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HISTORY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL
EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

By STEPHEN B. WEEKS
BUREAU OF EDUCATION



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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

BUREAU OF EDUCATION,

Washington, January 2, 1917.

SIR: Legislative and executive officers, teachers, and citizens in the State of Delaware are now cooperating as they have not done before for the advancement of public education and the improvement of public schools in that State. For some time this bureau has been cooperating with the State commissioner of education and others in this movement and has begun a survey of education of the State which will now be continued by and under the direction of a commission created by act of the legislature at its recent session. As a part of this general survey and as a background to the study of present educational conditions in the State, I recommend the publication of the accompanying manuscript on the *History of Public School Education in Delaware*. It has been prepared at my request by Stephen B. Weeks, of this bureau.

Respectfully submitted.

P. P. CLAXTON,
Commissioner.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The author of this study wishes to acknowledge with thanks the many courtesies that he has enjoyed at the hands of citizens of Delaware. The Hon. James H. Groves, first superintendent of free schools of the State, of Delaware, the Hon. Henry C. Carpenter, assistant secretary, and Dr. Charles A. Wagner, the first commissioner under the reorganization of 1913, have read the manuscript and made valued suggestions. Information has also been courteously furnished by Mr. Clifford J. Scott, superintendent of the city schools of Wilmington; by the Hon. George S. Messersmith, formerly secretary of the State board of education and now United States consul at Curaçao, West Indies; and by the Hon. Henry C. Conrad, judge of the supreme court of Delaware; while the detailed and accurate History of Education in Delaware by the Rev. Lyman P. Powell, D. D., LL. D., now president of Hobart College, has been always a valued guide and a constant source of inspiration and delight.

S. B. W.

HISTORY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION IN DELAWARE.

Chapter I.

COLONIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

I. ORIGINAL SETTLEMENTS: THE SWEDES, THE DUTCH, AND THE ENGLISH.

The territory known at the middle of the seventeenth century as New Netherlands extended from the Hudson (or North River) to the Delaware (or South River). The first settlements in what is now the State of Delaware were made by the Dutch and the Swedes. In actual attempts at settlement the Dutch took precedence. David Pieterszen de Vries, toward the close of 1630, embarked in person with a company of about 30 adventurers, who commenced a settlement the next year on the South, or, as it is now called, the Delaware River, near the present site of Lewes. "The voyage of De Vries," says the eloquent and exact historian of the United States, "was the cradling of a State; that Delaware exists as a separate Commonwealth is due to the colony of De Vries."¹

Such was the sentiment of students of two generations ago. Those of the present are in close accord with this conclusion. Says Rt. Rev. Frederick J. Kinsman, Bishop of Delaware, in an address delivered on occasion of the Hudson ter-centennial in 1909:

It is, nevertheless, unmistakably true that there is nothing in history more peculiarly Delawarean than Delaware's early connection with the Dutch. Two facts make this especially evident: First, the great river from which our State takes its name, the South River of New Netherlands, was made known to the civilized world through discoveries of a Dutch expedition; and, second, the Dutch settlement at Swaanendael [Lewes] in 1631 was indirectly the means of Delaware's becoming an independent colony and Commonwealth. Had the followers of De Vries never spent those few months preceding their massacre at this spot, we should all now be citizens of Maryland, and all that has made Delawarean history must have assumed a different aspect and have lost its distinct character.²

But it was not given the Dutch to make their first colony on the South River a permanent one, for when De Vries returned to the

¹ Bancroft's History of the United States, orig. ed., II, 281.

² See the introductory note to Gerard Troost's translation of the Voyages of David Pieterszen de Vries (Hoorn, 1655), printed in the Collections of the New York Historical Society, 2 series, vol. 1, 1841, p. 248. For other volumes of documents bearing on the early history of Delaware, see: Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York, vol. 12, n. s. 1 (Albany, 1877); Papers Relating to the Colonies on the Delaware, 1614-1682, in Pa. Archives, 2 s., vol. 5 (Harrisburg, 1877); and Narratives of Early Pa., N. J., and Del., ed. by A. C. Myers (N. Y., 1912).

³ See the Celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Landing of the De Vries Colony at Lewes, Del., Sept. 22, 1909. Del. Hist. Soc. Publications, No. 54.

Delaware in 1632 he found his colony destroyed and the site laid waste, without a solitary survivor to make known their fate. It was sufficiently apparent, however, that this had been the work of the neighboring Indians, and after endeavoring for some time to ascertain the perpetrators of the tragedy, De Vries sailed to the New Netherlands, and Dutch settlement of Delaware territory was for a time at an end.

While De Vries made the first attempt at actual settlement, another Dutchman had, at a still earlier date, looked toward the Delaware as a source of trade and commerce. Willem Usselinx, a Hollander, a native of Antwerp, had proposed in 1624, to Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, a plan for a Swedish trading company to be extended to Asia, Africa, and America. Usselinx had been connected with the Dutch West India Co. and was able to make extended reports about the country on the Delaware, its fertility, convenience, and other advantages. A Swedish charter, dated December 21, 1624, was obtained; the company was granted privileges, and Usselinx was to have as his share the one-thousandth part of all goods which the company should buy or sell. The plan was recommended by the King to the States; was confirmed by them in the Diet of 1627, and many persons became associated. The company, known as the South or Swedish West India Co., promised to become a rival of the older Dutch West India Co., but the rise of the German war and the death of Gustavus Adolphus at Lutzen in 1632 interfered with and delayed the execution of its plans.

The plans of the South Co. were soon revived, however, by Peter Minuit, another Hollander, who had been director general of New Netherlands under the Dutch West India Co. between 1624 and 1632. Minuit had fallen into disputes with the principals of that company, had been recalled and displaced, and thereupon went to Sweden and revived the propositions of Usselinx. These were received with pleasure by Queen Christina and were patronized by the chancellor and by the wealthy.¹ A colony under command of Minuit, who was most admirably fitted for the work, was sent out in two ships in 1638; land was bought from the Indians on the west side of the Delaware River, extending northward from Cape Henlopen to the falls of Trenton. The colony settled about where Wilmington now is. Fort Christiana was built on the banks of the River Christiana and by this name this settlement, from which was later evolved the State of Delaware, was long known.² It grew by slow accretions from the home country, by the coming of Dutchmen from New Netherlands, and later along with the development of Pennsylvania.

¹ Myers, in *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, etc.*, p. 60, points out that no record confirming the statement that Charles I of England renounced all claims to the Delaware country in 1634 has been found.

² See Acrelius, *Isaac: New Sweden, or the Swedish settlements on the Delaware*, first published at Stockholm in 1759, now translated by Rev. Nicholas Collin and printed in the *Collections of the New York Historical Society*, 2 series, vol. 1, p. 406 et seq.

COLONIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

The governors of New Sweden on the Delaware were Peter Minuit, Peter Hollaendare, Johan Printz, Johan Papegoja, and Johan Claesson Rising. Their rule extended from 1638 to 1655, and their political horizon was filled with constant bickerings with the Dutch who had never surrendered their claims to the territory. But New Netherlands was also weak, and new Sweden managed to maintain its political independence until 1655, when the Dutch came in force and, after gaining a bloodless victory, incorporated New Sweden into their own dominions. Both colonies had long felt the thrust of the English-speaking peoples westward from New England and northward from Virginia and Maryland. The pressure of this common enemy forced Dutch and Swedes to sink their own squabbles in the presence of a common danger, but in 1664 this pressure could be resisted no longer. New Netherlands became New York, and English dominion was unbroken from New England to the Carolinas.

For the time being Delaware was attached to the government of New York, although claimed by New Jersey and Maryland. In 1682, on the organization of the Pennsylvania government, it was granted to Penn to give his province of Pennsylvania an outlet to the sea and came to be known as "the territories," the "lower counties," or "Delaware Hundreds" of Pennsylvania. They were the cause of much quarreling and political jealousy and gave rise to much popular discontent, for the governmental relations of the two were unsatisfactory. Finally, in 1703, Delaware was reorganized as a separate colony with an assembly of its own, although under the same governor as Pennsylvania. This relationship was maintained till the War of the Revolution and then fell apart of its own weight as a result of the feeling of the times. So much for the political and governmental relations of Delaware down to the date when it became an independent and coequal unit in the Federal Republic.

Delaware is the second smallest State in the Union, having according to the census of 1910 a land area of 1,965 square miles and a total land and water area of 2,370 square miles. The decennial growth of population has been as follows:

Year.	Population.	Rank.
1790.....	59,096	16
1800.....	64,273	17
1810.....	72,674	19
1820.....	72,749	22
1830.....	76,748	24
1840.....	78,085	26
1850.....	91,532	30
1860.....	112,216	32
1870.....	126,015	35
1880.....	146,608	38
1890.....	168,493	43
1900.....	184,755	45
1910.....	202,322	47

In land area and population (1910) the counties range as follows, counting from the north:

	Sq. miles.	Population.
New Castle.....	435	123,188
Kent.....	617	32,721
Sussex.....	913	46,413

In 1910 there were 197,813 native Delawareans living in the United States; of these, 137,131 lived in Delaware and 60,682 lived in other States, of whom 19,779 lived in Maryland and 15,724 in Pennsylvania. In 1900 there were 13,810 foreign-born residents of the State, and in 1910 this number had increased to 17,492. From these figures it may be concluded that at the present time the population of the State is predominant in native stock and essentially homogeneous.

II. EDUCATION AMONG THE SWEDES AND THE DUTCH.

The fortunes of the Swedes were not essentially or materially changed by their conquest by the Dutch, nor did either of these nations find itself wrenched from its old moorings by the succeeding conquest by the English. They continued to live their own life in their own way, without let or hindrance. As early as 1642 and 1643 the Swedes had ministers of their own. There were others before the conquest by the Dutch¹ and we may assume, perhaps with a large degree of certainty, that these ministers were also to a certain extent teachers and in this way kept living the traditions of light and learning which these people had most certainly brought from their old homes. In the course of time the Dutch and the Swedish settlers became much intermingled, but the Swedes gave tone and character to the community.

Says Ferris:

The language of the Dutch had such an affinity to that of the Swedes that their children soon understood the religious service in the Swedes' churches, and freely joined in their worship. The Dutch had no regular ministry among them, whilst the Swedes were careful to maintain public worship as constantly as their isolated situation would admit; and being much the larger portion of the population, especially about Christiansburg, the rising generation lost their Dutch character and language, so entirely that in the year 1697, Rudman, who had just arrived from Sweden as a missionary, says: "We live scattered among the English, yet our language is preserved as pure as anywhere in Sweden." Several of their writers assure us that their character, manners, and customs, at that time throughout the colonies, remained purely Swedish.

Thus we see that at the end of the seventeenth century the English had changed but little the life of the original Swedish settlements on the Delaware. Says Powell, in his History of Education in Delaware:

The English governor of the province allowed the Swedes perfect freedom in religious and educational affairs. Their economic condition was excellent; there were

¹ Clay: Annals of Swedes on Delaware, ed. 1858, p. 33.

² Ferris, Benjamin: History of the Original Settlements on the Delaware (Wilmington, 1846), pp. 109-110, quoting first edition of Clay's Annals of the Swedes on the Delaware. See also Phila. edition of Clay, 1858, p. 33.

no poor among them. The Indians, far from attacking them, clamored for peace and the catechism. All circumstances, indeed, save three, conspired to promote education. These were the want of books, of schoolmasters, and of schoolhouses.

It was to obviate some of these difficulties that the Swedes at the end of the seventeenth century asked to be taken under the religious care of the church in Sweden. In response to that request and by the King's special order, pastors were sent out from Sweden to preach to them their own particular forms of religious belief and in the Swedish tongue. With these ministers were sent Swedish books, Bibles, catechisms, hymnals, and similar aids to the spiritual life. We know that at least one of these ministers established a school, and it is safe to say that what formal teaching there was in the colony was under their direction and control. This Swedish mission to settlers on the Delaware did not terminate till the death of Rev. Nicholas Collin in 1831.

Little is known of the real educational condition of the colonists during the Swedish and Dutch régime and how extensive were the changes wrought by the coming of the English. There were of course no public schools in the modern use of the term. Such schools as existed were either private or church or more likely were private under church supervision and direction.

It is perhaps possible to arrive at a safe estimate of what was probably the educational situation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Delaware by taking a brief review of the educational situation in the countries from which the settlers had recently come. Such a review is furnished by Wickersham in his History of Education in Pennsylvania.

According to Wickersham, in the seventeenth century the Dutch and the Swedes were both far ahead of the English in matters of education. In writing of these early Swedish and Dutch settlements on the Delaware in what are now Pennsylvania and Delaware, he remarks that at the time the first Swedish colony was planted on the Delaware there was no regular system of public education in Sweden, but that the church was active in its efforts to educate the young and home instruction was general. He continues:

Holland was, without doubt, the first country in Europe to establish a system of public schools, similar to the schools now known by that name. The work was begun under the Prince of Orange, in the latter part of the sixteenth century. * * * It was during their 12 years' sojourn in Holland, without doubt, that the Pilgrim Fathers obtained the germs of that system of education which has made New England so famous in our educational history, and it was in Holland too, almost certainly, that William Penn learned those broad principles of educational policy that are embodied in the frame he constructed for the government of his province and that he endeavored to have incorporated into laws for the benefit of the people.¹

¹ Wickersham, J. P.: History of Educ. in Pennsylvania, pp. 2-6.

Wickersham then makes the proper application to the situation on the Delaware in the seventeenth century:

Let no one expect to find well-organized schools and skilled teachers, for this mere handful of people in a wilderness, 3,000 miles from home and help, had to win the battle for existence before they could give much attention to the arts that cultivate and refine; but to such as have the patience to follow the narrative, it will appear that efforts greatly to their credit, under the circumstances, were made to instruct their children in the elements of common learning and to acquaint them with the essentials of Christianity.¹

He continues:

The churches no doubt served the place of schoolhouses in the early days, and the clergymen so far as they were able filled the double office of preacher and teacher. Two hundred years ago churches and schools were generally under one control in Sweden, Holland, and other European countries, and the schoolmaster was nearly always the minister's assistant, reading for him, leading the singing, visiting the sick, and in his absence taking the vacant place at the sacred desk. These customs were brought to America, and it may be safely said that so far as the early settlers on the Delaware had churches they had schools, and so far as they had ministers they had schoolmasters. * * * It was clearly impossible, however, that children living many miles distant from the churches * * * could be gathered for instruction frequently or regularly into the three or four places of worship which the colony afforded. Necessarily, therefore, the ministers and their assistants visited families as far as practicable, and, in conjunction with parents, taught the young what they could, at least to read and write and recite Bible lessons and the catechism. This plan of home instruction came early to the Swedes, for it was practiced very largely in the thinly settled portions of the mother country, and has not been discontinued even at the present day. When, therefore, there was a want of clergymen, there was a want of schoolmasters, and a dearth in religion was followed by a lapse into ignorance.²

In this review Mr. Wickersham points out what was to be expected from people who had such antecedents as had the Swedes and the Dutch in the seventeenth century. In his History of Education in Delaware, Rev. Lyman P. Powell, now president of Hobart College, New York, has gathered together from the scattered sources what was actually accomplished by these people in the matter of schools and his study is here briefly summarized.

The first Swedish schoolmaster who emerges from the mists of the past is Sven Colsberg, who in 1699 was engaged as bell-ringer at Christiana, and as the salary of that office was insufficient, to his other duties was added that of teaching and on the "10th of June, in the name of the Lord, Sven Colsberg began his schoolkeeping for a half year at the above-named place." In 1716 Arvid Hernbohm, "quiet and capable," then master at Wicaco, in what is now Philadelphia, was invited to Christiana where he was promised "honorable and satisfactory support." But Hernbohm declined. Johan Gioding came in his place and the school was opened in Johan Gustafsson's house June 17, 1717. The pastor was present with as many of the par-

¹ Wickersham, J. P.: History of Educ. in Pennsylvania, pp. 2-3.

² Ibid., pp. 15-16.

ents as could attend; he examined the children as to their proficiency and then recommended them to their teacher. A year later Mr. Gioding held a public examination of his pupils.

He asked questions regarding the most important Christian doctrines, requiring proof from Holy Scripture, to which questions of Mr. Gioding, to the surprise and gratification of all, they answered promptly and boldly, and so quickly confirmed their answers by a text of Holy Scripture that all the company present could not refrain from glorifying God with tears of joy and gladness for their children's quick memory and attainments and the schoolmaster's diligence and circumspection.¹

It appears that the burden of supporting Swedish schools now increased to such an extent that none were kept between 1722 and the coming of Acrelius in 1749. The children were sent to English schoolmasters, who taught them simply to read, but Acrelius urged upon his congregation the importance of preserving the Swedish language in its purity as it had then (about 1750) "very much fallen out of use," and under his leadership Nils Forsberg, a student from the University of Lund who had recently arrived, was employed as a sort of traveling educational missionary. Moving from house to house, he took up his temporary abode with first one family and then another and in this way instructed their children.

In summarizing the whole educational system among the Swedes in Delaware during the colonial period, Powell says:

The protracted struggle for separate and distinct Swedish schools was abandoned before the Revolution, and their subsequent history was merged into that of the Lutheran and Episcopal Churches. The reason for this is not far to seek. After the coming of the English in 1682 many of the Swedes began gradually to drop their native speech. Education in the Swedish language declined, and it became customary for Swedish children first to learn English and then the tongue of their fathers. Acrelius said that all children in his day could read English, write, and cipher. More attention was doubtless given to reading than to writing, particularly in the early period, for many made their mark instead of signing their names to documents. House instruction by the pastor was the last flickering light of education among the Swedes.²

With the Dutch the evidence for schools is still more scanty than for the Swedes. The first provision made by the Dutch for education in what is now Delaware seems to have been the offer by the city of Amsterdam in 1656 to settlers on Delaware River to "send thither a proper person for schoolmaster, who shall also read the Holy Scriptures and set the Psalms." The city of Amsterdam was "until further opportunity" to provide his salary. It was also required that at New Amstel (now New Castle) "a house for a school, which can likewise be occupied by a person who will hereafter be sexton, psalm setter, and schoolmaster" should be erected, but we have no record that such schoolhouse was really built or that one existed in the colony of Delaware before 1682. There are, however, records

¹ Powell, L. P.: History of Educ. in Delaware, p. 18.

² Powell, p. 20.

of Dutch schoolmasters in the colony, and some of their names have come down to us, including Evert Pietersen, Arent Eversen Molinaer, Abenius Zetscoven, and Andreas Hudde.¹

III. EDUCATION AMONG THE ENGLISH SETTLERS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

A modern writer, Right Rev. Frederick J. Kinsman, Bishop of Delaware, has emphasized the differences between the Dutch and the English by saying that, while the Dutch cared comparatively little for education as contrasted with the New Englanders, they cared more for the amenities, comforts, and graces of social life.² But Dr. Wickersham says:

As a social or political force the Swedish and Dutch settlers on the Delaware were scarcely felt after the arrival of Penn. They were soon surrounded by a more positive, more pushing, better educated class of men, and few of them came forward to take advantage of the new and broader field of effort that opened before them. They remained good, loyal citizens, working quietly on their farms or in their shops, and at times serving with apparent reluctance and in small proportion to their numbers, as local officers, on juries, or in the legislative assemblies of the province. In their descendants they gave the State some of its most worthy citizens and illustrious names.³

This judgment is not contrary to the conclusions formed by Powell and other authors who have been quoted already. In the seventeenth century the Dutch learned Swedish and tended to forget their own tongue; in the eighteenth century the Swedes "who became separated from their countrymen or who mingled little with them after the coming of the English, soon lost the use of their native tongue and were absorbed by the swifter currents of social and religious life into which they were thrown."⁴ They began to teach their children English even before they learned their mother tongue, and all the evidence goes to show that long before the Revolution the English were the predominant element in the population.

What then did the English do for popular education in the pre-Revolutionary period? Previous to the coming of Penn, indeed from 1640 on, isolated English families, some from New England, others from Maryland and Virginia, had attempted to settle along the Delaware, but while they were generally repulsed by the stronger Swedes and Dutch, they were not expelled; they gradually grew in power and even under the administration of Delaware as a part of New York some provisions had been made looking toward education, as will be seen by an examination of the laws promulgated by the

¹ Powell, L. P.: *History of Educ. in Delaware*, pp. 24-25.

² Bishop Kinsman's address in *Publications Del. Hist. Soc.*, No. 54, p. 10.

³ Wickersham: *History of Educ. in Pennsylvania*, p. 19.

⁴ Wickersham: *History of Educ. in Pennsylvania*, p. 79. In certain isolated settlements like "Wicaco, Kingessing, and Upper Merion, all near Philadelphia, they continued to speak the Swedish language for 150 years after this first settlement." It was this that made possible the continuation of the Swedish mission down to 1831.

Duke of York. But with the coming of Penn in 1682 the English came at once into greater prominence than they had ever occupied before in the province, and Penn's Frame of Government, thanks to his enlightened association with the Dutch in Holland, contained a provision that "the Governor and Provincial Council shall erect and order all public schools and encourage and reward the authors of useful sciences and laudable inventions;" it laid the foundations for industrial education also by providing that all children of the age of 12 should be taught "some useful trade or skill, to the end none may be idle, but the poor may work to live, and the rich, if they become poor, may not want."¹

The laws passed by the Assembly of Pennsylvania in 1682 and 1683 indicate the intention to provide immediately for the establishment of public schools and for the introduction of industrial education in accord with the ideas of Penn. Universal education was clearly contemplated, and had this been accomplished for Pennsylvania we may safely assume that Delaware would have received equal benefit. But the good work, educationally speaking, thus inaugurated under the direction of William Penn, did not long continue. A do-nothing policy was soon in the ascendant. Says Wickersham:²

The provincial authorities of Pennsylvania, as has already been stated, did next to nothing to promote the cause of general education during the long period from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the end of their rule in 1776. Charters were granted to a few educational institutions, some laws were passed securing to religious societies the right to hold property for school purposes, and in special cases enabling them to raise money by lottery to build schoolhouses; but this was all. Penn's broad policy respecting public education was virtually abandoned. Intellectual darkness would have reigned supreme throughout the province had not the various churches and the people themselves been more alive to the importance of the subject than the government.

What actually happened to Pennsylvania also happened to Delaware. The government itself did nothing. What was done was the work in the main of private denominational activity. In this work the Quakers and the Episcopalians led.

Before 1686 Christopher Taylor, a classical scholar and a Quaker minister, founded a school on Tinicum Island, where Gov. John Printz had established his headquarters and which is now in Pennsylvania. Taylor refers to the island as "Tinicum, alias College Island." It does not appear that the Quakers established any school in Delaware before the one at Wilmington in 1748. This school has had a continuous existence to the present time.³

The efforts of the Quakers had been anticipated by the representatives of the Church of England, to whom, through the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, is given

¹ See Thorpe, F. N.: Federal and State Constitutions, vol. 5, p. 3062.

² History of Educ. in Pennsylvania, p. 78.

³ Powell, L. P.: History of Educ. in Delaware, pp. 30-32.

the honor of making education universal throughout the State of Delaware,¹ for the efforts of the Quakers were mostly confined to the northern section of the colony. In 1705 Rev. George Ross was sent by the society as a missionary to New Castle, where he remained for many years. The importance of education was ever before his mind. In 1711 the vestry petitioned the society for a schoolmaster. But none seems to have been sent, for in 1729 Ross himself petitioned the authorities in England that "a small salary of £6 per annum may be allowed to a catechist or schoolmaster in this place to encourage his instructing youth in the church catechism." The business of education was at that time in private hands and was conducted by a different class of teachers. In a history of his church Mr. Ross has this to say as to the conditions of education in 1727:

There are some private schools within my reputed district which are put very often into the hands of those who are brought into the country and sold for servants. Some schoolmasters are hired by the year, by a knot of families who, in their turns, entertain him monthly, and the poor man lives in their houses like one that begged an alms, more than like a person in credit and authority. When a ship arrives in the river it is a common expression with those who stand in need of an instructor for their children. "Let us go and buy a schoolmaster." The truth is the office and character of such a person is generally very mean and contemptible here, and it can not be otherwise 'til the public takes the education of children into their mature consideration.²

Missionaries were sent from time to time to other sections of the colony, but it does not appear that they at any time engaged in the formal work of education, although devoting much time to instructing the people in the use of the liturgy, in catechising the children, and in similar work that lies on the borderland between simple religious instruction and formal teaching. Says Powell at the end of his review of the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel:

Brief as is this sketch of the society and its work in Delaware, it includes all that the records have revealed, and suffices to establish the society as the most important agent in the State at large in the last century for the propagation of education as well as the gospel. Moreover, it is equally clear that New Castle and Dover, whither missionaries were first sent, became the Iona and the Lindesfarne of this little Teutonic commonwealth, for they sent forth missionaries to its remotest bounds.³

There were individual private schools taught at various times during the colonial and revolutionary period, some of whose teachers attained to a local celebrity which has handed down their name and fame to the succeeding generations. One of these was John Thelwell, a schoolmaster famous in Wilmington during revolutionary days; another was Mrs. Elizabeth Way, a celebrated teacher of needlework in 1790, under whose instruction "the art of shirt making was strictly attended to, and fitting and cutting was taught here with neatness

¹ For an extensive study of Dr. Thomas Bray, the founder of the S. P. G. and his work in Maryland, see Dr. Thomas Bray: His life and selected works relating to Maryland, edited by Bernard C. Steiner (Baltimore, 1901).

