

Thesis —
The Reorganization Period
of Education in the United States.

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Outline

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This period of education begins immediately after the Revolutionary war and continues for fifty or sixty years. After the treaty of peace was signed the condition of the country was about as critical as was the eight or ten years just past thru. The States came out of the contest bankrupt financially, all industry was disorganized, and as is said the real War of Independence was yet to be fought. But in a very short time, not even three decades past until the final conflict was over. The States no longer had difficulties with foreign countries, but could turn their attention to home affairs, such as industrial, educational and all kinds of questions which would make their appearance in this transition from a colonial dependence to national independence.

These questions and the condition of the country in general were studied, argued and answered mostly by the wise men of that time, among whom were Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, John Hopkins and many others.

There was a general public sentiment that the right training of the mind, and the diffusion of light and education were the resources most to be relied on for ameliorating the condition, promoting the virtue, and advancing the happiness of man. It was thought to be as much of a duty for a parent to send his child to school as it was for him to pay taxes or fight in time of war.

Out of such strong sentiments, one can see that it was not hard to establish universal and liberal education. Large

possibilities were seen by the wisest men, and great enthusiasm was manifested for education and for the means of education. Art and industry thronged about the cities. Accelerating progress was noticed on every side.

Early in the eighteenth century the Public School Society of New York city was founded. In Boston the claims of public primary education were urged, and New York provided for the county supervision of schools.

During this period were also brought forth and discussed the first high-schools, manual training-schools, and mechanics' institutes, seminaries for teachers, associations, institutes and the publication of educational journals. Many more independent professional schools and departments, technological institutions, and learned societies, school and general public and free libraries were established.

Evening and special schools for laboring classes, and all the institutions for the defective and the dependent took their rise during these years.

The income for the support of schools has come from various sources. Local, State, National taxes; Municipal and legislative appropriations; city, state, and congressional land-grants, land-rents, students fees, rate-bills, and private benefactions; swamp and saline lands; bank-tax and surplus revenue funds; fines forfeitures, and escheats; excise tax and vender's licence have all at some time or other contributed to the support of education.

During this time there was a tendency to divide the authority, distributing the educational control among many small and independent corporations. But in later years this was done away with and a more centralizing control was

thought of.

Probably the first step in all the centering of educational control was the creating of permanent school-funds. Another was the lottery system of school administration. This was considered as a very honorable means of raising funds. Under this system the first steps taken toward the founding of what is now Columbia College were administered. Williamstown Academy, Mass. was partly founded, and two years later, four lotteries were granted to the Regents of the University of the state of New York. Many other colleges and universities were founded under this system.

In the form of permanent investment, a still more important source of school revenue has grown out of the provisions of the famous "Ordinance of 1787" and subsequent acts. The territory Northwest of the Ohio River was owned by other states

of the Union. In 1781 the State of Virginia offered to cede her territory to the United States. This offer was accepted in the year 1784. Several years later other states withdrew their claims, and from the sales of this "Western Reserve" a considerable amount of school fund was realized.

The total land-grants made by the United States for educational purposes up to 1876 - one century of its existence - amount to nearly eighty million acres, or one hundred and twenty five thousand square miles, a territory greater than England and Ireland combined and more than half that of all France. Eighty per cent of this is estimated to have been contributed to permanent funds for the elementary schools.

In 1837 by act of Congress the surplus revenue fund

amounting to \$30,000,000 was to be distributed among the twenty six states then comprising the Union.

With all the large permanent funds appropriated it is after all a small amount of income for the support of the schools. It is the local tax which is collected that provides the most of the income. By the United States Commissioners' report for the year 1886-87, it appears that the expenditures for education in the United States by States and Territories, was \$115,103,886. Less than six millions of this was received from permanent funds; while more than sixty millions were collected in local taxes.

The systems of school supervision may be divided into four classes, viz, District system, State supervision, City supervision and County supervision. The first or the District

system took its rise in the colonial period of New England. Certain towns and townships were set off into smaller independent bodies. This system was however not successful as it inculcated the idea of decentralization which was in a very few years against the sentiment of the people.

