for the tenure of the office, the independent power of removal, and to require for such removal the concurrent action of the President and the Senate. The proviso that follows proceeds to fix the term of office of seven heads of departments whose tenures respectively are fixed during the term of the President by whom they may have been appointed, and for one month thereafter, subject to removal by and with the advice and consent of the Senate."

Thus, as to these enumerated officers, the proviso takes from the President the power of removal except with the advice and consent of the Senate. By the terms however, before he can be deprived of the power to displace them, it must appear that he himself has appointed them. It is only in the case that they have any tenure of office, or any independent right to hold during the term of the President, and for one month after the term of his official functions. The proviso, therefore, gives no tenure of office to any one of these officers who has been appointed by a former President beyond the month after the accession of his successor.

In the case of Mr. Stanton, the only appointment under which he held the office of Secretary of War was that conferred upon him by my immediate predecessor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. He has never held from me any appointment as the head of the War Department. Whatever right he had to hold the office, was derived from that original appointment, and my own suffrage.

The law was not intended to protect such an incumbent of the War Department by taking from the President the power to remove him. This, in my judgment, is perfectly clear; and the law itself admits of no other just construction. We find in all that portion of the first section which precedes the proviso, that as to civil officers generally, the President is deprived of the power of removal, and it is plain that if there had been no proviso that power would just as clearly have been taken from him so far as it applies to the seven heads of departments; but for reasons which were no doubt satisfactory to Congress, these principal officers were specially provided for, and as to them the express and only requirement is that the President, who has appointed them shall not, without the advice and consent of the Senate, remove them from office.

The consequence is, that as to my Cabinet, embracing the seven officers designated in the first section, the act takes from me the power, without the concurrence of the Senate, to remove any one of them that I have appointed, but it does not protect such of them as I did not appoint, nor give to them any tenure of office beyond my pleasure. An examination of this act, then, shows that while in one part of the section provision is made for officers generally, in another clause there is a class of officers designated by their official titles, who are excepted from the general terms of the law, and in reference to whom a clear distinction is made as to the general power of removal limited in the first clause of the section.

This distinction is that as to such of these enumerated officers, as hold under the appointment of the President the power of removal can only be exercised by him with the consent of the Senate, while

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The recognition of the power by this act is therefore complete as a recognition under the Constitution itself, for there was no other source or authority under which it could be derived. The other act which refers to this question is that regulating the tenure of certain civil officers, passed by Congress on the 2d day of March, 1867. The first section of that act is in the following words:

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In the case of Mr. Stanton, the only appointment under which he held the office of Secretary of War was that conferred upon him by my immediate predecessor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. He has never held from me any appointment as the head of the War Department. Whatever right he had to hold the office, was derived from that original appointment, and my own suffrage.

The law was not intended to protect such an incumbent of the War Department by taking from the President the power to remove him. This, in my judgment, is perfectly clear; and the law itself admits of no other just construction. We find in all that portion of the first section which precedes the proviso, that as to civil officers generally, the President is deprived of the power of removal, and it is plain that if there had been no proviso that power would just as clearly have been taken from him so far as it applies to the seven heads of departments; but for reasons which were no doubt satisfactory to Congress, these principal officers were specially provided for, and as to them the express and only requirement is that the President, who has appointed them shall not, without the advice and consent of the Senate, remove them from office.

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