² Powell, pp. 36-37, quoting Perry's Hist. Colls. Relating to the Amer. Col. Ch., V., p. 47 et seq.

³ Powell, L. P.: History of Educ. in Delaware, p. 35.

and care." In 1748 the Quakers established their Friends' School in Wilmington, which has had a continuous existence since that time. The old academy of Wilmington was built about 1765, and instruction in it was begun before the Revolution. The object of the academy was declared to be to promote "religion, morality, and literature," and in 1786 a formal curriculum of studies was drawn up and adopted which mark it as a classical academy of the orthodox type. Particular stress was laid on Latin, Greek, and mathematics, but English was not neglected, showing that the institution was ahead of its time. As the life of Wilmington became more normal after the close of hostilities, the school facilities became more abundant, some of them being conducted by men who later became famous in other lines, the best known being the celebrated political writer, William Cobbett, publisher of Porcupino's Gazette, and Lewis Cass, candidate for the Presidency in 1848.

The educational history of Wilmington during the early days is that of other cities, *mutatis mutandis*. It has been seen how the city of Amsterdam sent a teacher to New Castle as early as 1657; the comments of Missionary Ross on the educational situation in 1727 have been quoted, and it was from New Castle as a center that the Presbyterians of New Castle Presbytery in days long before the Revolution sent forth a stream of missionaries to the old South who laid in the States to which they were sent the foundations of denominational schools from which came later by evolution the public schools of to-day. As early as 1738 the Presbytery of Lewes laid the foundation for Delaware College. In the absence of an organized public-school system, other towns organized for themselves, and independently of the State, schools that had more or less of municipal direction and care if not support, but as they were in reality private schools, no further consideration of their work is necessary in this study. Suffice it to say that from the time of the Revolution, and in some cases before that date, private schools began to be founded in most of the towns and villages of the State and furnished fair opportunities for education to those who wished and who could pay for its privileges. The curious reader who is interested in this subject will find a fuller presentation in Powell's History of Education in Delaware, where there has been brought together from various sources the scattered material extant relating to this interesting subject.¹

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to be that, as far as education was concerned, this was available to a greater or less extent during the whole of the colonial period to all who had the ambition to desire it, the energy to seek it, and the money with

¹ See also Schurr's History of Delaware, II. 683-698 (1898); Elizabeth Montgomery's Reminiscences of Wilmington (written in 1851); Ferris's History of the Original Settlements on the Delaware (1846); Wick-ersham's History of Education in Pennsylvania (1886).

which to pay for it. During the Swedish and Dutch periods education was in the hands of the church. Religion and education had not been clearly differentiated. The minister or his assistant served also as the teacher. Under favorable conditions the children were gathered for instruction, but where conditions were unfavorable the teacher visited the homes of the children. As the Dutch language in Delaware made small progress against the Swedish, so the Swedish soon began to lose ground against the more progressive and aggressive English. The government of Penn even started out with the promise of government-supported schools but later failed to make good its promise, and during the eighteenth century the educational institution on which the people found it necessary to place their main reliance was the private school, generally under church direction or with denominational support. These grew up from time to time in the leading towns of the province and served the purpose of giving some of the people the elements of an education which was of the prevailing classical and cultural type, but in which the government as such had no part. The educational opportunity of the State did not come till after the dawn of independence.

Chapter II.

THE FIRST ATTEMPTS AT STATE EDUCATION.

I. THE STATE SCHOOL FUND PERIOD, 1796-1829.

There is nothing on the subject of education in the Delaware State constitution of 1776.

A second State constitution was framed by a convention which met in New Castle in June, 1792. It was put into operation without being submitted to the people. This constitution has one reference to education:

The legislature shall, as soon as conveniently may be, provide by law . . . for establishing schools, and promoting arts and sciences.¹

It does not appear that there was any immediate action in recognition of this mandate of the organic law. No law was immediately passed, nor does it appear that the governors of the State in their messages to the general assembly made any reference in those years to the subject of education.

In 1796 the State took its first step toward meeting the instructions of the constitution of 1792.

On February 9, 1796, there was passed an act for the creation of a school fund which became the basis of the public school system of Delaware and which has been of preeminent importance in shaping the policy and giving tone to the administration of schools.

The act of 1796 provided that all the money accruing from marriage and tavern licenses, from 1796 to January 1, 1806, should be appropriated and known as "The fund for establishing schools in the State of Delaware." The State treasurer for the time being was constituted its guardian, under the name and style of "The trustee of the fund for establishing schools in the State of Delaware." He was authorized to receive gifts, donations, and bequests from individuals to whom the faith of the State was pledged. When the money in hand was sufficient, the trustee was to invest it in shares of stock of the Bank of Delaware, the Bank of the United States, the Bank of Pennsylvania, or the Bank of North America, and with the dividends arising therefrom to purchase other shares. He was to make an annual settlement with the general assembly and once a

¹ Art. VIII, sec. 12, constitution of 1792. See Thorpe's charters and constitutions, vol. 1, p. 580. The section was carried over, without change, into the constitution of 1831, where it becomes Art. VII, sec. 11. See Thorpe, I, p. 596.

year publish a list of the gifts received, with the names of the donors. The fund itself, at some time in the future, date not specified, was to be applied to the establishment of schools in the hundreds of the counties "for the purpose of instructing the children of the inhabitants thereof in the English language, arithmetic, and such other branches of knowledge as are most useful and necessary in completing a good English education," but it was further provided that the fund should not be applied "to the erecting or supporting any academy, college, or university in this State."¹

On January 24, 1797, an act supplementary to the school fund act of February 9, 1796, was passed. This act ordered the school trustee (the State treasurer) to sell the three shares of stock of the Bank of Delaware already acquired and apply the receipts, together with any other moneys he might then have in hand or receive, to the purchase of the shares of the stock of that bank reserved for the State by the act of incorporation. It was also enacted that the money arising from marriage and tavern licenses should be first applied to the payment of the chancellor and judges,² and then the remainder was to be appropriated for the establishment of schools. The money thus appropriated to the payment of the chancellor and judges was evidently intended as a temporary loan to tide over any distress in the State treasury, for the sum thus used was to be replaced by money accruing to the State from arrearage taxes.³

Between 1797 and 1806 there seems to have been no further legislation on the subject of the school fund. In 1806 the act of 1796 and the supplementary act of 1797 were extended for seven years from January 1, 1806;⁴ on January 27, 1813, they were again extended to January 1, 1820;⁵ on February 8, 1822, they were revived and continued in force "until repealed by law," and it was further ordered that the moneys which would have belonged to the school fund had the act been in force in 1820, 1821, and 1822 were to be reckoned up and invested in bank stock for the benefit of the school fund.⁶

Such is a summary of all the legislation in Delaware bearing on the school fund during this period. It is now proper to turn to an examination of the efforts to make it of service. The first proposed use of the accumulating school fund was in 1803, when the inhabitants of Glasgow presented a petition for authority to establish a school and for help from the fund. The legislative committee to whom the

¹ Powell's History of Education in Delaware, 139. The act itself is ch. 10c, Laws of Delaware, II, pp. 1396-1398.

² This had been the law from 1793 to 1796. See laws of 1793, ch. 2c, secs. 4 and 5. Laws of Delaware, II, p. 1137. It would appear then that the law of 1797 was merely a return to the earlier form of procedure.

³ Powell, p. 139, quoting Laws of Delaware, II, p. 1353 et seq., and VI, p. 327. See also ch. 133, Laws of Delaware, 1797, pp. 47-50. The moneys received from the trustees of the Loan Office and from the sale of vacant lands was to be invested in bank stock also, but "such shares, so subscribed, shall not be deemed or taken as any part of the fund for establishing schools in this State."—Sec. 5, ch. 133.

⁴ See ch. 24, Laws of Delaware, 1806, IV, p. 52.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1813, IV, 506.

⁶ Laws of 1822, ch. 144, p. 241.

appeal was referred recommended that they have leave to bring in the desired bill, but thought the fund was then "too inconsiderable for a general application" and that a grant from the fund would therefore "neither meet the wishes of the public, nor be consistent with the establishment" of the fund.¹ The bill was apparently not brought in; at any rate no such bill became a law.

In a letter to Henry Barnard in 1865 Judge Willard Hall gives an insight into the condition of education in the State at the time these earliest efforts toward a State system were being made:

In 1803, April, I came to Delaware and settled at Dover. There was then no provision by law in the State for schools. Neighbors or small circles united and hired a teacher for their children. There were in some rare places schoolhouses. There was no schoolhouse in Dover. The teacher there in 1803 was a foreigner who hired a room and admitted scholars at prices. The teachers frequently were intemperate, whose qualification seemed to be inability to earn anything in any other way. A clergyman who had some pretensions as a scholar, but had been silenced as a preacher for incorrigible drunkenness, stood very prominent as a teacher. In the best towns it depended upon accident what kind of a school they had. In Wilmington at one time they had a very good teacher; he made teaching respectable, and interested parents in the instruction of their children. In Dover we sent to Harvard College in 1813 and procured a teacher who was with us several years. Afterwards we were left to chance, but fortunately generally had a good school. But even in the best neighborhoods, teachers of the young frequently were immoral and incapable; and in the country generally there was either a school of the worst character or no school at all.²

The first official recognition of the cause of public education by the governor of the State seems to have been that contained in the message of Gov. David Hall to the assembly on January 4, 1805.³ He says:

When we take into view the gross ignorance that prevails in some parts of this State among the lower classes of the people, for want of proper schools established in their neighborhood, we lament that the legislature has not paid a more early attention to this important duty. A law having passed in 1796 to create a fund sufficient to establish schools in this State and the fund at this time being considerable, I beg leave to recommend the application of such part of the said fund as the legislature shall judge proper to the establishment of schools as in the said act directed.

Two weeks later, on January 17, 1805, we find the following in the journal of the house (p. 36). Its very brevity speaks with startling emphasis:

Mr. Higgins laid on the table sundry petitions, signed by 256 inhabitants of New Castle and Sussex Counties, praying the legislature to pass an act to enable trustees to open schools and to appropriate the school funds, which were read.

On motion of Mr. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Reynolds, that the said petitions be referred to a committee of three.

On the question, it was determined in the negative.

On motion of Mr. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Green, the petitioners had leave to withdraw their petitions.

¹ H. J., 1803, p. 44.

² Barnard's Jour. of Educ., 1866, xvi, 129, quoted in part in Powell, 142.

³ H. J., 1805, p. 8.

This and nothing more. The first effort to pass a school law had failed.

Gov. Nathaniel Mitchell, in his message to the assembly on January 8, 1807, says:¹

The state of our finances has gradually improved; * * * we are flattered with the prospect of realizing the expectation of the legislature, in establishing funds competent to the support of public county schools. This institution deserves encouragement. Ignorance is the bane of our Government. General information is its strongest pillar.

But at this session no petition for schools was presented; no bill was introduced, and on February 5, 1808, the trustee of the school fund was instructed to invest all funds on hand in shares in the Farmers' Bank of the State of Delaware.²

For the next few years there was silence in Delaware on the subject of education. Indeed for the whole of these decades, short and simple are the annals of education, and what legislation does appear is mainly devoted to private institutions. A summary of these provisions may be properly included here: In 1810 the Dover Academy was incorporated; in 1811 permission was granted to raise by lottery \$10,000 "for the use and benefit" of the trustees of the college of Wilmington; the next year the Georgetown school in Sussex County was incorporated, as was the New Castle Library Co.; and the Glasgow Grammar School was authorized to raise \$1,000 by lottery; in 1813 the "English schoolhouse" in Newark was to be repaired out of the proceeds of a lottery that was also to go in part to paving the streets of the town. In 1815 the Union School in New Castle Hundred and the Brandywine Academy in New Castle County were incorporated. Two acts for lotteries to aid education were passed in 1816 and these were followed by other acts of incorporation in 1819 (Milton and Seaford Academies).

On January 7, 1813, Gov. Joseph Haslet said to the assembly:

The school fund is also a subject for your consideration. The establishment of this fund must have been for general use, not for the erection of large and expensive seminaries, in the benefits of which very few can participate. A diffusion of knowledge is a principal concern in every republican government, whose great object is that each citizen may be able to come forward in public life, and avail himself of, and benefit society by, the exercise of those talents with which nature may have endued him. A man possessing the rudiments of education may improve himself by his own assiduity. Some of the greatest characters have made themselves in this way. The want of the rudiments of education has kept in obscurity many who would otherwise have been extensively useful and has lost to the world abilities which might have been its greatest ornament. The income of the school fund is now such, that it is believed, without exhausting the whole of this income, but leaving the fund gradually to increase, appropriations might be made, which with such aids as the different neighborhoods in this State might easily and would readily afford, would establish, for limited seasons, schools in these neighborhoods sufficient to teach the rudiments of education.

¹ H. J., 1807, p. 11.

² H. J., 1808, p. 109.

As it is reasonable that the present generation should not live exclusively for posterity, but should avail itself of the advantages which it possesses for its own improvement, I submit to you the propriety of appropriating a portion of the income of this fund to the purpose above suggested.¹

Gov. Haslet returned to the subject at the next session and said on January 5, 1814:

The importance of education in a republican government is universally acknowledged. In this Government, all the citizens have equal rights; and are under equal obligations. Education confers the power of exercising these rights, and discharging these obligations to the greatest benefit of the individual and of the community. Good schools can not be extensively established without public assistance. I submit it to your consideration whether a portion of the income of the school fund could not be usefully employed in establishing schools in the different neighborhoods of the State, for limited periods in each year. Such a system would be attended with most important advantages; and in carrying it into effect the legislature might confidently rely upon contributions of the neighborhoods in which schools should be established, which would be increased as the benefits of the system became better known and more sensibly felt.²

It is evident that the plan of procedure in the mind of Gov. Haslet was that of a system of education where a part of the expenses were met out of the income of the school fund and the remainder by the people, presumably in their private and individual capacity, but nothing was done that year nor in 1815. In 1816 a resolution recited that the trustee of the school fund then had on hand \$4,753.72, which was lying idle and instructed him to invest the same in the Farmers' Bank of the State of Delaware, "or any other incorporated bank of this State."³

II. THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL LEGISLATION.

The general assembly of 1817 was the first to undertake the work of the actual organization of a public school system. It had already chartered various private academies and semipublic charity schools for "destitute orphans" in Wilmington and in New Castle, but these had asked no public funds for their maintenance, and none had been provided for them. This assembly had also inaugurated the policy of incorporating Sunday schools, but its most important educational work was the passage of an act—the first public act of its kind in the history of the State—for "appropriating part of the school fund for the education of poor children." This act appointed a board of trustees "to superintend the education of poor children within their several hundreds, in the respective counties of this State." The trustee of the school fund was then ordered for the year beginning February 1, 1817, to pay in quarterly payments to the treasurer of each county the sum of \$1,000 per annum from any money in his hands. The amount available for each hundred was carefully fixed

¹ H. J., 1813, pp. 30-31.

² H. J., 1814, p. 7.

³ See resolution on pp. 157-158, Laws of Delaware, 1817, and chs. 106 and 113. See also H. J., 1816, p. 100.

in the law, and the school trustees were authorized to expend these sums only—

in the payment of such school masters, or teachers of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as may, by the trustees aforesaid, or a majority of them, within their several hundreds respectively, be intrusted with the tuition and education of poor children; * * * such children as may be obviously unable to receive the rudiments of an English education from any private or other source, except as hereinbefore provided.

The trustees were to make reports—

as to the number, character, and situation of the different schools and schoolhouses, in their respective neighborhoods, also the exact number, name, and ages of all the poor white children within their respective hundreds and their opinions as to the amount of money required to pay for their tuition together with such other particulars as they may deem necessary, to enable the general assembly at their next session, to determine the competency, of the net proceeds of the fund for establishing schools, to defray the expense, which might be incurred by the tuition of all the poor white children within the State.

The trustees were to make their reports to the county treasurers, and these were to report to the general assembly.

This was the law which launched the public schools as a clearly marked pauper system.¹ Financial details of the results of the law are not available to any great extent, but the report from Sussex County for 1817 made to the legislature on January 15, 1818, may illustrate the whole:²

Paid to Baltimore Hundred for use of schools	\$33. 94½
Paid to Broadkilm Hundred for use of schools	69. 22½
Paid to North West Fork Hundred for use of schools	38. 33
	141. 50
Balance in hands of county treasurer unappropriated	108. 50
	250. 00
Received from trustee of school fund	250. 00

The law of 1817 was revised and reenacted on February 3, 1818. The new act began by appointing trustees for each hundred in the State who were "to superintend the education of the poor children within their respective hundreds." Beginning with January 1, 1818, the trustee of the school fund was to pay each county \$1,000 in four quarterly payments, the proportion to each hundred being fixed in the law and devoted to—

the payment of such school masters or teachers of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as may * * * be intrusted with the tuition and education of poor children, * * * such white children as may be obviously unable to receive the rudiments of an English education from any private or other source, except as herein before provided.

¹ Wickersham shows in his History of Education in Pennsylvania, ch. 13, that the course of evolution of this phase of the subject was not essentially different in Pennsylvania from that in Delaware. A similar effort was made in Pennsylvania to educate the poor gratis. In that State more money was spent, the idea persisted longer and met with substantially the same results. There were also experiments with Lancasterian schools.

² House Journal, 1818, pp. 37-38. On pp. 23-24 is a statement that from September to December, 1817, there was paid out on orders from the trustees of the various hundreds a total of \$335.

The limit for three months' instruction was fixed at \$2.50 "and a like sum in proportion for any longer or shorter term." The trustees in the hundreds were to keep close and exact accounts of their expenditures and of the children taught and report the same year to the county treasurer who in turn was to report to the general assembly.

The local trustees were authorized and directed to pay to the Brandywine Manufacturers' Sunday School, the Female Harmony Society of Wilmington, the New Castle Benevolent Society, and the Female Union Society of Smyrna such sums as might appear their just proportion for "the number of poor children by each of them respectively educated." The trustees appointed under this law (1818) were allowed to draw and expend such sums as had been allowed but not expended under the law of 1817.¹

Fortunately there has been preserved a financial report from Sussex County made to the assembly on January 4, 1819, which may be used for comparison with the similar report made on January 15, 1818.²

SUSSEX COUNTY POOR-SCHOOL EXPENDITURES FOR 1818.

Paid Indian River Hundred for education for poor children.....	\$51.93
Paid Broadkilm Hundred for education for poor children.....	102.41½
Paid North West Fork Hundred for education for poor children.....	75.76
Paid Cedar Creek Hundred for education for poor children.....	100.00
Paid Lewes and Rehoboth Hundred for education for poor children.....	106.00½
Paid Dagsborough Hundred for education for poor children.....	32.97½
Paid Baltimore Hundred (balance of two years' appropriation).....	136.05½
	<hr/>
	605.14
Balance in hands of county treasurer.....	161.88½
	<hr/>
	767.02½
Received from school fund trustee.....	750.00
	<hr/>
Received from miscellaneous sources.....	17.02½
	<hr/>
	767.02½

No other reports on the financial side of the act of 1818 are available, and this in itself would seem to indicate that no particular degree of success followed the enactment of these laws. Powell says (p. 140) that a few schools were organized and the way opened for further improvement, but the division of pupils into rich and poor was disliked, and the school fund came to be known as "a poor children's fund." This dissatisfaction is well characterized by Gov. Cochran, in his message in 1877, when he says:

It is not surprising that a provision which invited a free-spirited and independent people to have their children schooled as paupers proved a failure. Perhaps the best fruit of this effort was that it excited a widespread discontent, which served to quicken interest in the subject, provoking discussion and stimulating to an earnest effort for a better matured and more efficient system.³

¹ Delaware session laws, 1818, pp. 340-346.

² House Journal, 1819, p. 40.

³ Message to general assembly of 1877, p. 16; also quoted by Powell, p. 140.

It would appear from these acts that the purpose of the legislators was to promote the organization of schools which should draw their support entirely from public funds. There is no indication that private incorporated academies were expected to share in the distribution of these public funds. This is evident from the supplemental act passed in 1821, which provides:

That for each and every poor white child taught at any incorporated or other regular English school within this State, and for whose tuition the teacher thereof can not in any other way receive compensation by reason of the indigence of such child and his or her relations and friends, one dollar per quarter, or four dollars annually, shall be paid out of any unappropriated money in the fund for establishing schools within this State.

Thus it seems not only was the education of the poor in Delaware to be funded as such, but it was to be done by contract at so much per head. The teacher was also required to make oath to his account and—

shall, moreover, obtain the certificate of at least three credible freeholders of the neighborhood that the child or children, for whose schooling the charges in said account are made, are such as ought to be entitled to the benefit of this act.

It would seem that this system was about as far from the present public school idea as was possible. None but paupers could enjoy its benefits, and for fear that another might slip in unawares this poverty was to be attested by the neighbors. Public education was only for those who could not help themselves. The public acts of 1817, 1818, and 1821 were a failure, because the pauper idea was in the ascendant. The act of 1817 ordered a report on the total number of poor white children in the State. The law of 1821 allowed out of the school fund \$1 per quarter, or \$4 per year, for each. It would seem that the purpose of the supplementary act of 1821 was to draw still more distinctly the lines between pauper and self-supporting citizens, and, according to Powell (p. 141), added to the unpopularity of the earlier laws. The children who enjoyed its benefits became the butt of ridicule for their more fortunate companions.

The conclusion is borne out by the State allowances for the education of poor children as provided for by annual enactments of the assembly, as follows:

Act of February 8, 1822: There was allowed to the Female Harmony Society of Wilmington \$195 "for the education of poor children" and to the Female Benevolent Society of New Castle \$115, to the Female Union Society of Smyrna \$48, and to individuals \$108.63.

Act of February 6, 1823: The school trustee was directed to pay claims of teachers for "the education of poor children," amounting to \$482.26.

Act of February 2, 1824: Female Harmony Society of Wilmington, \$193.49; Female Benevolent Society of New Castle, \$61.37; and to others, \$240.13. To this law was now added what was apparently a new section—that no teacher should be paid for more than 20 poor children in any one year.

Acts of January 9 and February 8, 1825: Female Benevolent Society of New Castle, \$76.11; Free Harmony School at Wilmington, \$80; Female Benevolent Society of New Castle, \$80; and to others, \$220.90.

Act of February 9, 1826: Free Harmony School, Wilmington, \$80; Female Benevolent Society, \$80; Female Union Society of Smyrna, \$40.78; others, \$156.90.

Act of February 9, 1827: Female Benevolent Society of New Castle, \$80; Free Harmony School, Wilmington, \$80; to others, \$280.41.

Act of February 16, 1829: Free Harmony School at Wilmington (for 1827 and 1828), \$160; Female Benevolent Society of New Castle for 1827 and 1828, \$160; Female Union Society of Smyrna for 1827 and 1828, \$99.44; and to 48 individuals, \$738.08, being an average of \$15.38 in sums ranging from \$1 to \$66.

These payments were all presumably for the two years 1827 and 1828, as there was no session of the assembly in 1828. The laws show that these sums were distributed over every part of the State.¹

III. SUNDAY SCHOOL LEGISLATION.

It has been noted that the poor were to be educated out of the proceeds of the school fund. The first definite provision for public taxation for the purpose of education seems to have come in connection with another section of the school law of 1821, that providing public funds for the support of Sunday schools. As is well known, the original idea of the Sunday school as advocated by Robert Raikes was not that of a school on the Sabbath for religious instruction, but the use of the Sabbath for working boys who could attend on no other day and their instruction in secular learning and by paid teachers. It has been shown that an act of 1817 (ch. 131) incorporated the Brandywine Manufacturers' Sunday School, in New Castle County. The law of 1821 (ch. 65) went further, for it provided that every school in the State instituted for the education of children on the Sabbath day should be entitled to receive from the county not more than 20 cents per white scholar per annum, provided the schools in question should be maintained not less than three months in each year. The amount to be used in this way was not to exceed \$200 for each county and was to be raised "as other county rates and levies are by the laws of this State."

This seems to have been the first provision for public taxation for education in the State, and it is perhaps best to give at this point the subsequent history of this movement. Scharf reports² that up to 1829 under this law 29 Sunday schools had received aid: Female school at New Castle, 100 scholars; Mill Creek, 40; Immanuel Church, New Castle, 93; Farm school, 50; St. James' school, near Stanton, 95; New Castle school, 93; First Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, 161; Newark male school, 20; Newark female school, 30; Mrs. Anderson's school, 23; Harmony school, 97; White Clay Creek, 120;

¹ See the original acts under these dates as given in the session acts.