The second that of the State supervision was quite successful. Among the earliest states that have developed a system of schools are Maryland, 1823; Vermont, 1827; Pennsylvania, 1834, and Michigan, 1834. Under this system however progress was not so fast at first on account of failing to obtain a suitable officer to supervise over the educational interests of the state. But after some of the states created a board of education the progress was very rapid. The two men that

hold a high place as to the organization of this system of school supervision are Horace Mann and Henry Barnard.

Horace Mann undoubtedly stands ahead in this line of work. His work is chiefly connected with the State of Mass. He was president of the State Senate when the Board of Education was organized. But he resigned this position to accept the secretaryship of the new board. For the rest of his life he was known as an educator, and by his wise counsel and persistent work he has left his impress upon the educational sentiments of, not only New England but the whole of the United States. It was also thru him that the system of Normal school originated.

Henry Barnard in Connecticut and Rhode Island originated an act under which the "State Board of Commissioners" was

organized. He was made its first secretary. And his duties were to gather information, to discover, devise, and recommend plans of improvement. His information was diffused thru lectures and periodicals.

Next to the State control is that of the cities. Now so common, and surely very successful is but half a century old. This system originated in Buffalo New York in the year 1837. Many cities quickly took up the suggestion and adopted very similar methods.

But it was soon considered very necessary to have a general school inspection of the rural districts of the country. The first attempt at this local supervision was made in Missouri in 1834. Other states very soon followed this idea and organized what is known as the County supervision.

Educational associations and societies in the United States have done a large part to promote the education in the early days of its existence. Whatever was best done in New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and the South and especially in the newer states of the North west was the work of organized societies. The "Free School Society" was established in New York city in 1805. The "Philadelphia Society" for the support of charity schools in 1790 was the prime mover in all the important school legislation of the State of Pennsylvania. Similar to these but very much broader was the College Society founded at Yale 1829 to assist collegiate and theological students in the West. Societies for the improvement of the teachers were early organized. These were however somewhat limited in membership according to our modern view. Ladies were not admitted as

members. Mrs L. H. Sigourney 1836 and later Mrs Emma Willard were allowed to submit papers on female education, which were however read by men in the Society called Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers. This association was the leading agency in Ohio education from about 1830 to 1840.

Out of these minor and insufficient societies grew the "National Educational Association". Its purpose were set forth in 1858, as: 1. The union of all sections in friendly associated action. 2. The creation of a teaching profession, by professional methods. 3. The accrediting of teachers by proper examining boards. 4. The Establishment of departments of pedagogics in connection with all schools which send out persons to teach. The specializing work of this association in later years has given much credit

to it.

Institutes were held as early as 1834 for the improvement of teachers. From the earliest times it was held that good teachers were necessary for the advancement of learning. But it was hard to establish a fundamental idea of how this was to take place. In 1789 Elisia Picknor recommended in the Mass. Magazine the establishment of a system of "Country schools to fit young gentlemen for college and school-keeping." But thru the efforts of Rev. James G. Carter in the Legislature of Mass. was passed the Normal School Act of 1838, and the school was opened 1839 at Lexington. This school admitted women only, and three pupils entered, but very soon the attendance increased. Later in the same year however another school open for both sex at Barre (now at Westfield). The curriculum of the colleges

have continually changed in accordance with the complexity of the knowledge received. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the courses were quite simple, but the rising of new sciences and the multiplication of facts have changed the nomenclature of learning.

In the twenty-four colleges at the opening of the century very little of the physical sciences was taught. Probably a great deal more was known than was taught. The infusion of the physical sciences into the curriculum of the colleges during the last century was very noticeable. The infusion was so great that at the present time the sciences undoubtedly predominate in the college courses.

Another modification of the curriculum comes from the infusion of the Modern Languages. Before independence was acquired

these languages were not studied, but after the United States became free, thru the frequent social and general intercourse, the growing and mutually profitable commercial interests, and the diplomatic relations with other countries it became necessary to study the foreign languages in this country.

Institutional History has also become a characteristic part of the courses of American Colleges. Early in the century in an incidental way it was put in the courses at Harvard and Yale.

The need of political, social and economic studies was early felt in the United States. They were early put in the courses of some of the colleges. The colleges that were the first to adopt a chair for economic work were Columbia College, William and Mary, Harvard, and Yale.