² Scharf, J. T.; History of Delaware, 1600-1868, Philadelphia, 1888, 2 v., vol. 1, p. 444.

Brandywine Manufacturers' School, 191; Methodist Church school, Wilmington, 213; Second Presbyterian Church school, Wilmington, 150; Catholic Church school, 40; Protestant Episcopal Church school, 84; Brandywine village school, 50.¹

Scharf gives also a list of the teachers in these schools and the amount received by each. The earliest teacher to be thus paid seems to have been P. Quigley, of the Brandywine Manufacturers' Sunday School, who received \$17.20 for 86 pupils on September 20, 1821. In 1822 the teachers in eight other schools were paid sums varying from \$7.20 to \$26.40, amounting in all to \$87.20. At every meeting of the levy court appropriations were made for this purpose.² The law seems to have long retained its popularity and is still in force, for the code of 1915³ requires the levy court of each county to pay annually "to the teachers of each Sabbath school kept therein for three months or more in the year, 50 cents for each white scholar." The total payment in any one year in each county is limited to a total of \$500, and it is required that Sussex County shall return annually to the levy court a statement of the manner in which the appropriation has been applied, and in the absence of such report no appropriation is made. Such statements for all the counties generally appear in the auditor's reports down to 1905. Since that date they are not found.⁴

Another phase of educational development of that date was the Lancasterian school. At the session of 1819 a petition "signed by 260 citizens" was presented to the assembly praying the establishment of "a model school on the Lancasterian plan." The matter was discussed, a bill was brought in to establish such a school in Wilmington, but it failed to pass.⁵

IV. FURTHER LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION.

While little seems to have been accomplished in the decade between 1821 and 1829 toward the actual organization of public schools, they had at any rate reached in their development that stage of importance which helped them command attention from the governors in their annual messages.

¹ Allowance for Sunday schools, 1829 (see Auditor's Report for 1829, pp. 151, 162, 182):

Sussex County.....	\$126.80
Kent County.....	13.60
New Castle.....	216.92
	357.32

² By an act passed in 1852 (ch. 645) a report on the expenditure of the public funds granted for the use of Sunday schools was required under penalty of loss of further appropriations.

³ See secs. 2190 and 2191 which have been brought forward from the code of 1852.

⁴ See the statistical tables printed at the end of this study. In 1867, chapter 134 repealed the law allowing \$500 per year to each county for Sabbath schools and fixed an individual payment of 50 cents for each scholar (pupil) in Kent and Sussex Counties and 20 cents in New Castle. This in turn was repealed by chapter 423, Laws of 1869, passed Feb. 9, 1869.

⁵ H. J., 1819, pp. 41, 119, 154, 158.

Gov. Jacob Stout urged in his message before the assembly in January, 1821, "the expediency of establishing academies and founding a college for the education of youth." He was further persuaded that—

the diffusion of knowledge among our citizens is indispensably necessary to the character and prosperity of the State, and that we have too long neglected the establishment of institutions similar to those which now constitute the pride and glory of our sister republic.¹

Gov. John Collins was the first, however, who showed any statesmanlike grasp of the educational situation. In his message to the assembly on January 2, 1822, he devotes nearly one-half of his space to this subject. He emphasizes the importance "of devising the best practical means of promoting education," for on it "depends the intellectual, moral, and religious character of the community." He said it was a matter "for surprise and regret that not even an experiment of public patronage had been made in the State;" it is true the means of the State are limited, but if "judiciously applied they might effect very important purposes." The counties had not been divided into school districts and there were few schoolhouses, but it was suggested that portions of the school fund might be offered the districts on condition that they "raise other specified sums by contributions." He insisted that these voluntary private contributions were necessary for the salvation of the schools:

It is conceded that these schools must be supported, chiefly, by voluntary contributions. It is probably best that it should be so; for that is rarely much prized which costs little; and it happens, according to the common principles of our nature, that some who would embrace the means of education if attainable for a price which they could afford, would altogether neglect them if offered as a free gift. It is submitted that the great object of the general assembly, in respect to the subject of promoting education, should be to excite the attention and combine the exertions of individuals; to attempt, by furnishing some public funds, to obtain greater voluntary contributions; and by placing the subject in the view of the different sections of the country, to impress upon the minds of the people the principle that to provide the means of education is an important part of their concerns.

With these views of the functions of the State in matters of education, it would naturally follow that Gov. Collins did not approve the laws of 1817, 1818, and 1821:

I have on a former occasion questioned, and I now submit to your consideration, whether the appropriations, which have heretofore been made of portions of the school fund, for the purpose of education are consistent with the nature and intent of that fund, or calculated to produce so much good as might be effected in a different manner? * * * The charitable nature of the appropriations and the benevolent views with which they are made command our esteem, but it is wisdom to consider that the general purposes of education in which the whole community are interested demand

¹ H. J., 1821, p. 17.

more than our school fund can afford, and that duty therefore requires that no part of it should be diverted from its legitimate course.¹

It will be noted that the central idea in the plan of action proposed by Gov. Collins was one of cooperation between the local community and the State. The community was to raise its funds by private subscription, and the State was to draw upon the school funds. This idea came, no doubt, from the suggestions of Willard Hall, then a member of the State senate and long interested in the development of education. As will be shown later the school law of 1829 was his work, and the suggestions of Gov. Collins in 1822 are near enough to serve as the prototype of that law. But the time was not yet. More talk was necessary, the State had not yet made up its mind.

At the session of 1823 little emphasis was put on education. The high-water mark of 1822 was now beginning to ebb, for Willard Hall was now no longer in the senate. Gov. Caleb Rodney satisfied himself with recommending to the assembly the consideration of—

the propriety of adopting some specific plan for the permanent diffusion of education among the whole body of the people. * * * The elementary instruction of youth forms the basis of their usefulness to the State. * * * A knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, which may be acquired in country schools under proper regulations, greatly contributes in all, * * * One striking feature of such a system is that it will comprehend the education of females, which is an object of the first importance and almost of indispensable necessity.²

With the opening of the assembly in 1824 a new era for the schools gave promise of beginning. Gov. Charles Thomas took the matter up in his message and in eloquent terms reviewed the situation:

I would earnestly press upon your attention the propriety of adopting some plan by which the means of education may be accessible to every member of the community. This is a subject of primary importance. * * * The school fund is gradually increasing; but, if permitted to remain untouched, it would require at least 20 or 30 years before it would be sufficient to carry instruction into every family. If unused, with the most assiduous care one generation must pass away before it would be productive of any benefit to the community. In these portentous times it seems rather a hazardous experiment to permit one generation to sleep in ignorance, in order that light and knowledge may be extended to the succeeding. The best way to secure the blessings of education to the next generation is to confer them upon the present. Ignorance: can not appreciate what it never enjoyed; they alone who have been favored with the blessings of education can estimate them at their proper value; * * * I would, therefore, recommend to your consideration the propriety of calling the school fund into active operation, and of supplying its deficiency to promote the object for which it was originally designed, by a school tax. Such a tax would be a blessing to the people, rather than a burden; for it would tend to relieve them from the most intolerable of all burdens, the burden of immorality and ignorance. If, however, you should deem it inexpedient to encroach upon the present school fund, I would urge upon you the

¹ At the session of 1822 was presented the report to the Maryland Legislature on Jan. 30, 1821, on the granting of public lands to the older States for educational purposes in order to even up those granted to the newer States. The Maryland report is reprinted and a strong report from the assembly committee sustained the Maryland contention (see H. J., 1822, pp. 15-31 and 40-50; and S. J., 1822, pp. 44-50).

² H. J., 1823, pp. 20-21.

propriety of laying a school tax for the purpose of the rising generation. . . A small tax would be sufficient if the State was divided into school districts and a certain sum allowed to every district that would furnish houses sufficient to accommodate a specified number of scholars or a certain sum, for each scholar, to every portion of any district that will furnish a schoolhouse. In a country like ours, where all power, directly or indirectly, flows from the people, it is a matter of astonishment that the diffusion of knowledge and the extension of religion and morality among the people were not the first objects of public patronage. Some of our sister States have wisely extended the arm of public protection over the education of the poor. I trust that you will not be backward in following this example. . . . In vain do we boast of our elective franchise and of our civil rights if a large portion of our citizens are unable to read the tickets which they annually present at the polls. Such men may think themselves free, but in fact they are slaves. Ignorance always has been, and always will be, the slave of knowledge. If information is generally diffused among a people, that people will always be their own masters; they will always govern. An enlightened people never has been, and never can be enslaved. . . . Sensible of the incompatibility between knowledge and slavery, the masters of the Old World have closed every avenue against the people, and openly declared that a nation, to be kept in chains, must be kept in ignorance. The circulation of all books that advocate political liberty and civil rights has been suppressed, and the freedom of the press is totally destroyed. . . . Enlighten the people; open schools for the instruction of the poor, and our liberty will be perpetual. But, if we close our ears against the admonitions of history, and shut our eyes against the light of experience, the fairest prospects that ever opened upon the world will be blighted, and the hopes of humanity and the prayers of the pious will be fruitless and unavailing.¹

This eloquent address, although falling short of what would be to-day expected of an educational orator, was far in advance of the leaders of the day when it was delivered. There appears here the first suggestion of a tax for general public education in the history of the State. The idea of public education as intended primarily for the poor had not yet disappeared, but the signs are evident that the educational leaders of the State were thinking. This last remark does not apply, however, to some of the legislators. The discussion on education began in the assembly by inquiring how much had been actually paid out from the school fund under the pauper school laws of 1817, 1818, and 1821.²

This was reported to be:

To New Castle County.....	\$1, 937. 50
To Kent County, \$1,250, less \$497.32½ refunded.....	752. 67½
To Sussex County, \$1,000, less \$270.38 refunded.....	729. 62
Total expended for public schools under the acts of 1817, 1818, and 1821.....	3, 419. 79½

A committee of the assembly then reported on the educational sections of the governor's message. This committee was convinced of the necessity of "doing something to improve the condition of schools." It was a lamentable fact that in some neighborhoods there were no schools, and in others "where they are established, they are, in many instances, from the incompetency and immorality of the teachers who conduct them, in the most unprosperous state."

¹ H. J., 1824, pp. 10-12; S. J., 1824, pp. 9-10.

² H. J., 1824, pp. 31, 64-66.

It was recognized, however, that until the funds were sufficient attempts at improvement would be disappointing and that expenditures under the acts of 1817, 1818, and 1821 had been made "for the education of poor children without materially promoting their instruction," for these children, except at schools in a few of the towns, had been taught "for such short and irregular periods that they could not have made any sensible progress in acquiring a knowledge of the first rudiments of learning."

The committee estimated that in eight years from 1824 the school fund would have increased so as to yield an annual income of \$15,000; that 300 schools were necessary for the State, to each of which \$50 might be allowed, or, still better, that the income of the fund might be apportioned as the needs of the pauper children might demand. It is everywhere assumed that the State fund for paupers was to be supplemented by private funds from those parents able to pay. This was probably the purpose of the assembly when organizing the school fund in 1796, for it "could not have been so visionary" as to suppose that the fund could ever be able to establish the new schools needed and support those already in existence. To accomplish that object a fund of \$2,000,000 would be needed. Nor was it to be supposed that it was the purpose of the assembly to take these schools so entirely out of the hands of the people "as to have them exclusively supported at the expense of this fund." Nor was it to be imagined that the assembly of that day "could have conceived the idea of combining with the avails of the fund, after it should have attained some growth, a school tax to be levied on the assessments of the real and personal property of the citizens."

It was estimated that a sufficient school tax would amount to \$80,000, "a larger sum than the aggregate of the county rates and levies, poor and road taxes, raised in the State. This would be almost exclusively paid by the holders of real property, who being saddled with so enormous a tax, in addition to their present unequal burdens, would be grievously oppressed."¹ There follows a curious argument against the imposition of such a school tax, for it would be "peculiarly obnoxious to the proprietors of great freehold estates." In conclusion, the committee thought that the school fund, "being the only resource on which reliance can be placed for founding new schools and meliorating the condition of those now established," ought to be "kindly and carefully fostered" and that after eight years it might have so accumulated as to make it possible to put the schools "into active and useful operation."²

The arguments of this committee have been quoted so extensively for two purposes: (1) To show how far the people of Delaware still were in 1824 from recognizing universal taxation as the basal principle of public education; and (2) to explain the provisions and crudities, the looseness and weakness of the school law of 1829, for

¹ These freeholders paid tax on rental values only.

² H. J., 1824, pp. 126-131.

in seeking to secure some result Judge Hall, when drawing that bill, had to keep himself within such bounds as would pass the assembly and be, to some extent at least, agreeable to the people of the State.

This report seems to represent the end of the school-fund period of agitation for public education. There is little in Gov. Paynter's messages in 1826 and 1827 on the subject, and this little deals rather with home training and moral education than with "the mere acquisition of the arts of reading and writing, and of the knowledge of arithmetic, and of foreign and dead languages" for which the governor seems to have had a most sovereign contempt.¹

It will be noted that the school-fund period extended from 1796 to 1829, just a generation. The fund was based on slight, but certain, sources of income. It began with nothing. In 1829 it had accumulated stocks worth in the market more than \$158,000, although there had not been until 1829 any increase in the assessed valuation of State property. It appears that the fund was carefully and honestly administered, and while under supplementary laws it was constantly drawn on for money with which to pay the judicial officers of the State and even the governor, it would appear that these sums were regularly, systematically, and honestly repaid, but the administration of this fund does not seem to have taken on a character essentially different from that in other States, for the financial administration of the fund came to be an end in itself and the schools disappear largely from view.

This becomes distinctly visible when we come to consider the sums paid out of the fund for schools and the sums invested for the fund in bank stocks. Under the act of 1817 each of the counties was allowed \$1,000 per year for poor children. All the sums allowed were not paid over to the counties and all that was paid over was not expended, but a part covered back into the fund. From 1817 and 1818 the sums paid to the counties or to teachers for teaching poor children never amounted to as much as \$1,000 per year until 1828-29, when it was \$1,115.93, and this, too, although most of the time the annual income from marriage and tavern licenses and from bank stocks varied in amount from \$2,131 in 1823 to \$10,550 in 1826. And this failure to spend seems to have been due as much to the indifference to schools as to the usual desire to increase the fund. In 1827 no more than \$432.89 was credited as expended for schools, and of this sum \$160 was paid for Sunday schools. The law of 1821 provided that the funds paid to Sunday schools should be raised by a general tax, as were other taxes. It is not clear how the \$124 paid out in 1822 for Sunday schools and the \$189 paid out in 1823 for the same purpose were raised.

The total effect of the efforts from 1817 to 1821 to establish schools was either nil or bad. No workable scheme of education was evolved;

¹ See H. J., 1826, p. 12, and same 1827, p. 26.

no schools were permanently established; the spirit of educational endeavor was not brought into the State nor induced to make it an abiding place; little or no interest in education was awakened among the masses; no friends for the system were raised up, and the deliberate declaration that the income of the fund was for the teaching of paupers, deliberately and distinctly so declared, divided the population into the rich and the poor, emphasized and exaggerated social distinctions, aroused a spirit of independence which would have none of the education thus offered, and so made the whole attempt a dismal failure. During these dark years, when public school education was at its nadir in the State, the better system had apparently but one friend. His efforts for better things have been noticed already in connection with the messages of the governors in 1822 and 1824, and in 1829 his ideas were finally crystallized into law. This friend of real public school education was Willard Hall, whose work will be considered with some detail in the next chapter.

V. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF THE SCHOOL FUND.

All that had been really accomplished before 1829 may be given statistically in the following presentation of the fortunes of the school fund, 1796-1829:

Statement of Delaware school fund, 1796-1829

Year.	Authority for statement.	Annual receipts, including dividends and excluding balances.	Paid for public (poor) schools.	Paid for Sunday schools.	Estimated value of bank stock belonging to school fund	Tax valuation (hundreds omitted).
1796-97.....	H. J. 1798, 42-43.....	\$3,523.53			\$3,523.53	
1798.....	H. J. 1799, 21.....	1,361.00				
1799.....	H. J. 1800, 22.....	2,436.54				\$8,857,000
1800.....	H. J. 1801, 23-25.....	1,402.00				8,857,000
1801.....	H. J. 1802, 14.....	672.00				8,502,000
1802.....	H. J. 1803, 16.....	3,280.97				8,651,000
1803.....	H. J. 1804, 20-21.....	2,284.00				8,819,000
1804.....	H. J. 1805, 14.....	1,787.07				8,542,000
1805.....	H. J. 1806, 16-17.....	3,674.09			22,368.55	8,709,000
1806.....	H. J. 1807, 5-6.....	1,792.00				8,792,000
1807.....	H. J. 1808, 22.....	2,993.00				8,263,000
1808.....	H. J. 1809, 18.....	2,174.00			33,359.01	8,227,000
1809.....	H. J. 1810, 35-36.....	5,462.95			39,440.72	8,228,000
1810.....	A. R. 1810, 32.....	4,359.65			46,403.96	7,991,000
1811.....	H. J. 1812, 42-3.....	7,884.00			58,943.37	8,009,000
1812.....	A. R. 1812, 35-36.....	7,431.20			57,912.85	8,041,000
1813.....	A. R. 1813, 41-42.....	9,100.75			68,458.29	7,898,000
1814.....	A. R. 1814, 37.....	11,210.61			75,213.64	8,073,000
1815.....	A. R. 1815, 30-31.....	7,655.20			82,714.22	8,029,000
1816.....	A. R. 1816, 32-33.....	8,568.00			91,153.70	8,611,000
1817.....	A. R. 1817, 35-36.....	9,338.25	\$1,250.00		99,131.88	8,886,000
1818.....	A. R. 1818, 37-39.....	10,470.66	2,250.00		91,766.27	8,567,000
1819.....	A. R. 1819, 31-32.....	8,567.88	260.00		86,678.63	8,638,000
1820.....	A. R. 1820, 234.....	7,537.25			94,102.82	8,690,000
1821.....	A. R. 1821, 252.....	8,081.94			114,689.78	8,726,000
1822.....	A. R. 1822, 243-7.....	8,185.50	890.22	\$124.00	119,788.84	8,810,000
1823.....	A. R. 1823, 201-2.....	2,131.00	376.99	\$180.00	120,933.18	8,851,000
1824.....	A. R. 1824, 282-3.....	8,761.87			121,922.70	8,924,000
1825.....	A. R. 1825, 375-9.....	7,345.00	380.76		121,364.07	8,646,000
1826.....	A. R. 1826, 346-9.....	10,442.02	367.03		123,768.28	8,758,000
1827.....	A. R. 1829, 243-7.....	9,321.34	272.89	\$100.00	144,721.09	8,773,000
1828.....	A. R. 1829, 278-9.....	7,037.75		\$414.92	151,643.42	13,115,718
1829.....	A. R. 1830, 143-5.....	10,561.48	1,116.93	\$357.32	168,160.15	13,262,000

¹ It is not clear whether these sums were paid from the school fund; apparently they were not.

² Charged as coming from the school fund, but under New Castle and Sussex Counties there is reported a total of \$206.49, which was apparently paid out of county funds.

³ Apparently paid out of local funds.

The investments and amount of the school fund in 1829 were as follows, as taken from the auditor's report for 1829:¹

2,439 shares stock in Farmers' Bank, full paid in, at \$50 per share.....	\$121,950.00	
Estimated value, at \$45 per share.....	\$109,755.00	109,755.00
37 shares in Bank of Delaware, at \$310 per share.....	11,470.00	11,470.00
44 shares in United States Bank, at \$123.25 per share.....	5,423.00	
20 shares in United States Bank, at \$122.87 per share.....	2,457.50	
1 share in United States Bank, at \$123 per share.....	123.00	
65 in all, estimated at.....		8,003.00
Cheapeake and Delaware Canal stock, cost.....	21,250.00	21,250.00
Balance cash on hand.....		6,682.15
Cost price.....	162,673.50	
Market value.....		158,160.15

¹ Appendix to H. J. 1830, p. 16. These totals will be found not to foot up correctly, but they are copied as given in the auditor's report.

Chapter III.

THE BEGINNINGS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

I. WILLARD HALL.

There came to Delaware in 1803 a man who through a devotion of 50 years to the cause of education won for himself in that State the loving title of father of the public schools. This man was Willard Hall (1780-1875), a native of Massachusetts, a Harvard graduate in the class of 1799, a lawyer by profession. He served as secretary of state of Delaware 1811-1814; was elected to Congress in 1816 and 1818, and was again secretary of state in 1821. In 1822 he was a member of the State senate, where his influence in behalf of education was already beginning to be manifest. As has been shown in an earlier chapter, he was the responsible person behind the educational recommendations contained in Gov. Collins's message of that year, and from that time on there was no let-up in his enthusiasm for the schools. In May, 1823, he was appointed by President Monroe judge of the Federal District Court of Delaware, a position which he filled with fidelity for 48 years. His elevation to the bench brought Judge Hall relief from the harassing details of his profession and gave him much leisure for maturing and developing those larger plans of usefulness upon which he had already begun to meditate, and it is even doubtful whether these unofficial and purely voluntary services, though less conspicuous, were not more valuable and far-reaching in their influence than his judicial duties.

Of his interest in the schools of the State his biographer says:¹

It is very far from an adequate estimate of the services of Judge Hall to the cause of popular education in this State to regard him only as the founder or organizer of the school system. That was but the commencement of his labors. Not content only to frame and inaugurate the system, he watched its operations with ceaseless vigilance, encouraging effort, conciliating honest dissent, shaming selfish cavils and narrow prejudices, studying to the utmost detail the practical working of the system, seeking legislation to remedy its defects and to improve its efficiency. He was the ever-ready adviser of school commissioners and teachers, even in the selection of school books and the adoption of the best methods of instruction. His care of the schools was paternal. The father of a family does not with more solicitude and watchfulness provide for the education of his children. In New Castle County, where his personal influence was more direct and operative, he organized an annual school convention, in which delegates from the districts met and discussed the interests of the

¹ For a sketch of Judge Hall's life, see the memorial address delivered by Hon. Daniel M. Bates before the Delaware Historical Society in 1876. (Wilmington, 1879.)

schools, and reports were made of their progress. These reports he examined in their minutest details, classified their results, and published them in pamphlet form with the proceedings of the convention, and with his own observations upon the then present condition and necessities of the schools. These pamphlets he took means to circulate in all the districts from year to year, as a means of diffusing information and quickening interest in the subject. The office of superintendent of the public schools for New Castle County, which during all these years he held under a commission of the governor, was hardly more than an honorary appointment, being without emolument or any defined duties. It was not needful either to quicken his interest in the schools or to add to the weight of his personal influence on all questions touching their welfare.

It will be found on examination that the praise quoted above, although often extravagant and inaccurate and without an intimate knowledge of what public education really stands for, as will be clearly evident to one who studies this biography in the light of the public-school development from 1829 to 1861, can hardly be called either excessive or undeserved. This is because Judge Hall, although conservative and steadily advocating an idea in school administration which has long since been shown to be unworkable, was the one man in Delaware who kept the public-school idea constantly before the minds of the people, and so made the evolution of a better system possible.

Of Judge Hall's share in securing the school law of 1829 Mr. Bates says further in his memorial address (p. 33):

In 1822 Judge Hall became again the secretary of state. * * * The secretary then took up the interests of popular education in this State with a grasp which relaxed only after 50 years of labor and under the infirmities of great age. It became, thenceforth, truly his life work. He matured, and the governor, by message to the general assembly, presented, and with great force of reasoning recommended, what in principle and outline became, and still remains [written in 1876], the school system of this State. The scheme proposed the division of the counties into school districts, with legal authority in the qualified voters of each to establish and maintain free schools; each district to receive a fair distributive share of the income of the school fund, upon the condition of its raising, additionally, a sum adequate, with the dividend from the school fund, to maintain a school. The scheme, as explained and enforced by the governor's message, so far harmonized conflicting opinions as to promise a practical solution of the long-vexed question, how to make the school fund available; and so, at a subsequent session of the legislature, Judge Hall was requested to mature the plan in further detail and to embody it in a statute. The result was the school law of 1829. Since that time the system has been, of course, revised, modified in details, adjusted in some points to the results of experience; and, as it is to be hoped, its efficiency has been much improved by the act of the last general assembly [that of 1875], providing for a State superintendent and board of control, with power to supervise the methods of instruction, and to raise the standard of the qualification of teachers. But in its essential principles and general framework the system of 1829, devised by Judge Hall, remains, after a trial of now half a century, well approved by experience and by the public judgment.

From this address it appears that the main idea in Gov. Collins's proposed scheme of 1822—a cooperation of the community and the State in the organization of the school—was Hall's idea. Indeed,

he actually drew up at that time a general law for the encouragement of free schools. This plan met with the approval of the governor, but failed of enactment into law for he was ahead of the legislature and must abide his time. The State was coming slowly to realize, however, that the idea contained in the laws of 1817, 1818, and 1821 was a failure, and that the school system would have to be redrawn on a broader and more liberal basis. As this failure became more and more apparent, the demand for a better act became more insistent, and in 1829 the proposals of Judge Hall received the sanction of the assembly. This brings the subject chronologically down to an examination of the educational act of 1829.

II. THE FREE-SCHOOL ACT OF 1829 AND ITS LATER AMENDMENTS, 1830-1860.

In his message to the assembly in 1829, Gov. Charles Polk introduces the subject of education by saying:

To the diffusion of intelligence through the medium of common schools all profess to be friendly; and the subject has so long furnished a standing theme of speculation among us that it has lost the interest of novelty, yielding little but trite observations to the truth of which every one gives a ready assent, yet it can not be said that we have ever realized the benefit of a single practical effort to establish a general system of education throughout the State.

Gov. Polk then enters into an estimate of the yearly value of the income from the school fund and shows that this income was insufficient to support a school system, for it never entered "into the imagination of those who established it" that the fund—

would ever accomplish that design without the subsidiary efforts of the people among whom it might be distributed. * * * Donations and bequests to the State appear to have been anticipated by the framers of the act, and in this they have been disappointed. * * * Any plan that can be devised by which the business of improving the education and morals of our people shall be reduced to a permanent system throughout the State will be a public blessing. We have been so long without any that some who were once advocates of the appropriation of the fund for the establishment of schools, in despair of ever arriving at a successful system, have been willing to divert it from its legitimate purpose.¹

The committee to whom the educational sections of the governor's message were referred floundered worse than the governor himself; they asked for more time and that they be instructed to invite Judge Hall to draw up a bill.² They were against schools that were free to all in the modern sense, because "that which costs us nothing we esteem lightly; this is a law of our nature founded in wisdom." Another argument against such a system was the failure under the acts of 1817, 1818, and 1821. Says the author of the report:

I had conversation with two of the trustees, to whom, when in former years appropriations were made of part of the income of this fund, money was committed to pro-

¹ H. J., 1829, pp. 8-10.

² H. J., 1829, p. 40.

vide schools for poor children; and the information of both was, that they provided the schools, but that they could not persuade the children to attend. One (and he was a respectable man) informed me that he went round to the parents; but they appeared indifferent to the matter. There must therefore be some system differing from one of entire gratuity.

And on the writer of that report it never once dawned that this indifference was not due to the gratuity itself, but to the way it was given; not that schools were free, but that those who accepted their privileges should take at the same time the brand of pauperism. To the sturdy, defiant, unbending, and independent manhood of Delaware is alone due our thanks that the State was saved from the imposition of a pauper system with its horizontal division of the people into two classes—the upper class who could educate themselves and the paupers who were to be educated by the State not as a right but as a gratuity. No wonder the committee could truthfully say in their report that “education is not now an object of so general attention in this State as it was 20 years ago. There is less care for schools.” The agitation and promotion of the pauper idea had done its perfect work.¹

Along with this report of the committee was presented Judge Hall's draft of a bill for a system of public education which became the “Act for the establishment of free schools,” of which a summary follows.²

The chief characteristics of the law of 1829 are as follows:

The levy court appointed five commissioners in each county to divide it into school districts. In making the division “it shall be a general regulation to form each district so that the most remote parts shall be 2 miles, or about that distance, from the center,” but districts comprehending a town might “be of such dimensions as shall be deemed just, having respect to the population.” The commissioners were to ascertain the number of schools in operation, the number of scholars taught therein, the several sums paid to the teachers, and to form an estimate of the number of children in each district between 5 and 21 years of age. The commissioners of each county were to form a board, with authority to review their proceedings as commissioners and to alter or form the bounds of any district.

The school voters in each district were privileged to hold a stated meeting every year, on the second Monday of October, at the schoolhouse, or any place designated by the levy court, to elect, by ballot, a clerk and two commissioners of the district. They were to determine in the same manner how much money was to be raised “by subscription or voluntary contribution” for procuring or maintaining a schoolhouse, or for “the support of a free school” in the district. Every resident in the district having a right to vote for representatives in the general assembly was also a school voter of said district.³ Occasional meetings might also be held.

Duties of the district clerk and commissioners: (1) To determine a situation and erect a school building thereon; (2) to keep the building in good repair; (3) to provide a school for as long a time as the funds would admit; (4) to receive all moneys and apply the same; (5) to employ teachers; (6) to do all acts requisite to the maintenance of a school.

¹ H. J., 1829, pp. 123-125.

² Laws of Delaware, 1829, pp. 184-197. See also a discussion on the bill in H. J., 1829, pp. 173-175.

³ The committee were elected for one year until in 1867 their term was extended to three years.

They were to employ as a teacher no person whom they did not have just grounds to believe to be of good moral character and well qualified to teach reading, writing, arithmetic, and English grammar, and such other branches of knowledge as the committee might deem necessary to be taught in the district. They might employ a female teacher (in respect to whom the qualification of reading and writing might be sufficient) in the summer months or other parts of the year when small children could attend school and others were engaged in the common occupations of the country. They might dismiss a teacher.

The clear income of the school fund thereafter to accrue was to be apportioned and appropriated among the three counties, one-third to each. One of these equal parts was then to be divided "among the school districts in such county, to each an equal share." Each district, however, should have from the school fund an amount equal to that resolved to be raised by the voters, and no greater. The auditor was to settle the accounts of the school committees, who were to appear before him whenever he attended "in their county to settle the account of the county treasurer," and failure to meet their part of the agreement meant forfeiture of their claims to a part of the funds for the next year.

Each school was to be opened on the first Monday in November and to continue as long as funds permitted. It was free to all white children. The school committee was to make regulations for the government of the school and was to "provide for the expulsion of a scholar for obstinate misbehavior."

Each school was made a corporation by the name of school district No. —, with the usual corporate powers.

The governor was directed to appoint, on or before the first Monday in March, a superintendent of free schools in each county for one year. The duties of the superintendent were: (1) To correspond with all persons interested in the execution of the act; (2) to aid in all matters connected with its execution; (3) to supply school districts with proper forms and to advise them in respect to their proceedings; (4) to see that notice be given of division of districts; (5) to collect information and report to the general assembly. For his services he was to receive no compensation but the payment of all expenses incurred in the performance of his duties. The earlier laws on the subject were repealed.

Judge Hall seemed himself evidently much pleased with the law. His estimate of it is quoted by Powell (p. 144):

The school system under these laws is simple and plain. It forms school districts, appoints and regulates the meeting of the school voters in these districts, and commits to these voters in these meetings the whole power over the subject of common schools for their districts. Every school district is a republican community for the special purpose of taking care of the interests of popular education within its bounds. It depends upon the school voters whether the children of the district shall have the benefit of a school and what kind of a school they shall have.

The import of the law appears in another quotation from Judge Hall:

The design of the system is not to make schools by its operation, but to enable and invite the people to make schools by their own agency.

The term "free" was applied to the school law to indicate two facts: First, that the people were left free to choose the length of time their schools should be in operation during any one year, and the amount of money to be raised by taxation for the support of the same thus placing upon the people themselves, voting in the school meetings, the power and responsibility of determining whether they would have a good school, an inferior one, or no school; second, making the title show that the

schools in the State were free for every white child to attend without reference to any money having been paid by its father or guardian.¹

The free school law of 1829 was soon subjected to numerous amendments. These began in 1830 and were followed by others in 1832, 1833, 1835, and 1837, but all after those of 1830 were of relatively slight importance. Those for 1830 were of great significance, for they gave to the school districts the authority to raise by local taxation such part of the required supplement to the school fund as a majority of the voters of the district might deem proper.² It provided also that any district which raised one-half of the distributive share to which it was entitled from the school fund should be allowed to draw the whole of the share due from the fund. This amendment cut the requirement set up by the act of 1829 in half. It also extended the time limit within which certain things could be done; neglect of the levy court to perform certain duties was not to count against the district; the number of commissioners was changed; and balances were made available for three years instead of going back into the county treasury at the end of each year. It was also made the duty of the school committee of the school district "to make an assessment list for their respective district." The assessment lists were to consist—

of the rates of persons of all the white male inhabitants of the district of the age of 21 years or upward, of the valuations of the personal property of all the white inhabitants of the district, and of the clear rental value³ of all the real estate within the district.

No tax was to be levied, however, without the express consent of a majority of the taxpayers, and in no case was more than \$300 to be raised in any district.⁴

There was at once uncertainty as to the proper interpretation of this amendment. To the assembly of 1832 Judge Hall addressed a communication as superintendent of New Castle County in which, after praising extravagantly the democracy of the law of 1830, he asks that it be amended to the extent of providing clearly that the matter of district school taxation should be settled by a majority of the votes cast at the designated election instead of requiring a majority of the voters of the school district.⁵

¹ Groves, J. H.: *History of Free Schools of Delaware*, in *An. Rep. Supt. Free Schools of Del.*, for 1880; also quoted by Powell, p. 144. These quotations seem to be from an address by Judge Hall issued for circulation among the people of the State soon after the passage of the act of 1829. (See *Rep. Com'r Educ.*, 1871, p. 109.)

² In a private letter written by Willard Hall in June, 1843, to Henry Barnard and now preserved in the Bureau of Education it is said: "About 1819 a law was drafted for establishing a system of common schools in the State, raising by taxation what should be required over the supply from the school fund. The draft was published by order of the legislature for the information of the people; it was abandoned." This may explain why the idea of taxation was left out of the act of 1829. Indeed, in this same letter Judge Hall says that "the power of taxation was stricken out."

³ It is of interest in this connection to consider the objections to the proposed school law, made by the legislative committee in behalf of the landowners in 1824. See ante, p. 33. This "clear rental value" was not finally repealed till 1917.

⁴ *Laws of Delaware, 1830*, ch. 21, pp. 21-24.

⁵ See his report in *S. J.*, 1832, pp. 31-37.

In 1832 also certain school committees were given more time in which to settle their accounts and the penalty for neglect was suspended.¹ In 1833 there was a redistribution of the clear income of the school fund "according to the aggregate number of white population, respectively,"² and the shares thus received in the counties were to be divided "among the several districts thereof, share and share alike."³ By another act two or more districts were permitted to unite and support a free school for the common benefit.⁴

In 1837 two acts of importance were passed. One of these admitted women to the schools as teachers on the same terms as men,⁵ while the other shows clearly how the educational wind was blowing in Delaware. Under the act of 1829 each of the local districts had been required to raise a sum equal to that to which it was entitled from the school fund; the amendment of 1830 reduced this requirement by one-half. The law of 1837⁶ cut this total requirement to the beggarly sum of \$25 per district, and Judge Hall tells us that this was sometimes raised by the patrons delivering 25 loads of wood at the schoolhouse at \$1 per load, while some of the more enterprising districts paid their teacher \$50, but took from him a receipt for \$75 and counted the difference as \$25 "raised."

By 1837 the amendments of most significance had been made to the law of 1829.

From 1837 to 1861 there was much school legislation, but most of it was purely local, for prior to 1857 no new school district could be created without special sanction of the general assembly, and the laws for this period are full of this special legislation.⁷

Occasionally, from 1851, acts looking toward the relief of a particular situation begin to appear. Thus in 1851 United School District Nos. 23 and 75 in New Castle County was allowed to exceed the \$300 limit fixed by the act of 1830 and to raise \$1,000 by taxation "in the same manner as school districts are authorized by law to levy and raise taxes." In this case the principle of the tax was not involved, but the amount.⁸

In 1852 District No. 9 of New Castle County, which had recently become a part of the Wilmington public school system, and one of the districts of Kent County, received similar authority to raise \$500,⁹

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1832, ch. 170, pp. 171-72.

² The earlier distribution had been in equal proportion to the counties without regard to the number of districts in each. This had caused dissatisfaction in New Castle and Sussex. See governor's message in S. J., 1832, p. 10.

³ Laws of Delaware, 1833, ch. 244, pp. 240-41.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1833, ch. 260, pp. 277-79. See also ch. 21, acts of 1830.

⁵ Laws of Delaware, 1837, ch. 79, pp. 81-2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, ch. 123, pp. 176-77.

⁷ See for example the laws of 1847, chs. 158, 167, 198, 212; and in 1849, chs. 207, 315, 326, 335, 351, 354, 375, 413, etc.

⁸ Laws of Delaware, 1851, ch. 486.

⁹ Laws of Delaware, 1852, chs. 638, 676; 1857, ch. 419; 1859, ch. 552.

and from this time on there appears a tendency, more or less distinct, toward allowing the more progressive districts to thus provide for their wants over and above the bare necessities. An act of 1857 provided also that new districts might be created by action of the levy court of the county, the only limitation on their power being apparently the requirement that the new district should contain at least 35 children over 5. When created the new district became under the force of the same act an equal participant with the older districts, whether "original or subdivided," in the benefits of the school fund of the county.¹ But this provision for local action did not put a period to the creation of school districts by special legislation,² and there is little in the laws of more than local educational significance from the acts of 1829, 1830, and 1837 until the passage of the act of 1861.

That there were some good provisions in the original law of 1829 does not admit of doubt; that it was a vast improvement over the earlier attempts of 1817, 1818, and 1821 is evident, for it abandoned whole-heartedly and forever the idea that public education was to be a pauper affair. Had Judge Hall accomplished nothing else educational in character, he would still deserve gratitude for wiping those disgraceful acts from the statute books of the State and erasing them from the minds of the people. The law of 1829 swept the table clean of the trash that had littered it and healed the sore which was injuring the cause of education, but when the turn is made from the negative to the positive features of the act there is less to be said in its favor. True, it was a great step in advance, when compared with the laws that it superseded, but it stood for little actual progress in itself. It declared all the schools to be free to all white children; it provided for county superintendents of education, but without salary, and for a community of interests between the school district and the local school fund; it made aid from the fund depend on self-help—they were to receive as much as they gave—but it left them free to give or not to give, to have a good school, a poor school, or no school at all, and to this failure no penalty was attached save the loss of their share of the fund and their own increasing ignorance. For one of these penalties unfortunately they did not care, and the other they could not realize. Under this law no tax was levied by the State nor by any smaller unit except the school district; no requirement was placed by the State nor by any smaller unit on the individual citizen. The law was simply permissive and only pointed out how each district might become a partaker of the common fund. Under a strong, intelligent, aggressive, and enthusiastic county superintendent much might be accomplished. Without such a leader little need be expected.

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1857, ch. 442. The requirement of 35 pupils in the district was a general one apparently and was renewed from year to year. See, for instance, ch. 206, passed Mar. 13, 1853.

² *Ibid.*, 1857, chs. 456, 457, 470, 474; 1859, chs. 532, 565, 594, 600.

This is exactly what happened. The history of public school education in Delaware for the next 30 years is mainly the history of effort to arouse interest in the local school districts, to provide enough local funds, first by subscription and contribution and later by taxation also (permitted in 1830) to meet the requirements for securing their proportion of the interest of the school fund. This effort generally developed into a struggle to secure a tax or to retain the tax already secured; it was renewed annually and with varying fortune, except that the invariable result was that when the tax question was annually settled little energy remained for school administration, and the schools were left to run themselves while their supporters recuperated their energies in anticipation of the next annual struggle over the question of local taxation.

This phase of public school education in Delaware was properly if not attractively characterized by Supt. Groves when he said:

Irresponsible and ignorant voters, together with men who had no direct interest in education, labored strenuously year after year in the annual meetings to vote down tax, by so doing to deprive the community of both the aid of the State and assessable property within the districts. Even the poor man, who represented in many cases a large family of children, whom a public or free school law especially benefited, was found voting against tax—voting away money that was lawfully placed within his reach, which would give to his offspring means for future support and happiness. Men interested in the prosperity of the State and the education of the rising generation petitioned legislature after legislature to change this feature of the law.

But no change in this section was possible until 1861.

III. THE EDUCATIONAL CONVENTIONS OF NEW CASTLE COUNTY, 1836-1855; THE GROWTH IN DEMAND FOR CENTRALIZATION.

Perhaps the one idea which stands out most prominently in the educational history of Delaware between 1829 and 1861 is the realization of a growing necessity for greater centralization and the long-continued struggle against the inevitable in attaining that end. In the following section that fact comes repeatedly to the front.

In 1830 the governor reported that school districts had been set off in Sussex and Kent. Amendments of that year provided for similar action in New Castle. County superintendents were appointed, but the office was an unpaid one. It required considerable knowledge of educational matters and much devotion to the cause of the people. It is perhaps safe to say that the success or failure of the schools depended entirely on the personality of the county superintendent. Without these extraordinary qualifications the system was foredoomed to failure.

It was reported that in 1833 more than 133 districts had been organized and were receiving aid from the fund. Of these schools 61 were in New Castle County, 36 in Kent, and 36 in Sussex,² but as

¹ History of the Free Schools of Delaware, in An. Rep. Supt. Free Schools of Delaware, 1880, p. 49.

² Powell, L. P.: Hist. of Ed. in Delaware, p. 145.

laws already quoted would indicate, the funds available were not sufficient, there was already hostility to the voting of taxes, and the schools began to decline. In 1835 Gov. C. P. Bennett saw the defects in the law and in his message to the assembly declared:

A system of education prescribing the mode is as necessary to the success of this, the most important institution of a free government, as the series of laws by which its creation is authorized. . . . the vitality of the principles of our Government depends upon the diffusion of knowledge. . . . The system of education therefore ought to be graduated in strict conformity with this material characteristic.

He then adverts to the Prussian system, praises and commends some of its characteristics, and while declaring that "as a system" it was "entirely unsuited to our habits and opinions" thought that "in many of its details it would be found applicable to our situation and views; and some of its formulæ might be adopted as models whereon a portion of our less comprehensive system might be molded."¹

The committee of the house to whom this part of the message was referred made a long report in which they declared that the people had taken but little interest in the education of their children and that the schools were retrograding when the present law was enacted; they reviewed the objections to the system of taxation then in force for the use of schools and suggested that some of these might be removed by changing the tax value of land from the rental value basis to the gross value basis. They reported 127 schools in the 193 districts.²

In this year also there was a proposition to give to the school fund the sum of \$25,000, being one-fourth of the sum which was to be raised by lottery for the use of the Delaware State College.³

In 1836 comes the first of the series of annual educational conventions held in and for New Castle County and in which Judge Hall was leader and guiding spirit. The printed reports of these conventions are the principal sources of information which we have of the progress of the free schools in Delaware for the 25 years from the passage of the law in 1829 to the suspension of the conventions in 1855. The accounts as given in their journals are incomplete, fragmentary, not uniform, and do not cover the whole State, yet they are the best available picture of the educational life of the State as a whole, as they show the needs and the difficulties of the system and suggest the methods of thought of the people.

The first of these annual conventions met in Wilmington on December 15, 1836. Forty-eight districts were represented by 123

¹ H. J., 1835, p. 10.

² H. J., 1835, pp. 66-70.

³ See Laws of Delaware, 1835, ch. 362, pp. 355-357. Between 1836 and 1851 the Delaware College lottery yielded "to the State" the sum of \$13,206.90, according to Gov. Sharp's message in 1851, but there is no statement of the part that went to schools, if any. (See H. J., 1851, p. 7.)

delegates; Judge Hall was its chief promoter and became its president, as he did of most of its successors. The convention, first of all, insisted on the greater centralization of power: then it asked the general assembly to accept the State's share of the surplus revenue and to apply the income to public education. They appointed a committee to wait on the assembly; and the act of February 22, 1837, by which the larger part of the income from this fund was made available for the public schools, was the result.¹ Thus at its first session the New Castle County school convention began to promote the cause of public education; and, although often halting and feeble in its efforts and frequently divided in its councils, continued for 20 years to make its contribution to the educational advance of the State.

The report for 1837 shows some of the characteristics of a modern educational meeting, and, while nominally composed of delegates from New Castle County only, was to a limited extent a representative convention of the educational interests of the whole State. Various matters of local and general, of temporary and permanent, interest were discussed, including textbooks, the method of raising money for the schools, the question of a normal school for the training of common-school teachers, school libraries, and school journals. A report on the uniformity of textbooks declared it to be "a decided advantage," and a uniform series was recommended: Angell's series of spelling and reading books, No. 1 to No. 6; Emerson's arithmetic, parts 1, 2, and 3; Smith's geography and atlas; Smith's grammar; Olney's History of the United States.

In the matter of taxation the committee were of the opinion that the best way was through a tax levied according to the existing provisions of the free-school laws and collected by the regular collectors of the hundreds and not by special collectors as was then the fashion. It was said in some districts that the plan of taxation was very unpopular; that it was at times difficult or impossible to get collectors to do the work, and that collection then devolved on the school committee.

In 1837 reports, oral or written, were received from 46 districts in New Castle County. In 3 of these no school had been established; about one-half of the others had been in operation seven years or since the adoption of the system; the other half were mostly instituted three or four years since; some were open all the year, but the greater part from 6 to 10 months only. In a considerable number of the districts schoolhouses had been erected. In 33 schools the whole number of pupils averaged 1,400, the largest numbering 200; in 3 or 4

¹ Bernard's *Journal of Education* for 1836, vol. 16, p. 330. No copy of the original edition of the journal of 1836 has been seen. There was a reprint issued in 1850 in the form of a broadside. A copy of this reprint is in the Bureau of Education.

of the largest the sexes were taught separately. In a few the "mathematics and some of the higher branches of an English education are taught. But in the greater number, the rudiments only are attended to."

In 1837 also the school fund was increased by assigning to it a part of the income from the surplus revenue. Delaware's share of this fund was \$286,751.49. Of this sum \$265,793.83 was invested for the benefit of the school fund. The balance, \$20,957.66, passed into the treasury.¹ From an act passed February 22, 1837, it appears that the State had subscribed for 5,000 shares in the capital stock of the Farmer's Bank of the State of Delaware. It paid for them with this surplus revenue fund. The interest from this stock and the interest from the other money loaned by the State (except that loaned to Sussex County) was to be divided into three parts, one-third to each county. New Castle was to use it for schools, Kent for schools or for any other purposes, and in Sussex one-third went for schools and the other two-thirds for the poor.²

At the meeting held in 1838 the proposal to increase the school fund through the use of a lottery was discussed and condemned, and Judge Willard Hall made a long report against the establishment of a normal school for the training of common-school teachers. This report is of particular interest for the reason that it is so very different in form, thought, and content from the opinion of to-day. It should be remembered, however, that Judge Hall was not an educator, but a lawyer and Federal judge. He begins by pointing out that the pupil was often prevented from employing his time profitably by inability to secure a suitable teacher. Shall a school for the instruction of such teachers be established? Judge Hall answers, "No."

The notion held up is that the teacher is not simply to learn what is to be taught, but he is to learn also the art of teaching. In my opinion, this is a metaphysical affectation. The art of teaching lies in the heart. If a man sets his heart upon teaching, either from a principle of duty or delight in the employment, he will teach well all he knows. A man who proceeds upon what he professes to be principles of science, apart from this cooperation of the heart in communicating knowledge, will rest on his formalities; and the coldness and barrenness of death will rest there with him. A man whose heart glows with delight in communicating instruction probably will adopt some peculiar manner, and his astonishing success will be ascribed to his manner. Another with no heart in the business will coldly go over this manner and find no success. As we do not want children to be educated to be school-teachers, but to

¹ H. J., 1851, p. 7.

² See Delaware session laws, 1837; also ch. 27, acts of 1839. In his History of Federal and State Aid to Higher Education, Blackmar makes the general statement that the fund in Delaware went for "education." The above seems to have been the more exact division, but Gov. Tharp said in 1851 that according to the legislative report in January, 1840, of the interest and dividends apportioned "chiefly for the benefit of the school districts" the sum of \$11,752.76 was not distributed to the schools, but was carried to the treasury, "nor does it appear that this sum was ever restored to the school fund." (H. J. 1851, pp. 7-8.) Later the fund so increased that Gov. Temple could say in 1847 that the State was distributing \$28,500 among 185 districts and 11,350 pupils, or about \$2.50 to each. (See S. J., 1847, p. 21.)

be prepared for any station or employment to which they may be called, the correct course would seem to be to commit them to the instruction of those who have been so educated. To my mind the argument appears conclusive against the need of any such school.

Judge Hall argued that there were three additional objections to the establishment of a normal school: (1) The first objection arose out of what he considered "an axiom in the concerns of freemen, that men should be left to their own inclinations and judgments, to what they may deem their interest, their duty, and their fitness in respect to their occupation"; (2) as soon as the system came into full operation the "school-teachers, being educated for their particular employment, would form a body of men animated by a common spirit." This esprit du corps, this class consciousness, would give them a fearful power, as was the case with the Jesuits: (3) the increased cost, because the better educated the teachers the more pay they could command.¹

He argued, further, that teachers should not remain long in the profession:

I have long been fixed in the opinion that a few years only of the freshness of youth ought to be devoted to school teaching. In no other way will the best of our young men become teachers. They must look forward to something better. There are cases in which persons with particular aptitude to teach and particular fondness for teaching continue good teachers till old age; but they are rare. It is the result of my observation that those who teach long lose the power of usefulness. Their tempers are spoiled; they disgust their scholars; they get into a beaten track, they can make no improvement. The fervor and studiousness to excel, natural to youth and a new employment, being spent, give place to the weariness of a dull irksome round.

Judge Hall adds to his report some statistics on the general educational situation in Delaware:

Illiteracy in Delaware in 1858

	New Castle.	Kent.	Sussex.
White adults can read.....	8,545	5,227	7,085
White adults can not read.....	372	1,576	2,621
White children, 10 to 15, can read.....	1,132	912	1,303
White children, 10 to 15, can not read.....	179	488	1,134
White children under 10 can read.....	1,029	327	385
White children under 10 can not read.....	3,262	3,205	5,376

At this time, also, efforts were made to procure libraries, to form lyceums, and to circulate educational periodicals. Committees were appointed to examine and visit teachers, and efforts were made to secure the creation of a board of examiners in each hundred. The main source of trouble for the schools, however, was the method of raising the necessary funds. The levy of the tax was often defeated at the polls, and then of necessity resort was had to private contri-

¹ See a modern article advocating substantially the same view of the normal school in the *Unpopular Review*, January-March, 1916, V., 64-65.

butions. There was a growing conviction that the only effectual way of putting an end to the apathy which was throttling the system—

would be the passage of a law making it obligatory on each district to support a school for a specified number of months in the year—and that by the *tax system*—the proportion and amount to be adjusted according to the present law, and then handed over to the proper person to be collected with the other taxes of the hundreds (1839).

Another trouble of all these years was with the loose organization of the school system—if there can be said to have been any organization at this time. There was no general mandatory law. The whole idea of public education was bottomed on absolute democracy. Every school district had the absolute power of saying whether it should have a good school, a poor school, or no school, and there was no one to say them nay. And yet this extreme democracy had held up before its eyes the horrors of the centralized system of Prussia. So fearful were they of falling into the Scylla of Prussian centralization that they actually steered into the jaws of the Charybdis of decentralization.

In 1839 there was a discussion, in particular, of the ways and means to secure libraries for the various schools. It was recommended that the American School Library, published in 50 volumes by the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and costing, together with a suitable case, the sum of \$25, be put into all of the schools. Lyceum lectures for school communities were sometimes provided and occasionally museum facilities.

In addition to the troublesome question of the school tax was that of the supply of teachers. The number of well-qualified teachers was always less than the demand. To meet the deficiency, "rather than be without a school, many districts have taken up with some strolling inebriate, well educated, perhaps, himself, but without moral principle and, of course, without industry or faithfulness in his calling." The committee reporting on this matter in 1839 did not agree with Judge Hall's report of the year before.

Your committee fear that many years must elapse before an adequate number of competent instructors can be found. They do not now exist: they must be created by special efforts for that purpose. Male and female seminaries must be established or fostered by the State, for the express purpose of multiplying teachers, or the cause of education will languish and be behind the age.

The pay of teachers will explain their fewness. One district paid out \$900 and another \$600 for teaching, but the number of teachers is not given. The sums usually paid to teachers varied from \$87.50 to \$67.50 per quarter. District 57 paid \$350, but this was an exceptional district:

In this district there has not been a vote in opposition in three years. In the commencement of the free-school system there was discord; but the people by coming together and discussing the subject, became satisfied that it would be ruinous to

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neglect the education of their children, and that the free-school system, if cordially supported, would afford them the best means for this important object. The people are harmonious, the children are well taught, the school flourishes.

In 1840 the principal subjects of discussion were their perennial stand-bys. The collection of taxes in a way less offensive to the people was one.¹ It was proposed also to make school warrants receivable for taxes. The second matter for general consideration was the education of teachers. It was complained also that to this convention only 10 districts had reported. From a study of these reports it seems that the school year was, as a rule, broken into two terms: A winter term with a man teacher, when the big boys were mostly in attendance—this was usually the longest session and the best attended; there was a shorter session in the summer, with a woman as teacher. The scheme of studies in these one-teacher schools covered anything from primary subjects to and including mensuration, algebra, geometry, grammar, geography, astronomy and natural philosophy, botany, and composition. The average attendance was generally less than 50 per cent of the enrollment, and the length of term varied from a few weeks to 12 months. The usual pay of teachers was about \$75 per quarter, and in some cases women received more than men.

In 1841 Gov. Comegys makes an appeal in his message to the assembly in behalf of the schools.² He says:

That our system [of schools] has been the means of effecting the most incalculable benefits, I believe its greatest enemy will not presume to deny. In such of the districts as have been distinguished for vigor and unanimity in its promotion, it has answered the expectation of its friends. * * * But it has shared the fate of everything else which is valuable in society—it has been opposed and denounced; and at this moment there are many who would gladly see it razed from its foundation. Of some Utopian scheme, all profess to be the advocates, but many, who are apparently the loudest friends of a free school system, are decidedly hostile to any other than one supported exclusively by the school fund, without the aid of the people, and devoted entirely to the education of poor children. * * * The taint of pauperism * * * would be an invincible barrier to its success. * * * The mental culture of the youth, like every other matter of public utility, should properly be the business of the State.

I do not wish it to be inferred * * * that I am insensible to the defects in the plan of instruction at present in operation. * * * The existing law provides annually for a superintendent in each county. As no compensation is given to the superintendents, it is difficult to secure the services of any one disposed to give the requisite attention to his duties. The consequence is that the State has no official information in regard to the progress of the schools or the operation of the system. As it is important that it should be furnished, annually, with a report, it has occurred to me that the office of superintendent, in each county, might properly be abolished,

¹ This cause of complaint was removed by the act of Jan. 29, 1841 (ch. 283, p. 315), which provided that the school tax might be collected by collectors of the district or by collectors of the hundreds who were appointed by the levy court or the court of appeals in each county, or by a special collector appointed by the school commissioners.

² Message of January, 1841, separately printed. Dover, 1841, pp. 4-7.

and a general superintendent for the whole State created. By appointing a competent individual, giving him a reasonable salary, and imposing on him such duties as should naturally devolve on one intrusted with the general oversight of the whole machinery of public instruction, much good might result to the system; its movements be accelerated, and its advantages more widely diffused. As another means of improvement, I would recommend that higher qualifications on the part of teachers be required, and the business of examining and licensing them be confined to the superintendent alone. * * * It also would be a gratifying alteration * * * to prevent the high degree of excitement at the annual school elections. The bickerings and animosities, * * * the excitement grows out of the opposition of young men who have neither children nor education * * * an exemption of such persons, and of all persons whose assessment does not exceed \$300, from school taxation, would remedy the existing evil. Whether it would be advisable to repeal the provision authorizing a vote, and insert one directing the levying a tax as other taxes are laid, I leave to you to determine. It is foreign from my intention, however, gentlemen, to recommend measures of doubtful expediency, or which would hazard the continuance of the system.

The reader has noticed that in this plethora of words there are elements of strength and wisdom: A declaration in favor of a public school system; a recognition of the failure of the pauper school idea, but indications that that idea was still alive; a modest and cautious suggestion of the necessity for a State superintendent and of a State school tax.

The truth of the matter seems to be that the people of Delaware had done nothing so long, had spent so many years under a highly decentralized system that they had practically ceased to think in the terms of any other system. The thing that terrified them most was centralization. It became a term to conjure with. Thus when Judge Hall thought it desirable to add a long exhortation to his edition of the school laws printed this same year (1841) in behalf of the care and encouragement of the public school system, he did not fail to put in a word of warning by pointing out the terrors of centralization as exemplified "in the much applauded system of the King of Prussia." To warn against Prussian centralization in Delaware at that time was like warning against floods in the Sahara or icebergs on the equator.

But even the centralized Prussian system was not without its advocates in Delaware, as against the system of perfect freedom then the law in the State. "Some persons complain of this system [the one in use] as defective; they say it wants power, and they insist upon applying to the legislature for more law," says Judge Hall, and he seems to have felt it his duty to oppose this idea, so that all power might be kept in hands as near as possible to the people and that every ascending officer be made correspondingly weaker than the one below. Judge Hall has been well called the founder of public schools in Delaware. This is true, but it should be

¹ See School Laws of Delaware, Wilmington, 1841, pp. 31-44.

added that he built on a foundation so narrow and so hedged in by limitations on the power of initiative that a strong State system was, under the conditions, impossible of development. Judge Hall is the father of the schools, but his fear of centralization condemned them to a field of restricted usefulness. He believed in education for all, but of the meaning of public schools as the term is understood to-day he had little conception. He was by far too much of a strict constructionist to found a State system.

In January, 1841, Judge Hall, as superintendent of New Castle County, presented a formal report on the public schools to the general assembly. It is the only report of the sort which has come under the observation of the writer, and is not in reality a report at all, but a review of the school situation, an argument of the same kind as the preceding item and mainly against centralization. It is worth attention, for it gives some insight into the school situation in the State and also shows how its supporters regarded it. Judge Hall remarks that, as there was no legal requirement on school committees to make reports to county superintendents, none had been made. He felt the need of such and urged that the system be strengthened to the extent of giving superintendents the power to require such reports and to obtain information in such other ways as would enable them "to exhibit the true state of all the school districts within their county" and that a salary should be annexed to the office. But this did not to his mind mean centralization, for "there is error in looking to the system to do what the people must do. The design of the system is not to make schools by its operation, but to enable and invite the people to make schools by their own agency." The general assembly had exercised toward the common schools "enlightened liberality," and in no State, except Connecticut, was there "so generous public provision." "The school districts are organized to manage their own schools according to their own judgments." If the people neglect this opportunity, the general assembly can not assume it for them. The assembly might as well undertake to educate the children—

without their going through the wearisome process of study and recitation, as to provide a system of schools to work well without the care, and pains, and diligence of the people interested in them. The great need is to awaken the people on this subject.

Judge Hall, however, had made progress in the matter of taxation since he wrote the law of 1829. It will be recalled that there was no provision in that act for taxation for schools. He now referred to the discussion on the subject of such taxation which took place in the New Castle County convention in 1839 and declared "to deny taxation in a school system is to resolve upon the end without the

¹ Printed as a supplement to his edition of the school laws of that year (Wilmington, 1841), pp. 45-55.

means." The suggested amendment was that the levy court should "assess a school tax upon the taxables of every school district, to be placed to the credit of the district, and paid over to its school committee." The amount of the tax was to be so regulated as to equal the dividend received by the district from the school fund the previous year, but the district was allowed the right to prescribe a larger sum. "The hundred assessors could be required to estimate the clear rental value of the real estate in the school districts * * * so that the assessment could be made upon the principle now prescribed by the school laws." This would always give them a school "as a certainty."

Judge Hall then came back to the supply of teachers: "This difficulty is not confined to our system; it prevails throughout the Union." In Massachusetts the difficulty has been met by the normal school, but this kind of school has been adopted from Prussia; "absolute power can readily form a system of education, perfect in the exhibition—a regular gradation from top to bottom, each part holding up that below, and upholding that above it. Such is the Prussian system; and learned men, curious in these matters, seem disposed to make it their pattern." He summarizes his faith in the following clear-cut and luminous statements:

We want a supply of teachers for common schools, such as our districts can employ in their common schools, and sufficient for all our common schools. Teachers educated in normal schools may have special qualifications of superior value (although as a general position this is doubted, it is believed to be a notion); but such teachers can not be teachers of common schools; common schools can not employ them; for common schools, we must have a supply of such teachers as common schools can employ. * * * Colleges supply their own teachers. * * * Why can not scholars of common schools, having gone through a course of education in them, likewise become teachers of what they have learned?

Meetings of the New Castle County convention were held in 1841 and 1842, but their proceedings have not been available.¹ In 1843, 72 delegates were present from 32 districts, and Morton McMichael, Esq., delivered "an eloquent and highly interesting discourse on the advantages of common schools."

The main business of this session seems to have been to listen to a report by Judge Hall on the proceedings of the State school convention held in Dover in January, 1843. That organization discussed a proposition "to change the law so that the levy court of each county shall lay a tax upon the taxables of each school district, of at least \$50, to be collected and paid into the county treasury." The proposed change was at first approved by the convention, but after adjournment the reactionaries prevailed and the earlier action

¹ No journals for these years have been found; and Miss Hassé, in her Index to Documents of the State of Delaware, marks them also as "not found" (pp. 55), but Newlin in his address before the Delaware Legislature in 1857 (p. 11) says "New Castle County has held 21 conventions" and the Delaware State Journal for Sept. 2, 1842, has an announcement that the school convention was to meet on the 6th.

was reversed. There was, however, considerable sentiment for such a law. Kent County, in fact, insisted on a larger sum than \$50 "as proper to be raised in each district." In that county one school district had asked and obtained "a provision by law to raise by tax more than \$300, by vote of the district" and there "a very praiseworthy spirit in favor of affording to the rising generation the facility of good common school education prevails."

The meeting in 1844 was more numerous attended than in the previous year. The reports were fuller and the discussion both more animated and of more general interest. There was one on textbooks which carried a recommendation of a uniform series, including the books of Salem Town and the histories of S. A. Goodrich, but with all of their argument and recommendations the separate reports continue to show little uniformity in the texts used, for the compelling force of law was absent. A subject of much more importance was that which proposed to ask the legislature to take "into consideration the propriety of appointing some general superintendent to whom the supervision of common-school interests shall be confided." This resolution was proposed to the convention, but Judge Hall was against it. True, no particular name appears in opposition, but the old arguments used are his—the voice of Jacob was there. It was pointed out that Delaware was able to make a larger contribution from its school fund for education than any other State. Connecticut distributed the year before \$80 per district, but Delaware distributed \$137, and it was declared that the State must depend on the general intelligence of the people to advance the schools:

The great question is, *How can this most certainly be done?* It is positively denied that the confiding of our common-school interests to the supervision of a general superintendent, or the incorporation in our system of any salaried officer, is adapted to this purpose, or to produce any good. Such an officer might make a show of our schools on paper, but he would do nothing to make them better. He would take no part practically to improve the schools. Those least capable of doing are usually most fluent to tell *how* to do. * * * The law gives the people of every school district power to organize and act as a body upon the subject of a school; they can thus have as good a school as they please to provide for; in no school district in the State where reasonable pains have been taken to have a good school has there been a failure; the law gives as much power as is necessary or safe; * * * let the school voters of each district feel the responsibility of the charge which the law devolves upon them. * * * It is believed common schools can be improved in no other way.

¹ By act of Feb. 22, 1843, District No. 18, in Kent County was allowed to charge tuition for the summer quarter (ch. 474, acts of 1843, p. 527). It was to be collected by the collector of the districts, but this law was not to go into force until the district had raised \$300 by the usual methods.

² This is the end of Judge Hall's report on the State convention of 1843. Powell (p. 147) refers to it, quoting from *Barnard's Journal* (XVI, 370), which probably quotes this report to the New Castle school convention for 1843, p. 2. I have been able to find no other contemporaneous reference to this State convention. There is no mention of it in the *Delaware Gazette* (Wilmington) for Dec. 30, 1842, Jan. 6, 20, Feb. 2, 1843; nor in the *Delaware State Journal* (Wilmington) for Jan. 3, 6, 10, 17, 20, 27, Feb. 3, 1843. No other contemporaneous newspapers have been seen.

And yet, had the author of this report taken the time to reflect on the figures sent in to this convention from the school districts of New Castle County, he must of necessity have soon come to the conclusion that nothing approaching uniformity or universality in education could ever be expected in that county, at least till some compelling power brought down from above should force it. This the subsequent educational history of Delaware most abundantly proves, for in 1844 some districts in New Castle County had schools, some had not; some reported and some failed to report; some kept the school open for the school year, some for 11 months and some for 4; some had an average attendance of 50 per cent and some of 37½ per cent; one paid as much as \$525 per year for teachers and another hired its teachers for four months at \$9.37½ per month. Some included Latin and Greek in their courses and taught not only Horace, Juvenal, and Homer, but also algebra, geometry, history, and bookkeeping, while others confined themselves to the rudiments. Some levied a moderate and proper tax for school support, others clung to the outgrown idea of contributions; some made instruction free, others demanded \$1.25 "from each scholar"; uniformity in textbooks was recommended, but could not be enforced; while the texts used and the courses given varied according to the school and the teacher.

From these reports it would seem that the schools were suffering from that excessive liberty which was theirs under the law and for which Judge Hall plead so insistently. Granting his great service to the schools time and time again, it does seem that here at least he was a retarding factor, not a leader or organizer.

The lack of organization, and the consequent disadvantages, made itself felt also in the inability of those interested in the broad subject of education from getting their discussions and arguments easily before the people. There were few organs of publicity accessible. Judge Hall used the journal of the New Castle school convention for the views of the conservatives. The progressives replied in various ways. In 1845 this took the form of a report to the general assembly on the public schools of Kent County, by Charles Marim, county superintendent, who under the guise of a county report to the legislature discussed the school situation in the State. It will be quickly noticed that his opinions vary widely from those of Judge Hall, whose report on New Castle County in 1841 has been quoted already. Mr. Marim had been superintendent of Kent County for some years; he had visited the schools and had studied them at first-hand and by personal inspection. He writes that his tour in 1842 "was attended by circumstances well calculated to inspire emotions of the most agreeable character."

His conclusions were that the system was to a "great extent useful," was gradually overcoming the prejudice of earlier years, and that any attempt to repeal the law in existence would mean the political death of the one who attempted it. Some schools were almost models, and as such the schools of Smyrna and Cantwell's Bridge are named, but the system was not without faults. His opinion was that—

No efficient plan could be devised for educating the great mass of our population which is exclusively supported by a public fund, unless a compulsory provision is incorporated in it, similar to that which prevails in Prussia, obliging the people to school their children.

He recognizes the scarcity of good teachers, urges that arrangements be made with Delaware College in this regard, and points out the fallacy in Judge Hall's argument that they might be taken out of the schools themselves. He suggests the desirableness of an examination of teachers and urges the appointment of a State superintendent with an adequate salary, saying:

At all events, I am thoroughly satisfied of the necessity of placing at once a head to our school system. It is now without one, and we can not expect it to proceed with uniform prosperity until this deficiency be supplied.¹

In 1845 the attendance at the county convention was smaller than in 1844. They discussed again the subject of general taxation and appointed a committee to collect school statistics. They considered the incautious way in which teachers were employed and the deficiency of libraries; they considered the importance of having the cooperation of women in their work and invited them to attend the next session of the convention as spectators. The reports on the schools did not differ from those of earlier years, nor did they differ in 1846 when Judge Hall delivered an address.

From about this time it becomes evident that there had been developing steadily since the first passage of the school law in 1829 two parties in the State who considered the administration of the schools from opposite standpoints. The party which had been constantly in power were the decentralizationists, under the leadership of Judge Hall, who insisted on the most complete liberty of action. The districts were formed by legislative action; when this had been accomplished all was then left to individual school district initiative, with what disastrous results is everywhere early and openly manifest. Ever Judge Hall recognized this possibility of weakness, but only Acting Gov. William Temple had a superior way of settling these difficulties, for after animadverting on the criticisms on the school laws he declared that in his judgment—

these difficulties arise from the natural imperfections of the human heart, rather than defects in the existing law; time and experience will eradicate the evils, while too much legislation might aggravate rather than remove them.²

¹ S. J., 1845, p. 42-52.

² H. J., 1847, pp. 19.

The other party we may call the centralizers. They were in the minority for a generation, but they began to make themselves felt in spite of the eloquence and earnestness of Judge Hall. They insisted on a general and uniform system of school taxation for the State and that a State superintendent should be appointed through whose efforts the local systems might be unified and the work made uniform. They brought the subject up year after year in the New Castle County conventions, but Judge Hall was always on hand to oppose their plans. The two parties agreed on certain elementary principles—(1) that the only just and proper way to raise the needed funds was by taxation; and (2) that the schools should present an equality of opportunity for all. Judge Hall rendered a service to the State in driving this idea home:

With respect to the dividend from the school fund being for the poor, the notion is both false and injurious. In all our institutions the poor and rich are upon the same platform; we allow no distinctions formed on these conditions. We measure man's worth by intelligence, capacity, moral excellency—and consequent usefulness; not by dollars and cents. In school the poor man's child is as independent as the rich man's; there is no more charity for one than the other. The dividend is intended to encourage and help the district to form a good school for all.¹

So far, and it will be noticed that this statement goes beyond the original law of 1829, the two factions were together; in other respects they were as far apart as ever. In this same address Judge Hall holds up again to his terrified spectators the bugaboo of Prussian thought on education. He adds further:

Yet there is a strong disposition in this country to conform school systems to the Prussian model. In the report of the Board of Education of Massachusetts of last December, it is stated: "The cardinal principle which lies at the foundation of our educational system is that all the children of the State shall be educated by the State." Now let it be distinctly remarked that this is not the principle of our school system; but that our system is founded upon the position, the people must educate their own children; and all the State should do, or can do for any useful effect, is to organize them into communities so as to act together for that purpose, and help and encourage them to act efficiently.²

It is evident then that one of the tasks before those who hoped for a well-organized uniform school system in Delaware was to overcome this decentralizing influence. This was evidently the purpose of the convention in 1845 and 1846 when it recommended that the voters in each school district hold a special meeting in the coming December—

to consider the expediency of applying to the legislature for the passage of a law providing some general system of taxation, for raising in the districts the sum that must be supplied in addition to the dividends from the school fund—in order to elicit the public feeling in relation to that important measure.

¹ Proceedings New Castle County convention, 1846, p. 15.

² Proceedings New Castle County convention, 1846, p. 11. The same idea had been expressed in almost the same language in the Delaware State school convention in January, 1843, in Dover. See *Barnard's Journal*, xvi, 370, and *Powell's Education in Delaware*, p. 146.

Evidently the opinion of the leaders had somewhat changed since 1843.

The reports to the convention in 1847 would seem to indicate that more success was attending the various efforts to get accounts of the workings of the schools. It is evident that much progress was being made, but the reports indicate that the schools were still grievously undermanned, that schoolhouses received little attention, that benches and desks were but poorly adapted to the needs of the children, that school libraries were almost entirely wanting, and that there was no grading of pupils and little uniformity in textbooks, in courses, or in the taxes levied. The pupils were substantially evenly divided between the sexes, but the attendance was everywhere poor. On the other hand the length of the school term was much longer than might be expected—the schools being open in many cases, according to report, all the year—but, while the teachers were overworked, they were miserably underpaid. As a rule there were no other schools (apparently private schools) reported in the districts, but an "increased desire of mental improvement" seems to have been general. The condition of school sentiment in Kent and New Castle Counties was contrasted. In Kent there was little opposition to the schools and no school convention; the county had only half as many children of school age as New Castle and yet those who attended no school were twice as many in Kent as in New Castle. The difference is attributed to the work of the school convention which now also urges the organization of a county teachers' association and boldly asks the commissioners of the school districts "to permit their respective teachers to devote one week during the year to the attendance upon such association." The necessity of organization and centralization was becoming more and more evident.

The sum of the reports for 1848 was that the schools were improving, that opposition to taxes was disappearing, and that—

in all districts where the money is raised by tax the sum raised is liberal, and the school is easily supported and prosperous. Where there is no tax, but the money raised by voluntary contributions, the sum is stinted and inadequate, and the schools drag heavily.

In February, 1849, Judge Hall presented to the general assembly a lengthy document which he called a Report on the Schools of New Castle County. It is in reality a review of the school situation, an examination of the difficulties and of the faults of the system in use, and an extended argument against change. This position is natural for the system in use was Judge Hall's own evolution, and the experience of 25 years had not caused him to alter his opinions.

He admitted that there were weaknesses in the system as administered. Some of these were little less than deliberate frauds prac-

ticed on the public in the interest of the district or of individuals in the district.¹ He had no remedy for these abuses. He argued that "upon the principles of our institutions there can be no remedy" if the people "set no value on education" and so consign all depending on their care to "ignorance and degradation." He insisted that "the evil will cure itself, and the cure, although too slow for our anxieties, will be the best that can be devised in its ultimate effects." He claimed, and no doubt with perfect truth, that these abuses had been much made use of to injure the schools, and then adds:

The desideratum is to form a right public sentiment through which the people will engage and become active to provide good schools for their children. With this public sentiment nothing else will be necessary, for the people once engaged will not stop short of anything ascertained to be needful, but without it nothing else will avail. Beneficent bounties will not—this we see in England; power can not—this we see in Prussia; the people themselves can accomplish it by putting forth their own efforts, as seen in Scotland and New England.

To those who were disposed "to force up our school system by compulsory law" he replied that "when we resort to compulsion, whether of law or other means, we foster tempers, in ourselves, arbitrary and overbearing, and in them perverse and obstinate—both parties are made worse."

To those who favored the employment of "agents, as superintendents, lecturers, or otherwise, to go among the people and arouse them to effort," Judge Hall answered that such an officer is not necessary, to find out the condition of particular schools; that the auditor has ample power in the matter of finances, and that a re-division of the counties so as to even up the inequalities in the districts would put all these complaints at rest within two years. In discussing the matter of a State superintendent he declared that all of his duties were already provided for by law and proposed that the New Castle school convention should be turned into a similar meeting for the whole State.²

The convention of 1849 went back to basic principles and devoted itself to a discussion of the question whether it is "right and proper to resort to taxation to support common schools." It would seem that this subject had been settled long before, but the "affirmative was carried with only one dissenting vote." More attention was given by this convention to the condition of schoolhouses. The

¹ In a special report to the legislature in 1843, S. Spearman, then State auditor, said:

"In settling the school accounts of the respective school districts in the State the auditor has found it impossible to look behind the vouchers presented by the respective school communities who came before him for settlement. It is believed that much peculation is practiced upon the fund paid to the respective districts for the purpose of maintaining schools by those who disburse the money. This idea was first presented from noticing how much more money it required to pay the contingent expenses of some districts than others under like circumstances and condition. This evil may be remedied by compelling the clerk of each district to cause to be published * * * the account which shall be settled by the auditor." S. J., 1843, p. 66.

² H. J., 1849, pp. 214-229, and S. J., 1849, pp. 120-124.

reports of the separate districts were now tabulated for the first time. The figures are so imperfect that it is doubtful if they are of any value, but the principal figures are given for what they are worth:

36 districts in New Castle County raised \$6,342.50 by tax for the use of schools, being an average of \$176.20.

5 districts raised about \$300 by subscription.

37 districts had 394 months of school, or nearly 11 months each; 10 districts reported their school as kept for 12 months.

26 districts reported 2,392 children of school age, or 92 to a district.

34 districts reported 1,451 boys and 1,278 girls enrolled, while 6 districts reported 394 pupils, enrollment not divided by sex.

29 districts reported that they paid their men teachers \$2,006 per quarter; being an average of \$71 each, and 16 paid its women teachers \$799, or \$50 per quarter; 1 district paid men \$500 per year, 2 paid \$400, 6 paid \$300, and 1 paid \$18 per month.

73 districts reported 36 schoolhouses, the largest of which was 30 feet square; about half of those reported were "comfortable" or "convenient" and improvements in others were promised.

Of the 40 reporting on the "condition of school" a large majority gave the situation as favorable, but these would really be the schools most ready to report, and it may safely be assumed that the condition of the 33 from which no reports were received was less prosperous and that they met with more opposition.

No proceedings of the school convention for 1850 have been seen. The Delaware Gazette for August 23 announced that it was to meet on September 3 and that the subject for discussion was "What should be the standard of instruction in common schools?" The meeting was held, but evidently was not up to standard, for the Gazette says in its issue for September 6: "This body was quite numerously attended on Tuesday last, but we fear that the enthusiasm in the cause is not as great as it should be." It would seem that its proceedings were not published. No copy has been seen, nor has reference to such been found.

In 1851 Gov. William H. Ross, in his inaugural address, analyzed the school situation accurately and declared that other States had provided themselves with "a much more liberal and extensive system of general instruction than we have yet adopted." He urged "such a revision of our present school laws as * * * will best adapt them to the increasing demands and necessities of the times." He referred to the "utter inefficiency" of the plan then in use, declared a large part of the funds raised under that system was "wasted and misapplied," and recommended—

a tax sufficient to sustain the schools in regular operation, without any intermission of time for the want of funds, which tax should be levied, collected, and paid over to the county treasurer, as all other taxes are, and by him distributed pro rata.¹

But it would seem that the various parties, cliques, and factions in the State, while all wanted in a general way to advance the in-

¹ H. J., 1851, pp. 157-158.

terests of the schools, could not agree on any common plan of action. They were working at cross-purposes with each other, and each sought to advance his hobby rather than come together and agree on some constructive program. Thus the New Castle convention in 1851, instead of taking up and urging the governor's suggestions, branched out and had some discussion on the architecture of schoolhouses and on the necessity of school libraries. It was urged also that information be collected on the state of the school districts; that the school commissioners visit the schools at least once a month; that the commissioners appropriate a certain part of their income to the purchase of suitable schoolbooks which were to be resold to the children at cost, in this way reducing prices and promoting uniformity; the question of equal payments to large and small districts was considered, and it was proposed to employ an "agent" whose duty it would be to visit—

each school district and district school in the county, to diffuse information, and by private intercourse and public addresses excite in parents and children higher regard for school privileges, more concern for school advantages, juster views of what schools should be, and what accommodations should be provided—as schoolhouses, grounds, and fixtures—and deeper general interest in this all-important subject; also to collect statistics relative to the schools.

This proposition came very near to the superintendency of other States and this centralizing tendency did not fail to attract the attention of the conservative decentralizers, but they allowed it to pass and contented themselves with a brief review of what their local, decentralized system had done:

It is not 20 years since our school system went into operation. In the outset it was met by determined hostility. Every step of its onward movement, has been resisted by inveterate prejudices, intense selfishness, ingenious sophistry, and unyielding interest and ignorance. Against these influences there has been no compulsion, no excitement, not even positive requirement of law, nothing but the voluntary action of the people meeting and voting in their districts according to their judgments. So far as there has been any bias, it has proceeded from the adverse causes which we have noticed. In furtherance of the system there has been nothing but its merits dispassionately appreciated by the good sense and sound understandings of the school voters.

The writer then proceeds to reinforce his conclusions from the reports. He says that the lowest sum raised by taxation out of the 44 districts reporting in that year was \$50; in two districts only was the sum thus raised so low. The average raised in all the districts was \$173 to the district. In 1838 the average was little more than \$100 per district. Only one district in New Castle County contented itself with the legal minimum of \$25; more than half the districts raised from \$100 to \$300, with an average of \$160. There was "substantial evidence of general and growing appreciation of common schools by our citizens;" 39 districts out of the 44 reporting raised

their school money by taxation, and out of the 57 districts which had reported in the last two years 51 had used the tax method.

The convention of 1852 was rather more aggressive in tone, and devoted itself mainly to reports on schoolhouses and ventilation. These do not present a favorable or encouraging view of the situation, and the old fight over the voluntary character of the tax law was also renewed. One district condemned the existing system, referring to it as "the present odious school law," because it left the districts at liberty to do each year as they saw fit. The conservatives defended the law and uttered what they evidently thought to be an unanswerable argument: "The law is established and we can not alter it. * * * It is further believed that there is no need of a change."

The convention of 1853 shows women as members for the first time. Teachers were also present as such, and an effort was now made to compile a teachers' directory. A committee was also appointed to memorialize the legislature to change the school tax law for New Castle County and put it on the same footing as other taxes, indicating a step in advance by the progressive forces. The demand for an "agent," voiced in 1851, is renewed, and he is now boldly called a "superintendent," his duties being missionary in character. Under the remarks is added a long and eloquent plea for improvements in the schoolhouses and an encouraging report on the condition of the schools in New Castle County, where 45 schools out of the 77 districts reported and 43 raised money by taxation. When apporportioned "among the number of scholars reported from these districts" it was found that there was raised for each scholar in Brandywine Hundred, \$2.84; in Christiana, \$3.35; Mill Creek, \$1.85; White Clay, \$2.54; New Castle, \$3.40; Red Lion, \$3.09; Pencader, \$2.83; St. Georges, \$4.91; Appoquinimink, \$2.75; average of all, \$3.02. It was found further that New Castle County raised more money by taxation for schools than it received from the school fund by more than one-fifth. On the other hand, Sussex raised little more than one-third as much by taxation as it received from the fund, and the average for each district was only \$39.04.¹

The situation in Kent was better than in Sussex, but not so good as in New Castle. In Kent more than half as much was raised by taxation as was received from the school fund. Twelve districts in Kent raised only \$25 each, which was the minimum amount necessary to draw the proportion due from the school fund; 11 districts raised \$50 or more; 6 exceeded \$100, and 4 raised more than \$150 each. In 28 out of the 52 districts in the county there was ground to believe that there was "a spirit of school improvement." The

¹ See also the Table 3, p. 171.

United School Districts in New Castle County were the only ones which raised as much money as was needed; United District Nos. 23 and 75 (Christiana and Brandywine) raised \$900; Nos. 45 and 46 (New Castle) raised \$2,000, and Nos. 9 to 18 (Wilmington) raised upward of \$8,000, but "in no other districts in the State is there sufficient money raised for making their schools what they ought to be." This report then presents a statement of the comparative increase in the amounts raised in the various counties as follows:

Amounts raised for schools.

Counties	In 1834	In 1841	In 1852
New Castle	\$9,988.55	\$8,997.00	\$12,650.00
Kent	1,240.00	6,597.00	3,108.00
Sussex	2,843.15	4,087.00	3,301.00

It was thought that these figures in the three counties showed the good effects of the New Castle school convention and "make apparent the disadvantages in Kent and Sussex for want of means to direct the attention of the people to their common schools." And, as usual, in a long and eloquent harangue it was denied that any of these disadvantages were to be traced to the faults in the voluntary law. It is evident that sentiment in the county and in the convention itself was crystallizing into a demand for a compulsory tax law; the convention had this year even dared make such a recommendation to the assembly and the governor had done the same. All this was hard on the conservatives, and the writer of the report, presumably Judge Hall, labored faithfully to stem the tide which was setting strongly in favor of a general State law. Again use is made of the bugaboo of Prussian absolutism, and it was argued that "contention and agitation, controversy because of difference of opinion, are the price of liberty."

The proceedings of the conventions for 1854 and 1855 are the last available. There is now an evident change in the tone of the convention. It was becoming more specific in its demands, more definite in its work, and deals less in glittering generalities. It would appear that those in charge were coming more and more to be the real teachers of the State and not mere friends of education. This is seen from their resolutions. They demand that a superintendent of schools for the county be appointed "whose duty it shall be to visit the schools and to note the state of the houses and furniture and to examine the pupils and inspect the mode of teaching adopted in the different schools." A bill was drafted embracing these and other

¹ The rate has not been worked out for other years, but in 1856 the sums raised by contributions and taxes for schools in New Castle was about 14 cents on the hundred dollars of taxable property; in Kent it was 13 cents and in Sussex about 6½ cents.

amendments to the school law and presented to the general assembly of 1855. It even passed the house, but was defeated in the senate.¹

The organization of a teachers' institute was also proposed by the convention, and it was suggested that the "people of the districts would do well to display a proper liberality and pay the expenses of their teachers while attending these meetings." An improvement in the quality of teachers was urged and steps were taken to establish a monthly school journal.

The Delaware Gazette (Wilmington) reports the proceedings for 1855 and shows the fortunes of the programs advocated in 1854. Dr. Grimshaw, in reporting on the fortunes of his School Journal, said that he had received more letters of encouragement from other States than from Delaware and that want of support had caused its suspension. With astonishing loyalty to an ideal the convention discussed the question of its revival. It was reported that the teachers' association idea had also failed and for the same reason—lack of interest on the part of the teachers and others.

A step in advance is shown in the recommendation that textbooks be bought out of public funds and made free so as to "remedy the present defects in school classification." A list of books suitable for use of the public schools was reported. It included: Holbrook's Child's First Book in Arithmetic; Stoddart's Intellectual Arithmetic; Greenleaf's Common School Arithmetic; Davies's mathematical series; Tower's Intellectual Algebra; Mayhew's Bookkeeping; Northend's Dictation Exercises; Monteith's Manual of Geography; Connell's Primary Geography; Ackerman's Natural History; Swan's Speller or Fowle's Common School Speller; Sanders's readers; Parley's first, second, and third books of history, combined with geography; Grimshaw's History of the United States; Willson's American History; Willson's Outlines of History; Shurtleff's Governmental Instructor; Tower's Grammar; Johnston's or Parker's Natural Philosophy; Comstock's Chemistry.²

This school convention was organized for and was mainly confined in representation to New Castle County, but it is evident that in influence and leadership it was as large as the State. It was doing much to break down hostility to State taxation, and thus became the main factor in putting the question of school support beyond the power of the annual caprice, narrowness, and prejudice of the average voter. The conservatives were still nominally in power, but it was becoming more and more evident that the old order was gradually giving place to the new, and that the tenacious adherence to certain

¹ Bernard's Journal, xvi, 372. See also H. J., 1855, pp. 203-205, 324. In 1853 an effort had been made to obtain from the legislature the appointment of county superintendents, with a definite salary, and with power to visit the district schools, collect and diffuse information, and by private intercourse and public addresses arouse a keener interest in public education. The program failed, but it is evident that the effort of 1855 was a revival of the same idea.

² See reports in the Delaware Gazette (Wilmington) for Sept. 7, 1855 (in Library of Congress).

forms because they were supposed to represent a purer democracy was gradually yielding before a centralizing tendency demanding results rather than satisfying itself with mere empty theories of government.¹

The last school convention of New Castle County seems to have been held in 1855.² Its place was substantially filled by the "convention of the friends of education in Delaware," which met at Dover on January 15, 1857. There had been an earlier State convention in Dover in January, 1843, and some reference to its discussions has been had in this paper already, but it would seem that the spirit of individualism and of decentralization had then been too strong for united State action and the movement failed. Its revival in 1857 was another indication of the growing demand for State educational solidarity. The convention of 1857 drew up a series of resolutions which were presented to the legislature then in session. The convention recommended: (1) That the taxation for public schools be made permanent and that a State superintendent be appointed; (2) that the school commissioners be elected for three years, one each year; (3) that the State be redistricted; (4) that provision be made for securing good teachers; (5) that normal schools were "indispensable and vital" to the success of the system.³

It will be noticed that the first, third, and fifth resolutions had been opposed by the conservatives. The State was evidently now breaking away from their leadership.

In 1857 Gov. P. F. Causey reported that during the previous year some \$53,000 had been expended for the use of the free schools, and that over 12,000 children had been in attendance. He suggested that provision be made for "a higher grade of instruction for such children as may, in the free schools, show the strongest evidences of talent and merit" and recommended the appointment of a "superintendent for the State, or one for each county, with a proper compensation, whose duty it shall be to visit annually all the schools in his jurisdiction, and make report."⁴

In 1859 he warned the legislature that, unless some step was taken speedily toward the improvement of the public schools, the State would soon find itself "far behind" nearly all the others. He then continues:

In many, I mourn to say very many, of our free schools, the pupils have graduated nearly up to the level of their teachers when they have learned to write their names and to read without spelling out their lessons. * * * Our State ought at once to

¹ Proceedings of School Convention of New Castle County, Del. Years seen: 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1842, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854—all in Bureau of Education Library. There is a brief summary of these meetings in Barnard's Journal, xvi, 369-372, on which is based the summary in Powell's Education, 145-147.

² The convention of 1855 agreed to meet again in 1856, but no report of such meeting has been seen.

³ S. J., 1857, p. 54.

⁴ See his message of Jan. 6, 1856, in S. J., 1857, pp. 11-12.

be redivided into school districts, and every district provided without delay with a properly constructed schoolhouse and fixtures, and a teacher capable of instructing in all the branches of a thorough and substantial English education. * * * This subject * * * has been the theme of much debate in our legislative halls for many years, and yet each succeeding session has ended in little or no alteration for the better.¹

Gov. Causey was succeeded by William Burton, who in his inaugural two weeks later declared:

It is a melancholy fact that in our State, * * * any free white person should arrive at lawful age without being instructed in the first rudiments of an English education. Yet the last census tells the sad tale that there are in Delaware 4,538 white native-born persons who can neither read nor write. * * * In some districts schools are only kept open sufficiently long to exhaust the fund derived from the State. In others, a majority of the voters deciding against a tax, the schoolhouses are suffered to remain closed the entire year. * * * Party spirit, too, has been known to control the result of a school election.²

Such after 30 years of conservative, laissez faire administration was the condition of public schools in Delaware.

IV. ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT, 1829-1861.

Having thus traced with considerable detail the ebb and flow of sentiment for public-school education in the State of Delaware for a whole generation immediately following the school enactment of 1829, it is now possible to review and take stock of gains to the cause during the period.

It will be recalled, in the first place, that the act of 1829 provided for a purely voluntary system. As Judge Hall characterized it, every school district was so organized that its citizens were left free to say whether they would have a good school, an inferior school, or no school at all. This "free" system broke down at the first trial. The idea of 1829 was to raise funds by contributions. Experience demanded and secured in 1830 an act permitting a tax to be voted by the citizens of the district. This was a step in the direction of a State system. But this advance was quickly followed by a step backward. The act of 1829 required the local districts to raise as much as they were to receive from the school fund; an amendment of 1830 cut this requirement exactly in half; another in 1837 reduced it to \$25, and this beggarly sum was sometimes raised in ways that were in violation of the spirit of the law. But while these unfavorable symptoms were developing, the organization of individual schools was going on. There were favorable reports of the growth of the system as early as 1833, and in his message to the assembly of 1845³ Gov. Cooper could report that all the school districts were then organized with a few exceptions, and proof that the system was winning its way was shown by the fact that every year added to those who availed themselves of the opportunity to use the schools.

¹ Message of Jan. 4, 1850, in H. J., 1850, p. 14. ² Message of Jan. 18, 1850, H. J., 1850, pp. 82-84.

³ H. J., 1845, p. 8.

In the meantime Judge Hall had organized the New Castle County school convention, which, from 1836 to 1855, conducted a continuous agitation looking toward a greater development of the schools. The work of the convention was of value in that it kept the subject of the schools before the people and helped to awaken them to a realization of both its importance and necessity. On the other hand, its influence was confined in the main to New Castle County, and, being under the influence of Judge Hall, it advocated a retention of all power in the hands of the local school district, fought all efforts at centralization, and in 1838 opposed, in an elaborate report, the establishment of a State normal school. But as time went on, and as the individual leaders and educational thinkers of the State passed from a condition of tutelage to one of independence in thought, conservative views began to lose their authority. The necessity for a uniform State tax and for uniform State supervision and control became more manifest.

The centralizing tendency is manifest in the reorganization of the State educational convention in 1857, which after essaying an organization in 1843 had failed to maintain itself before the people. In 1846 teachers' societies were recommended; an association of New Castle teachers was organized in 1847, but failed. It was again organized in 1854 and met with but little more success, but these repeated efforts show the drift of educational thought. The tendency in this direction is also indicated by the publication in 1854-55 of at least four issues of the *Delaware School Journal*,¹ under the editorial direction of Dr. A. H. Grimshaw, then county superintendent of New Castle. The *Journal* was published in Wilmington and the first number is that for November, 1854. The prospectus promised monthly issues at an annual cost of \$1:

The *Journal* will contain about 24 pages of reading matter; it will be devoted to the school question and will also contain judicious selections on literary and scientific topics. This number will be sent to gentlemen throughout the State, whose cooperation we earnestly solicit. The editors do not expect to realize any pecuniary profits from this undertaking, but feel a sincere desire to advance the cause of education and promote the welfare of their fellow citizens.

The scope and plans of the *Journal* were still more fully set forth in the introduction, which serves also both as an historical review of the situation up to that time and as an outline for future endeavor:

We would beg leave to remark, in the outset, that this is to be a State school journal; its whole object will be to promote the cause of common schools throughout all parts of our State.

We find that nearly all of our neighboring States are making active exertions to improve their schools and advance the cause of popular education; and we note the means employed are school journals, educational conventions, teachers' institutes, and

¹ See Haase's *Index to Delaware Documents*, p. 66. The first number was for November, 1854, and at least four numbers were issued, being dated November and December, 1854, and January and February, 1855, of 24 pages each. There is a set in the Delaware Historical Society at Wilmington. The Bureau of Education has Nos. 1 and 3, November, 1854, and January, 1855. pp. 1-24 + 49-72.

district libraries and lectures. In the State of Delaware there is no settled, determined, constant, and energetic action by means of which our teachers can be roused to the necessity of self-improvement or our people interested in that subject of vital importance to the American Nation, the subject of common schools. In this county, with the exception of a few desultory letters, generally intended to produce a local effect, and the annual report of Judge Hall, president of the county convention, there is no effort made to draw the attention of the people to the proper consideration of the school question. In the counties of Kent and Sussex, we believe there is not a line written. This is our apology for attempting to establish a journal which shall contain editorial and original articles upon all the questions which suggest themselves in connection with education, and whose columns shall be open for the reception of communications and the discussion of educational topics.

The people of this State need to be awakened; not only this, they need to be instructed upon the subject of common schools. First we need good schoolhouses, and we must learn how to plan them. Second we need good teachers, and we must devise some means to secure them. Third we need school libraries, and we must acquire a taste for reading in order to establish them. Fourth we need a revision of the school law; that is, our tax must not depend upon the precarious votes of every school election, any more than our county, road, or poor taxes; our commissioners must be made a more permanent body, only one being changed each year.

* * * We have a school fund, schoolhouses, teachers, pupils; but we have not good common schools. * * * It is very manifest that we need some means of infusing vitality into our school system. If the press is a mighty engine, if it can influence the people upon religious, political, and agricultural subjects, it can do so upon educational topics. We have, therefore, because no one else has seized the helm to guide public opinion, taken upon ourselves the office of pilot. We shall endeavor to collect as much information as possible upon the condition of the schools in all the districts of the State; we shall try to ascertain the qualifications of the teachers employed in our common schools, the manner in which the various committees perform their duties, and the number of votes polled at each school election.¹

It was a good plan, boldly conceived and bravely put into action. Had the editor been able to execute his plans as outlined above, had he been able to gather and print information on the subject of the public schools and to make suggestions for their improvement, his work would have been of the greatest service to the schools and to the State. He made a good beginning, and circulated 400 or 500 copies of the Journal, but unfortunately the times were not propitious and although the editor pledged himself if the first number was issued "to continue the publication for one year," the publication seems to have been suspended with the issue of the fourth number, that for February, 1855. The School Journal died in debt, and the school districts of New Castle County were assessed \$5 each to liquidate the outstanding obligations. The people had not supported the organ intended for their advancement.

During the fifties there were other indications of educational progress. Institutions beyond the public school grade were chartered,²

¹ Prospectus in vol. 1, pp. 1-3.

² Georgetown Academy in 1847; Smyrna Union School in 1853, ch. 643; Wesleyan Female Collegiate Institute, changed to Wesleyan Female College by ch. 162, laws of 1855; Delaware City Academy, 1857, ch. 400, and 1859, ch. 586. Scharf, I., 447, gives a long list of earlier private schools with the dates of their charters.

and then there began the reorganization of public school systems in the towns. Thus by an act passed on February 4, 1852,¹ the New Castle Institute, a school "for teaching the first rudiments of learning, as well as classical literature and such of the sciences as are usually taught in academies and colleges," which had been supported in part by the "contributions of individuals whose children receive instruction" and in part out of "the funds of the New Castle Common," was taken over by the town, called Districts 45 and 46 of New Castle County, and became the basis for the new public school system.

The first organization of the Wilmington schools followed closely on the passage of the permissive law of 1829. The city was then divided into 10 school districts, but there was powerful opposition; only in the tenth district did the school become permanently established, although there were schools for short irregular periods in 2 others. In 1833 there was a considerable sum of money coming to these districts, and the 9 were reorganized by act of February 6, 1833, as United School District Nos. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, in New Castle County. A schoolhouse was built on the corner of French and Sixth Streets with 2 rooms of 120 seats each; men and women teachers were employed, and this arrangement continued till 1852, when the conviction of the increasing usefulness of the system made possible the act of February 9, 1852.² This act laid the foundations for a general public-school system for the city. It created a board of public education of 12. They were organized as a corporation, but were forbidden banking powers. They were to take over the public-school system as it then existed and organize and conduct schools for the benefit of white children and levy taxes for support of the same.³

Success followed so quickly on this reorganization that the board could say in its report in 1857:

Instead of about 300 children, miserably accommodated and laboring under many inconveniences, we find 1,800 children, almost all well provided for, in comfortable buildings with neat furniture and arrangements, trained to habits of order, and generally interested in their studies and attached to their teachers.

In 1859 there were seven schoolhouses; Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 were used for primary grades; Nos. 1 and 4 served for instruction in the higher grades. There were then 39 teachers and 1,940 pupils. But by this time the needs of the schools had outrun the ability of the city to provide out of its usual income. Authority to borrow was asked of the assembly and granted on condition of a favorable vote by the citizens. This approval was refused, and when the city again

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1852, ch. 623.

² See Hall's Historical Sketch, quoted in Wilmington School Report for 1875-76, p. 64.

³ Laws of Delaware, 1852, ch. 636; amended in 1853 by ch. 5; and in 1855 by ch. 199; 1857, ch. 480.

asked from the assembly authority to borrow without a popular vote their request was rejected.¹

Supplementary agencies bearing on matters educational began also to take their place in the evolution of a more connected and stronger system. Thus the Agricultural Society of Sussex County was incorporated;² its business was "to promote and encourage agricultural and horticultural pursuits and improvements in good husbandry and tillage of the soil, improvements in the breed of stock of all kinds." Similar in general purpose was the incorporation of the Red Lion Library Association in 1857, with an endowment of \$10,000 capital and a life of 20 years.³

The same year saw the incorporation of the Corbit Library into the school system. Dr. James Corbit had left by will \$950 to St. Georges Hundred, in New Castle County, as an endowment for the purchase of books for the use of School District No. 61 in that county under the name and style of the "Corbit Library." By act of 1857 (ch. 416) the administration of the fund was put under charge of the school commissioners of the district and administered as part of the public-school system.

It is evident that the terrors of the Prussification of the school system of the State had now largely ceased to terrify, for the progressives were boldly demanding first a State "agent" and later a State superintendent whose business would be to organize a real State system. Indeed, in 1857 a bill embodying some of these demands was passed by the senate,⁴ but failed in the house.

Nowhere is this change of sentiment more manifest than in the feeling on the subject of normal schools. It will be recalled that a report made by Judge Hall and others in 1838 had opposed the establishment of a State normal school and had terrified the timid by picturing the evils of overcentralization. But these fears were neither universal nor lasting in effect, for in 1843 a correspondent of the Delaware State Journal suggested that Delaware College be endowed by the State and then required to educate teachers for the public schools,⁵ and so far had the Delaware of 1857 advanced on this subject beyond the opinions of the report of 1838 that E. J. Newlin, president of Delaware College, on February 17, 1857, delivered an address by invitation on normal schools before the general assembly, and the address was later printed by order of the house. It will be of interest to summarize this address briefly in order to furnish a basis of comparison and contrast with the report of 1838.

¹ See Laws of Delaware, 1855, ch. 203; 1859, ch. 668, and Hall's Historical Sketch, loc. cit., p. 67.

² Laws of Delaware, 1857, ch. 458.

³ Laws of Delaware, 1857, ch. 351.

⁴ S. J., 1857, pp. 151, 161.

⁵ See correspondence of "Z" in Delaware State Journal (Wilmington), January, 1843.

This address is predicated on a petition to the assembly from the trustees of Delaware College pointing out that under the law provision had already been made for the organization, but not for the support of a normal school in that institution.¹ They now ask for an annual appropriation of \$3,000 for the school and suggest that, in the absence of any other method of raising this amount, it might be taken from the annual income of the school fund. This would mean a reduction on the average of \$15 per district, which might be made good to the district by giving to each the privilege of sending one pupil to the school free of tuition charges, making about 200 normal pupils from the whole State who for their part were to agree to teach in the public schools for a certain period. President Newlin begins with the premise that the whole matter resolved itself into the simple question whether the public school should be supplied with competent or incompetent teachers; whether the children should be well taught or imperfectly instructed. Then after reviewing the origin and growth of normal schools in Europe and America he presents his arguments in form as follows:

1. That it is obligatory upon every State in this Republic to give to all her children a good education, by the establishment and support of good common schools.
2. That a State can not have good schools without well-trained and competent teachers.
3. That the only way to secure a supply of well-qualified teachers is by the establishment of normal schools.

It is evident that the realization of the necessity for normal schools was growing in the State. The school was not immediately established, but all of these efforts had their effect. In 1859 a petition was presented to the assembly praying the establishment of a "free college and normal school." The committee to whom it was referred deemed such a move inexpedient at the time—

inasmuch as the proposed establishment has not been fully and fairly before the minds of the people of the State. Your committee being themselves favorably impressed toward the plan proposed, doubt not that the people of the State will, when the subject is fully canvassed and presented to them, extend like favor to it.

They proposed that a committee of six be appointed to draw up a bill, that it be published in three newspapers in the State and presented to the next legislature.²

What then was the educational status of Delaware in 1861 when the first State law went into effect? Unfortunately there are no complete statistics covering all phases of education, and under the system then in vogue in the State there could be none. In the

¹ See p. 7, where reference is given to ch. 43 of the Revised Code of 1852, which, in dealing with Delaware College, sec. 5 provides that there shall be established a normal school "connected with the college for the preparation of teachers." Pupils were to be admitted from the district schools at reduced rates on their pledge to teach one year.

² H. J., 1859, p. 301.

absence of fuller statistics use must be made of the scanty collections found in the censuses of 1840, 1850, and 1860. These follow on this page. To these may be added the statistics in the available auditor's reports between 1830 and 1860. The auditor was the responsible accounting officer to whom reports on the financial dealings of the schools were sent and the only one who had in any sense the power of reviewing the financial doings of the local district school commissioners. The powers of the auditor were ample for any inquiry he might deem proper, but his term of office was short and if not reappointed he must resign it into new hands.¹ The figures of the auditor are both imperfect and incomplete; they are not uniform and the periods covered are not all of the same length, but, as they represent substantially all the statistical material for the period that is available from State sources, they are printed for what they are worth.²

Statistics of education in Delaware.

	1840	1850	1860
Colleges:			
Number.....	1	2	1
Teachers.....		16	8
Pupils.....	23	144	90
Annual income, total.....		\$17,300	\$9,500
From endowment.....		\$1,200	
From public funds.....			
From other sources.....		\$16,000	\$9,500
Academies and other schools:			
Number.....	20	65	40
Teachers.....		94	101
Pupils.....	764	2,011	1,957
Annual income, total.....		\$47,832	\$47,482
From endowment.....		\$225	\$400
From taxation.....			\$400
From public funds.....		\$1	\$422
From other sources.....		\$47,606	\$46,240
Public schools:			
Number.....	152	194	256
Teachers.....		214	296
Pupils (apparently average attendance).....	6,924	8,970	11,736
Pupils by families (apparently total enrollment).....		14,216	18,672
Pupils, free negroes.....		187	250
Annual income, total.....		\$43,861	\$67,847
From endowment.....			\$500
From taxation.....		\$14,422	\$32,359
From public funds.....		\$27,753	\$29,020
From other sources.....		\$1,686	\$5,968
Illiterates over 20, total.....	4,832	10,181	13,169
Free colored.....		5,645	6,508
Foreign.....		404	1,666
Libraries:			
Public.....		4	64
Volumes.....		10,250	61,100
School.....			1
Volumes.....			100
Sunday school and church.....		12	48
Volumes.....		2,700	20,270
College.....		1	1
Volumes.....		5,000	7,000
Total libraries.....		17	114
Total volumes.....		17,950	88,470
Newspapers:			
Number.....		10	
Circulation (average).....		7,500	16,144
Annual.....		421,200	1,010,776

¹ See governor's message, January, 1847, in H. J., 1847, p. 20.

² See Table 3, at end.

³ Of these, 1,571 were "at public charge." The entry under this heading in 1840 was "primary and common schools."

⁴ White only.

Chapter IV.

THE FIRST STATE TAXATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1861-1875.

The original idea in Judge Hall's bill, which became the school law of 1829, was individual and neighborhood cooperation. It was absolutely and entirely voluntary; there was no supervision by State or county; there was no legal requirement, no compulsion by the State, for the proposal to levy a tax which appeared in the original draft of the bill was omitted in the enacted law. The schools to be established were denominated "free schools," but it was a curious freedom, for "free" meant that their patrons and supporters were free to support them well or ill, or not support them at all, as most appealed to their desires and interests. But this phase of the movement broke down the first year. It was soon seen that voluntary contributions could not be depended on to support the schools if they were to exist at all, and as early as 1830 a State law was passed permitting the school districts to vote a local tax on themselves if they saw fit. This remained the law until 1861 and was a step in advance, but it had fatal objections: The local school district was the unit of taxation; the tax when voted was purely local; it applied only to the local school district and was to be voted each year. The result of this unfortunate provision has been narrated already. There began at once to grow up two parties who differed radically on the administration of schools. The conservatives advocated the status quo. They wanted no change, little or no State interference, and as much liberty of individual action and school district initiative as possible. On the other hand the more aggressive party, whom we may call, by way of contrast, the progressives, wanted a stronger central control for the purpose of supervision and direction in the matter of taxation. Between the two ideals the sentiment of the State swung back and forth for a generation, but during most of this time, despite the activity of the conservatives, and in spite of their much writing on the subject, public sentiment more or less steadily approached the idea of a centralized State control. After much agitation the beginnings of such a State law were finally attained in 1861. This was the first general State law on the subject of taxation for public-school education ever passed in the State.

I. EDUCATIONAL LEGISLATION, 1861-1875.

This act, passed March 1, 1861, provides that it should be the duty of the school committee in each school district in the month of April of each year to assess and levy in each school district in New Castle County the sum of \$75; in each school district in Kent County, \$50; and in Sussex County, \$30, "to be applied to the support of the school of their district, to be assessed, levied, and collected as provided in chapter 42 of the Revised Statutes."¹ Any school district might levy any additional sum up to \$400 after the exact amount had been fixed by a majority vote. A majority of the voters in the district might also levy a sum not to exceed \$500 for the purpose of building a schoolhouse, and all sums decided on by majority vote were to be levied and collected in the same manner as the minimum sums required by the act.²

The act of 1861 marks the downfall of one tendency in public education in Delaware and the completed evolution of its opposite. The act of 1829 required that as much money be raised in the district as was due to the district from the school fund. The act of 1830 cut this requirement in half, and the act of 1837 reduced it to \$25. This tendency of the voter to reduce the requirements on himself to the lowest limits was met by another movement which sought to provide for the schools by State action. The logical result of this tendency was the act of 1861 which to that extent eliminated the wishes of the individual voter altogether and made school support automatic.

Of the law of 1861 Supt. Groves remarks:

This act of 1861 was a long and grand step in the cause of education in the State. By its provisions no child was to be deprived of an opportunity of attending school or of securing a common-school education, throwing the responsibility entirely upon the parent for any neglect. The State fully measured up to her power and responsibility by her action in providing for the education of her subjects. That this avenue should not be closed, wherein the future citizen and voter might allege that an education was impossible, she plainly indicated by her provisions. Further, she declared that it were better to build schoolhouses, employ teachers, and maintain schools than enlarge the almshouses and prisons; that the amount of illiteracy should be smaller, and that fraud in the ballot, with covered head, should take its place behind the intelligent voter. Before this date it was indeed a critical period annually on the first Saturday in April for the youth of the State. Fathers, anxious and considerate for the welfare of their children, with nervous tread and painful forebodings, wended their way yearly to the school meeting. The State herself was in suspense and awe, awaiting the result of the actions of her subjects. The weal or woe of society hung trembling in the balance, to be decided by the day's action.³

¹ This was the Revised Code of 1852, then in use.

² Laws of Delaware, 1861, ch. 70. Several other laws were passed at this session which were educational in character (chs. 58, 100): One provided for the building of a schoolhouse (ch. 64); one for the publication of the act of 1861; and another voted \$157.32 for the liquidation of an unpaid bill for printing which still hung over the late New Castle school convention (ch. 132).

³ Groves, J. H.: *History of Free Schools of Delaware*, in 6th An. Rep. Supt. Free Schools, 1880, pp. 49-50.

It is perhaps best at this point to trace the subsequent legislative fortunes of the public schools down to 1875, when a new general school law marked another step forward and started the system on a career of real State-wide development. There was of course but little educational legislation during the war period and this little was local in character. After the return of peace the law of this period of most general significance was the act of 1867 which chartered, as a private institution, the Delaware State Normal University, whose creation will be noticed later. With this exception practically all the educational legislation between 1861 and 1875 was essentially local in character. In this predominantly local legislation, however, there can be traced certain tendencies which were now making themselves felt as never before. These included the further organization of town and city systems and the grant of authority to these to borrow money on the public credit either with or without mortgage security on property already owned by the school.¹ This tendency was not confined to the larger cities, but seems to have permeated the whole educational system. The stronger and more ambitious school districts were given more freedom of initiative in one of two ways. If so disposed they were permitted to exceed the \$400 limit set by the act of 1861 in the matter of local voluntary taxation. The first of these acts seemed to have been that of February 13, 1867 (ch. 141), which allowed School District No. 78, in New Castle County, to raise \$800; in some cases the amount thus raised by taxation was as much as \$1,500.² Such acts were euphemistically called acts for relief and they appeared from year to year.³ When taxation was not available or insufficient these smaller districts might also borrow with or without mortgage.⁴

When the action of the legislature on similar questions presented by the Wilmington schools in the fifties is recalled, the stride toward modern methods is seen to have been tremendous.

Another development of this period was that which took the more or less disjointed, fragmentary, and independent school districts that centered in and about the towns and villages, apparently including in some cases the older institutions of private origin and reorganized them as a single public-school system. This new system sometimes continued to bear the ante bellum name of academy, but more often distinctly proclaimed itself as the public-school system. The consolidated school was thus incorporated and given authority to collect sufficient taxes for the pay of teachers and for schoolhouses. In this way the town and city schools of the State began to make progress.

¹ See Wilmington under acts of 1863, 1869, 1871, and 1873.

² Ch. 395, laws of 1873.

³ See chs. 427 and 428, laws of 1869; chs. 44, 45, 47, and 51, laws of 1871; chs. 396, 400, 401, 403, 404, and 406, laws of 1873; ch. 44, laws of 1875.

⁴ See ch. 140, laws of 1867; chs. 429 and 430, laws of 1869; ch. 402, laws of 1873.

New Castle seems to have been the first of the smaller cities to inaugurate this scheme of development. In this way the Dover Academy was reorganized in 1867 (ch. 180) and Milton Academy in 1869 (ch. 484). These institutions were often both primary and secondary schools, and in some cases at least, as was the case with the Dover public schools, under the act of March 9, 1875 (ch. 42), it was still possible to provide for a deficit by a rate bill levied on parent or guardian and collected as other taxes. Following these precedents, in 1875 (chs. 52 and 53) the school districts in Delaware City and Lewes were consolidated into town systems. Neither of these laws, however, was a good one, for Delaware City within certain limits went back to the old principle of letting the voters decide what the tax should be and both provided for school rates, but the weakness of these acts is perhaps atoned for by the better law given to New Castle the same year (ch. 54). This town received a charter for 20 years for its board of education, which was put in full charge of the schools and authorized to fix, up to \$4,000, the amount to be raised for education, and there were to be no school rates.

The legislature continued the business of creating new districts, and homes and farms were regularly transferred by legislative enactment from one district to another.¹ Thus it would appear that in this State centralization worked by contraries. A State-wide law for a general school tax was secured only after a struggle of a generation, but the organization of a new district in any county or the transfer of John Doe from district A to district B for the sake of greater personal convenience was a matter of such grave concern that it commanded the attention of the whole State.

In these ways did the public educational sentiment of Delaware begin to again find the voice which had been stilled by war, although there was as yet no central authority to whom reports might be made and whose duty it was to preserve and publish such reports. An effort to secure such was made in 1867 when a bill entitled "An act to provide for the appointment of a State school superintendent and a board of school examiners for this State" was introduced into the house on March 6. It passed the house, but failed in the senate.²

Notwithstanding this failure in legislation, the friends of education were not cast down. An educational mass meeting was called to be held in Dover on December 23, 1867, its purpose being "for a mutual interchange of opinions; to receive and discuss suggestions of improvements in the law." The meeting was in session two days.

¹ See chs. 423, 424, 425, laws of 1869; chs. 50, 52, laws of 1871; ch. 398, laws of 1873; ch. 45, laws of 1875, and later.

² See chs. 53, 181, laws of 1871; ch. 399, laws of 1873; chs. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, laws of 1875, and later.

³ H. J., 1867, pp. 433, 456, 505; S. J., 1867, p. 389.

and its "proceedings were conducted with signal unanimity, harmony, and good feeling." A preliminary meeting had been held on November 9, 1867, and the call for a State-wide meeting had been issued by Kent County. The meeting in December called itself a State educational convention; many ladies and gentlemen were present, mainly from Kent and New Castle Counties, with a few from *Sumsex*. The speakers included T. Clarkson Taylor, of Wilmington, and J. P. Wickersham, of Pennsylvania. No report on Mr. Wickersham's address has been seen, but the *Wilmington Daily Commercial* for December 31, 1867, contains a summary of that of Mr. Taylor. The larger part of this address is a plea for more education in general and for a better system in Delaware in particular. The defects of the existing law were considered. These included the method of raising school funds over and above the taxes provided by law, for the district was still allowed to vote annually on the supplementary amounts to be raised. The results of this provision were unfortunate, because progressive districts went forward and indifferent ones did not. There was no general school head, and therefore no unity of school action, there was no standard of qualification of teachers, and the general law was entirely inadequate. He suggested that each district be required to levy enough tax to keep the schools open for at least four months (some demanded eight months) before any appropriations might be made to them from the school fund. These taxes should be levied, collected, and disbursed by school commissioners in each hundred and town district, who were to be substituted for the commissioners of each school district and were to have also general care of the schools. Mr. Taylor asked that a State superintendent be appointed; that county superintendents examine teachers and schools, hold institutes, etc., and that there should be provision by law for good school buildings, grounds, furniture, and apparatus.¹ Uniformity of textbooks was also urged by the convention, but the question of school libraries was laid on the table.

At least two results came from this meeting: It served as a sort of school institute for the teachers of Kent, who later effected a formal organization and agreed to meet again at Smyrna in April; in accord with the general sense of the convention a committee was appointed to draft a general school code, expressive of the changes desired in the existing school system. The committee reported to another meeting held July 13, 1868, changes and additions to the school law² then in force. These alterations were embodied in what was called "The new school law." This was presented to the general assembly

¹ *Wilmington (Del.) Daily Commercial*, Dec. 24, 31, 1867.

² The *Commercial* reports that the attendance on this meeting was small and that another was called to meet in December. See issue for July 15, 1868.

of 1869 and its passage urged, but in vain.¹ Similar efforts were made in 1871 and 1873, but with the same result.

As illustrating the desires and ideals of the period may be quoted the statements of Dr. J. E. Clawson in 1871, with his list of "particulars in which our public school system needs reform," and the educational bill brought forward in 1873. These two help much to explain the evolution of the law of 1875. Dr. Clawson said:

The voting for tax or no tax at the annual school election should be abandoned, and the amount of tax necessary to keep each school in the county open, at least six months in the year, should be levied and collected in the same manner as other county taxes. The appropriations from the State might be used to keep the school going for a longer time.

Each county should have a superintendent, whose duty should be to visit each school in the county as often as possible, and in connection with the district officers, whenever practicable, in order to excite an interest in the community on the subject of education, make suggestions to the teachers as to the best modes of teaching and governing schools, and to the commissioners as to the construction, ventilation, warming, and furnishing school buildings; to examine and furnish with certificates persons properly qualified to teach; to make an annual report to a State superintendent * * * and hold county teachers' institutes, etc.

There should be also a State superintendent, who should prepare suitable blank forms, receive reports, make a biennial report, and recommend legislation. This officer and the three county superintendents, with an additional State officer who should act ex officio, might form a State educational board who would recommend a uniform system of textbooks and consider educational interests in general. It was thought that adjustments to the system in use might be made without appreciable cost to the taxpayers.²

The educational bill which was proposed in 1873, but failed of enactment,³ may be summarized as follows.³ It was entitled "An act to amend the several acts relating to free schools in this State." It provided for the election of county and State boards of education; the governor was to appoint a county superintendent for each county and to require an annual report on the schools to the legislature. It provided for careful supervision; ordered the school commissioners to raise a certified annual tax and made them personally responsible for the amount; provided for the examination and certification of teachers by the county superintendents and authorized the establishment of colored schools by the colored taxables in any district in the same manner as the white schools were then organized.

¹ The Wilmington Daily Commercial, in its issue for Mar. 15, 1871, says that the Teachers' Association of Kent County late in 1868 appointed three men to draft a school bill. This bill was presented to the assembly, which "treated it with little better than silent contempt, and here the clamor for reform for a while ceased and the Teachers' Association of Kent County died a natural death." It intimates also that politics was at the bottom of this failure, for it adds that two of the men who drafted the bill were Democrats: "They were not afraid that a reform school law would turn white men black or black men white."

² See Normal School Advocate, vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 5-6. See also an argument in favor of establishing normal schools in 4th An. Rep., Delaware State Normal University, 1869-70, pp. 49-53.

³ Rep. U. S. Comms. of Ed., 1873, pp. 50-52.

The administrative work of the schools was placed in the hands of the county board who heard appeals, formed new districts, provided textbooks at cost, and received reports from the county superintendent, who was their agent. His main duty was to visit the schools, and to make reports on all phases of the work. They were to be paid \$1,200 per annum. Every district was required to raise at least \$75 from taxes; funds from whites and blacks were to be kept separate; and the negroes were to receive all the taxes paid by them.

The bill as proposed in 1873 failed, but, as will be seen later, prepared the way for more successful action in 1875.

II. THE DELAWARE STATE NORMAL UNIVERSITY, 1866-1871.

The first law of general significance after the war period was the act of January 23, 1867, which provided a charter for the Delaware State Normal University.¹ This was organized as a private institution on November 19, 1866, because of the necessity for an institution "wherein students might receive a professional education, which should peculiarly qualify them for instructing and disciplining youth." It was commenced without aid from the State and remained a private institution to the end. Strictly its history does not belong in these pages, but it sought to render public service and is admitted for the sake of the service rendered and because of the influence exerted by it in drawing public attention to the needs of the public schools.

It began its work without State patronage and without endowment save the value of some 20 scholarships which had been subscribed for in advance. It received with its charter authority to hold property up to \$100,000, together with the usual powers of a corporation. The trustees included John C. Harkness, who became its president, Dr. Caleb Harlan, its vice president, Dr. John A. Brown, James Bradford, Allen Gawthorp, Judge Willard Hall, who in other days had so strenuously opposed the normal school idea, Howard M. Jenkins, and others, 28 in all.

Besides the normal-school course the institution provided for a business education and had a department in which teachers were prepared for teaching the classics, modern languages, and the higher mathematics in the academies and high schools. Passing over the other departments, it appears that for admission to the normal course the candidate must be 14 years of age, of good health and good moral character, and able to pass an examination in reading, spelling, penmanship, arithmetic, grammar, and geography. The course covered three years and besides the usual high-school branches

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1867, ch. 279. The act itself is not printed in the session laws for that year, but may be found in the third annual report and catalogue of the Delaware State Normal University, 1869, p. 9.

required school government, principles of education, theory and practice of teaching, school economy, mercantile calculations, commercial rules, bookkeeping, business correspondence, and extemporaneous speaking. There was also work in instrumental and vocal music. On completion of the normal course the degree of bachelor of school teaching might be conferred, and this degree might be followed by that of master after three years of successful practice.

During the first year there was a faculty of 6 men, 1 woman, and 1 vacancy; 76 pupils were registered, of whom 26 were women; 19 persons attended the evening sessions. In 1869 there were 2 graduates, 4 in 1870, and 4 in 1871. At one time the attendance was as high as 188; in 1870-71 there were 86 students, of whom 27 were women.

In May, 1870, the board of trustees issued a circular—

setting forth the inefficient and disastrous condition of public education in the State of Delaware, and recommending, as immediate remedies, the establishment of a State normal school, the office of State superintendent, and a teachers' institute in each county for two weeks annually.

They proposed to evolve into a State Normal and Polytechnic University, and for this purpose were then undertaking to raise from \$50,000 to \$100,000; but while this work was going on harmoniously and hopefully and after more than \$40,000 had been raised for this purpose, their work was brought to a sudden close by a repeal of their charter on March 29, 1871 (ch. 153), "without any mentioned reason or cause."¹

The causes of this repeal it is of no advantage to present. It is sufficient to say that they go back to the circular issued in May, 1870, by the State Normal University. Certain statements contained in this circular were reprinted in the Annual Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1870, came under the eye of one of the United States Senators from Delaware, and were regarded by him as a misrepresentation of the real facts. The matter was aired in the Senate, with the result that the offending statements in the Report of the Commissioner of Education were cut out and the charter of the Delaware State Normal University was repealed by the legislature.²

Those who would investigate the matter for themselves will find the sources in detail in the Congressional Globe and in the various issues of the Wilmington Daily Commercial.³

¹ See catalogues and reports, first to fifth (1866-1871), in Bureau of Education, and Powell's Hist. of Ed. in Delaware, p. 164. See also Bernard's Jour. of Ed., XVII, 807.

² "An act to repeal ch. 279, vol. 13, of Delaware laws."—H. J., 1871, p. 508. Mar. 28 the bill "was read" and "Rule 19 was, by unanimous consent, suspended and the bill just read was read a second time by its title" (pp. 533-4).

³ See the discussion in the Congressional Globe, 41 C., 2 S., pp. 1078, 1100, 1123, 1132-35, 1413, Feb. 9-20, 1871, and in the Wilmington Daily Commercial for March and April, 1871, especially Mar. 3, 15, 27, 30, 31, and Apr. 3, 7, 10. See also the first edition of the Report of the Commissioner of Education for 1870, pp. 103 and 106, and compare that edition with the second issue.

It is evident, however, that the discussion in the United States Senate and in the Delaware newspapers served a purpose in awakening the citizens of the State to a clearer realization of the situation. Thus, "Mutual Friend," who writes from Milford, Kent County, to the Wilmington Daily Commercial for April 7, 1871, says that the school system was "not what it should be," for "education to be general must be free; and to be free it must be fostered by the State." This end, he claimed, was not accomplished by the laws of Delaware. There were, he thought, probably 20 school districts in Kent and Sussex Counties that had not had a free school in the last year; that under the system in use it was possible to have men on school boards who could not read or write, and "this, to our personal knowledge, has frequently happened."

The discussion was often bitter and perhaps sometimes unjust. There are intimations also that there was not only class consciousness, but class hostility, as when a correspondent of the Wilmington Daily Commercial (Apr. 7, 1871) charged that in Milton and Milford the upper and wealthier class—the "broadcloth" class—who were able to educate their own children in private institutions, were for that reason opposed to taxation for the public schools. The religious question also came up at times, as was the case in 1867, when the Roman Catholic authorities of Wilmington asked the assembly to allow certain church schools to be taken under State control.¹ During this same year (1867) "An act to prevent the improper distribution of the school fund of this State" was introduced in the house, where it passed, but failed in the Senate.² The reason for the introduction of this bill has not been discovered.

That the closing of the Delaware State Normal University was felt throughout the State is indicated by the effort to supply its place. In 1873 the assembly was called on to dispose of the land-scrip fund, which was then beginning to accumulate. By an act passed on March 27 of that year it directed that \$3,000 per annum for two years should be paid out of that fund to Delaware College, and in consideration of the receipt of this fund the college was required to—

provide free instruction of a suitable character for 10 students from each county of this State whenever such students on presenting themselves for admission shall obligate themselves to teach in the free schools of the State for not less than one year.³

In 1875 an effort was made to reenact and continue the act of 1873, and a bill was introduced for this purpose. The bill passed the senate, but was defeated in the house May 25, 1875.⁴

¹ See H. J., 1867, pp. 586-89. On one occasion at least this religious question had come up before. In 1847 the assembly chartered St. Mary's College, at Wilmington. There was immediately presented to the legislature a petition to repeal the charter. The petition was refused. The report refusing the petition may be read in H. J., 1847, pp. 287-289.

² H. J., 1867, pp. 443, 464, 500, 612.

³ Delaware laws, 1873, ch. 408.

⁴ See H. J., 1875, pp. 373, 745.

III. PROGRESS DURING THE PERIOD.

Taken as a whole it may be truthfully said that there was little legislation of general educational significance between 1861 and 1875. There are even indications that it was felt to be necessary to approach this question with more or less caution. For some years the subject of education had given place in the governor's message to weightier problems, and when in 1871 Gov. Gove Salisbury returned to the subject he felt it proper to apologize to the assembly for his remarks on education because "changes in long-established and well-understood laws * * * should not be made incautiously or without mature consideration." He then suggested that changes were needed and—

that some superintendence should be had by the State, through a legally authorized agent, over this whole subject; * * * the duties of those intrusted with this power should be clearly defined by law and their performance strictly enjoined.¹

If these cautious suggestions of the governor are to be taken as the measure of official enthusiasm, it will be seen that private individuals had more highly developed ideals and were more boldly aggressive in advocating their views. Witness the list of "particulars in which our public school system needs reform," published by Dr. J. E. Clawson in June, 1871, and already quoted.

But after all, the most important question in connection with this period is not theory but actual accomplishment under and as a result of the act of 1861. This is a question much easier in the asking than in the answering, and in reply but two sources may be used, the census of 1870 and the auditor's reports of 1861-1875, which give substantially the same class of figures with more detail. In the absence of any annual State school reports, such statistical matter as is available is welcomed gladly.

For the year ending June 1, 1870, the census reports that out of a total population of 125,015 and a school population of 40,807 (5 to 18 years of age) there attended school 19,963, of whom 18,770 were white and 1,195 were colored. There were 19,356 persons over 10 years of age who could not read and 23,100 who could not write, 11,280 of these being white and 11,820 colored.

At that time the schools of all classes, from primary to college, public and private, numbered 375. They had 510 teachers, of whom 147 were men and 363 were women, with 19,575 pupils. The total income of these institutions was \$212,712; of this sum \$120,429 was from taxation and public funds and \$92,283 from other sources, including tuition.

The public schools numbered 326 of all classes and were divided as follows: One normal school (the Delaware State Normal Univer-

¹H. J., 1871, p. 19.

sity), with 1 man and 6 women teachers, 100 pupils, and \$4,000 income; 12 graded common schools, with 61 women teachers, 2,935 pupils, and \$44,755 income, of which \$41,455 came from public sources. There were 313 ungraded public schools, with 106 men and 214 women teachers, 13,800 pupils, and a total income of \$78,974 from public sources.

There were reported also of private schools, "classical, professional, and technical." Eleven colleges and academies, with 32 men and 31 women teachers, 859 pupils, and \$53,550 of income; 38 other "not public" institutions are also reported (including day and boarding, parochial, and charity schools), with 59 teachers, 1,881 pupils, and an income of \$31,433 from private sources.

The detailed statistics of the public schools in the three counties, both financial and personal, as recorded in the annual reports of the State auditor are given later in tabular form.¹

It would appear that the official heads of the State were not during these years entirely indifferent to or forgetful of their duty to the schools.

¹ See Table 3, at end.

Chapter V.

THE STATE SYSTEM: ADMINISTRATIONS OF GROVES AND WILLIAMS, 1875-1887.

At the opening of the assembly in January, 1875, Gov. James Ponder, in reviewing the results of the earlier public-school efforts, declared that in the 40 years of its existence the school system had been of "incalculable advantage" in furnishing the means of primary education to the youth of the State. He thought, however, that these advantages had been gradually impaired by the multiplication of school districts:

More than double the number of school districts originally established now exist in the State and in some localities it is difficult to maintain good schools for any great period of the year owing to the small number of pupils¹ living in the district.²

It would seem, however, that Gov. Ponder did not grasp the full significance of the school situation. The bill which came up for consideration at this session of the assembly indicated first of all that the idea of centralization in public school administration was making strides in the State, and that the people had come to realize as never before the failure of the earlier decentralized, individualistic system.

The act of 1875 did not repeal the original act of 1829, but appeared as an amendment to it, gave it a modern interpretation, and when compared with the amendment suggested as desirable in June, 1871, by Dr. J. E. Clawson³ and with the bill proposed in 1873,⁴ a remarkable similarity is observed. As the changes advocated by Dr. Clawson had the approval of the faculty of the Delaware State Normal University and the bill of 1873 that of the teaching organizations, it may be safely assumed that the law of 1875 gave satisfaction to most if not all of the more progressive educators of the State. It would even appear that the act of 1875 was more nearly like the suggestions of 1871 than it was like the bill of 1873.

¹ The law provided that when a district was organized there should not be less than 35 pupils in the new nor less than that number left in the old district.

² H. J., 1875, p. 19. It appears from the reports of the State superintendents for this period that the average school district often contained more pupils than could be accommodated in the schoolhouse or taught by the teacher. See for instance the third annual report, 1877-1878, p. 44, where it is shown that the average number of children "between 5 and 21 years, to each school" in 1877 was 140 in Newcastle, 61 in Kent, and 48 in Sussex.

³ See ante, page 78.

A synopsis of the law, ordinarily known as the "New School Law of 1875," follows:

I. THE FREE SCHOOL LAW OF 1875 AND ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

State superintendent.—A State superintendent was, by this law, to be appointed annually by the governor, "to hold his office one year or until his successor shall in like manner be appointed." His salary was \$1,800 per year and his duties were to visit every school in the State once a year, noting in a book the modes of discipline, government, and plans of instruction in use; to advise with teachers as to the best methods for the advancement of their pupils; to examine all that may desire to teach; to hold a teachers' institute in each of the counties at least once a year, of at least three days' session, for imparting information and having a general interchange of views of teachers as to the wants of the various schools; to report in writing to the governor on the first Tuesday in December in each and every year the condition of the schools, and make such recommendations and suggestions as he may think proper in regard to a thorough completion of the system.

State board of education.—The president of Delaware College, the secretary of state, State auditor, and State superintendent were organized into a State board of education.¹ The president of Delaware College, by virtue of his office, was president of the board and the auditor was secretary of the same. The latter officer received a salary of \$100 per annum. The other members received no pay. The duties of the board were to determine what textbooks should be used in the schools; to issue blanks and forms for distribution to the local commissioners, and to demand returns to be made in pursuance thereof; to hear all appeals and determine finally all matters of controversy between commissioners and teachers.

Teachers.—All teachers were required to have a certificate from the State superintendent, countersigned by the county treasurer in the county issued upon the payment of \$2, said certificate setting forth his or her proficiency in the common English branches; to make out and hand to the commissioners of the district a report setting forth the whole number of pupils attending school during the quarter, the textbooks used and branches taught.

Revenue.—The manner of raising revenue was the same as in the old law, except that in Sussex County each school district was required to raise by taxation not less than \$60 annually, instead of \$30, as formerly, and in New Castle and Kent counties \$100, instead of \$75 and \$50 as formerly.

In 1879 an amendment was made to the act of 1875 requiring the superintendent to issue, as occasion demanded, three grades of

¹ Changed by ch. 309, laws of 1881, so that it consisted of the secretary of State, the president of Delaware College, and the State superintendent. The assistant superintendent became secretary of the board.

certificates, known as the first grade, good for three years; the second, for two years; and the third, for one year. He was also granted the privilege of issuing temporary permits to teachers to teach for 30 days, when in his judgment the interests of education required it.

The act of 1875, of which the above is a synopsis, did not abrogate the free school law of 1829, but merely supplemented it.

The first "superintendent of free schools of the State of Delaware" was James H. Groves. He was appointed April 13, 1875, and served until April 13, 1883, when he was succeeded by Thomas N. Williams, who served until April 13, 1887, when under the act of April 7, 1887, the superintendency was abolished. In 1881 the office of assistant State superintendent was created.¹ This officer was directed by law "to aid the State superintendent in the performance of his duties" and for this end was subject to his direction. The position was filled by the appointment of Henry C. Carpenter, who served from April 13, 1881, till April 13, 1887, when this office was also abolished.

In his estimate of Groves, Powell² says that he "proved to be a well-equipped, enthusiastic officer, and a very important factor in the success of the new law. He thought the true function of public education is to prepare the average man for the duties of citizenship." Judge Conrad calls him "an efficient organizer." He "filled his position with great credit. His organization of the teachers' institutes, and the remarkable tact displayed by him in the management of them, resulted in their success from the beginning."³

The remainder of this section will be devoted to a brief presentation of what was accomplished during the administration of Mr. Groves and of his successor as State superintendents, so far as those results are recorded in the scattered sources of the period.⁴

These annual reports, while brief, are more uniform in their treatment of subjects than is often the case. Their statistics are very incomplete, however, and leave various important subjects, like attendance, out of consideration; usually only the figures for every other year are presented, and as far as statistics go, it is evident that the State officers were still thinking in terms of the separate counties rather than in those of the State.

During the 12 years between 1875 and 1887, while the educational fortunes of the State were under the direction of a State superintendent, the same subjects came up again and again for discussion. The questions of most importance were: The examinations of teachers and teachers' certificates, supervision or the annual and

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1881, ch. 369.

² Powell, L. P.: *Hist. of Ed. in Delaware*, p. 154.

³ Conrad, H. C.: *History of Delaware*, III, 302.

⁴ Six annual reports for this period were published: 1875-76, 1877-78, 1879-80, 1881-82, 1883-84, 1885-86, and biennial reports for 1887-88, 1889-90, 1891-92. For this period the auditor's reports were published separately from the assembly journals. In the school law, teachers were instructed under penalty of loss of salary to make monthly reports, but no such penalty was provided against district clerks if they should fail to pass these reports on to those higher up.

semiannual visits to the schools by the State superintendent or his assistant; teachers' institutes in the various counties and what was naturally suggested in that connection—the importance and need of a normal school; and the question of uniform textbooks. Other subjects that commanded the attention of the superintendents and got large representation in their reports were the condition of public schools in the cities and towns and statistics of the same; the public and semipublic educational work carried on at this period among the negro population and specimens of the examinations given applicants for teachers' certificates. The statistics for this period are to be found at the end of this volume.

The first annual report issued by the State covers the year ending April 1, 1876. Perhaps the most important subject of the time was the qualification of teachers. Before 1875 the only requirement for teaching was the good will of the community. The plan of annual examinations of teachers now proposed and enforced was found to be of service in raising the standard of qualification. Examinations, given partly oral and partly written, included orthography, reading, writing, mental and written arithmetic, geography, English grammar, history of the United States, and the theory and practice of teaching.

The most important duty of the superintendent at this period, perhaps, was that of visiting schools. The law required that all schools in the State should be visited annually by the superintendent. The purpose of the visit was twofold: First, to examine the plan of the teacher in his school classification, the number of daily recitations, the time devoted to each, the number of classes in each branch, and method of instruction used and made of government; and second, to encourage the teacher in doing what was right and proper, to show him how to remedy existing evils, to properly drill and to enkindle a manly enthusiasm in the pupils themselves.

Of the results Supt. Groves says in his first report:

In most cases the teachers were using the methods used in the schools where they were taught. If they had been taught according to the old method reading, writing, and ciphering, that was their program. It was reading without any regard to inflection, articulation, emphasis, or even a proper regard to the sounds of the oral elements; writing, without even so much as a specific supervision of the exercise; arithmetic, merely the "ciphering" part. In grammar there was the mere recitation of the text; in geography 8 or 10 questions, and "take your seats." There was too much of *learning lessons* and not enough of *teaching*. * * * In many schools neither grammar nor geography was taught. Reading, writing, and ciphering formed the sum and substance of the daily work.

By an act of 1881 an assistant State superintendent was appointed,¹ whose duties were alike in kind and character to those of the superintendent. He also was appointed by the governor for one year, was given a salary of \$800, and was required to aid the superintendent

¹ Ch. 300, law of 1881.

in his work. By this action the superintendent was partly relieved from the necessity of traveling from school to school and so released for the distinctively administrative duties of his office.

The law of 1875 required that the State superintendent should hold an institute in each county for at least three days, "for the purpose of instructing and assisting teachers in the best mode of teaching and governing schools and having a general interchange of views upon those subjects." The teachers were required to attend and occasionally to lose the time, although as a rule they were allowed to close their schools for the days the institutes were in session.¹ The State superintendent was the responsible officer in charge of the institutes and did most of the teaching, although aided now and then by lecturers from neighboring States, who did their work without charge, and also by local talent, including lawyers, doctors, ministers, and educators, who "lent their presence and assistance in the good cause."

During the earlier years the institutes were financed entirely from the fund collected from teachers in payment for teaching certificates. On the earnest recommendation of the State superintendent the assembly contributed in 1885 (ch. 445) the sum of \$300 annually for the use of the institutes, \$100 going to each county. In 1887 a similar sum of \$300 was given for a State teachers' institute. The very existence of these institutes suggested constantly and persistently the need of a normal school for the State. As something of a substitute for a normal school there was organized in 1888 a summer school for teachers at Smyrna. It was under the direction of Levin Irving Handy, county superintendent of Kent. In 1888, 59 students were enrolled; in 1889 the number was 60.

The free school law provided that the State board of education and the State superintendent should determine what textbooks were to be used in the schools, but they were given at first no power to enforce their decision.² The result was that many varieties of textbooks still appeared; one particular school with 33 pupils could boast of 26 classes. The difficulty was corrected by the law of 1881 (ch. 369), which directed that the State superintendent should purchase all the books to be used in the schools, pay for them out of State funds, and distribute them to the clerks of the school districts at cost price. These were to sell the books at fixed prices to the pupils and cover the receipts back into the hands of the State superintendent. This law put an additional burden on the clerks without increasing their pay and also subjected them to the risk of loss, for under the law they were responsible to the superintendent for the books ordered. In 1885 a five-year adoption period was provided.³

¹ In 1881 this was made the law. See ch. 369, sec. 9.

² An amendment in 1879 (ch. 46) required the school commissioners to certify under penalty that they had "adopted and used" the books directed to be used by the State board.

³ Laws of Delaware, 1885, ch. 446.

Notwithstanding evident weaknesses the superintendent could say in his first annual report that "there is a marked change for the better" and that "a genuine interest in public education is gradually but persistently overcoming any lingering prejudice to the new order of things. The position of public-school teaching is being ennobled and elevated." He still felt it necessary, however, to plead for more support, for in 1883 there—

seemed but one thing lacking, namely, the hearty cooperation of parents and school commissioners. . . . It is highly important that the school commissioners in each district should be workingmen, ready to labor in season and out of season to promote the interests of the schools, whether paid or not paid for their services. Hard labor is the sine qua non of a good school.¹

In 1877 Gov. Cochran put himself to the trouble of reviewing with some detail the historical development of the idea of free schools in this State from 1792 to the date of writing. He also reviewed the law of 1875, and in this message and in that of two years later rejoiced in the encouraging prospects of the schools.

In the report for 1878 (third annual) the superintendent declared that there had been "a very perceptible improvement in the qualifications of the teachers" and attributed this improvement in the main to the annual examination of teachers.

From my personal knowledge, and from careful calculation, I am satisfied that of the 462 teachers who were examined and received certificates not more than one-fifth of the same could have passed then [1875] the examinations required this year. The gradual elevation of the standard of qualifications year by year has been the means of inducing a more systematic and accurate study of the branches used in our schools and of fitting men and women for the responsible duty of training our youth.

In 1879 the act of 1875 was so amended² that it required the applicant for the teacher's certificate to answer 60 per cent of the questions set on orthography, reading, writing, mental and written arithmetic, geography, history of the United States, and English grammar for a third-grade certificate, good for one year; answering 90 per cent secured a second-grade certificate, good for two years; and for a first grade there were added to the above, natural philosophy, elements of rhetoric, geometry, and algebra. Such certificate was good for three years.

Improvement in the teachers meant naturally an improvement in the schools, and in this report the superintendent was able to suggest the question of graded schools for the more advanced:

It has been a matter of consideration whether New Castle County is not ready for a course of study, year by year, for pupils between the ages of 6 and 16 years.

In this report also the superintendent urged the necessity of a codification of the school laws³ and that the whole matter of levy-

¹ Seventh An. Rep., 1881-82, p. 9.

² Laws of Delaware, 1879, chs. 45, 46.

³ Codification ordered by ch. 399, sec. 10, laws of 1881.

ing and collecting the school tax should be left in the hands of the levy court commissioners. It will be remembered that the method of levying and collecting this tax had not been changed by the act of 1875. The irreducible minimum required by the State had been increased, however, from \$75 to \$100 for each school district in New Castle and Kent and from \$30 to \$60 in Sussex.¹ It was in practically all cases necessary to raise an additional sum by a popular tax levy, and this was now as it had been in the past a source of much bickering and confusion.² The State teachers' association, which had been organized in 1879, at its annual meeting in August, 1880, went on record in the matter of this levy. They condemned the method in use and petitioned the assembly that school taxation be placed "on the same basis as other tax laws of the State."³

In many cases school furniture was still in a primitive and therefore chaotic condition, for it had been "made without particular reference to school uses." Difficulty was also experienced in persuading school committees to improve their old buildings or undertake the construction of new ones.

In 1881-82 the superintendent reports the situation as particularly bad. Several new and quite creditable school buildings had been erected.

Yet what has been done in this direction is only a very small fractional part of what ought to have been done. What we need, perhaps, more than anything else, is a strong public sentiment in favor of better school accommodations. A majority of our school buildings are unfit for the purposes for which they are used. They are flimsily constructed, wretchedly arranged, built on small lots and in low places, and contribute in no respect to the comfort of the children. Nearly all of them seem to have been built without a thought of ventilation.

But soon after this date conditions began to improve, for in 1883-84 the superintendent reported that \$129,000 was spent in "the erection of better and more commodious schoolhouses. Yet this is but a small part of the work to be done in this direction." In 1885 and 1886 more than \$125,000 was spent for the same purpose.

In 1883 there was made to the free schools the first direct appropriation from the State treasury in addition to the State school fund. This amounted to \$25,000; of which \$10,000 went to New Castle County, because of its larger population, while Kent and Sussex each received \$7,500. In the last two again the sum received was divided equally among the districts,⁴ but in New Castle it was divided in proportion to the school population in the district,⁵ while an

¹ In 1881 the requirement was raised to \$150 in New Castle and \$125 in Kent. There was no change in Sussex (see ch. 399). In 1883 (ch. 47) and 1885 (ch. 440) the requirement for Sussex was raised from \$60 to \$75.

² For example, see Seventh An. Rep. for 1881-82, p. 18.

³ Report for 1880, p. 14.

⁴ Modified somewhat as to Kent County by Laws of Delaware, 1885, ch. 442.

⁵ Laws of Delaware, 1883, ch. 47.

amendment of 1885¹ provided that no district in Sussex County should receive any of this fund until it had raised at least \$75 by taxation.

In April, 1883, Supt. Groves was succeeded in office by Thomas N. Williams. This gave the new superintendent an opportunity to review the eight years' work of his predecessor:

When I entered upon the duties of my office in April, 1883, owing to the efficient management of my predecessor, and his worthy assistant, I found that the school had been established upon a healthy basis and a most careful supervision has been exercised.

The experience of the past year has shown a most satisfactory development and growth and has been rewarded by a gratifying measure of success. I can safely say that there is a growing interest in the cause of public instruction in our State, which, though not so generally active perhaps as we could desire, is nevertheless so much more so than formerly that I am convinced our schools are not retrograding but steadily and surely advancing. The increase of interest in our free schools is evidenced by the number of beautiful and commodious houses that have been erected during the past year in the three counties of the State; the old, comfortless, homemade desks that have given place to new and improved school furniture; the willingness with which the people have, in many of the towns and rural districts, used their influence to obtain sufficient means for procuring good school apparatus and good teachers; and the general manifestation on the part of the public of a desire to elevate the standard of free education.

* * * The seeming importance of our free schools has gradually assumed the force of a profound conviction. * * * Considered as the growth of 10 years, the Delaware system of "free schools" is a most gratifying work. Never before has public sentiment been so strong in favor of the support of free public schools as to-day. The press of the State is a unit in their favor. The leading men of all parties and all religious denominations acknowledge and defend the duty of securing a good common-school education to the children of all classes.

This judgment pronounced by Mr. Williams on the work of his predecessor appears to be a fair and not unreasonable estimate of the development of the first years under a State system, and the development thus inaugurated by Groves was continued by Williams and then by the State board.

The Delaware State Teachers' Association dates from December 30, 1875, when it was temporarily organized in Wilmington. Efforts had been made to develop such an organization in 1847 and again in 1854, but with indifferent success. It received permanent organization at Rehoboth, August 28, 1879, and since then has been of particular value in encouraging the holding of local educational gatherings. About 25 such were organized in 1883-84, mainly in Kent and Sussex. They were held in churches, schoolhouses, and town halls, and were well attended, and "in several cases in our little crossroads educational meetings was laid the foundation of what is now a beautiful and attractive school building."

The evidences of progress were again summarized for 1886. Commodious houses, good apparatus and good teachers, and a desire to

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1885, ch. 441.

elevate the standard were now everywhere visible, but "the want of a more active interest" was still holding many districts from advance. Another drawback was the frequent change of teachers, and while many teachers were improving, "one of the great needs of the State" was a normal training school. This led to a somewhat detailed discussion by the superintendent on the organization of such an institution, but its day was not yet.

The report for 1886 was the last issued by the State superintendent. The next (that for the two years ending Dec. 31, 1888) was issued under the auspices of the State board of education, which, under the act of 1887, became the administrative head of the State system.

When consideration is directed away from what was actually accomplished under the act of 1875 and is centered on the general tendency of school administration during the period, it is possible to trace development in two particular directions. These were: (1) The unusual development during these years of incorporated town and city schools; and (2) the beginning of the State education of negro children. These phases of educational growth will now be considered.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCORPORATED TOWN AND CITY SCHOOLS.

It will be recalled that the development of the town and city schools began practically with the enactment of the free-school law of 1829, but that for the next 20 years there was little progress. About 1852, as told in an earlier chapter, individual development became possible by the enactment of more progressive laws. The consolidation of contiguous districts lying within or near the corporate town limits began; in many cases, especially under the later acts of incorporation, the new consolidated district was allowed to retain the total of the shares of the school fund to which each separate district had been entitled under the older acts.¹ Their development was further greatly advanced by giving them authority to levy taxes over and beyond the \$300 limit that had been fixed by the law of 1861 or to borrow money and secure it by mortgage on school property or by the faith of the town. In this way Wilmington and New Castle had made much progress in city school evolution, and others, after the close of the Civil War, found it of advantage to follow their example.

This consolidation of outlying neighboring districts, absorption of older private systems, and general reorganization under special charters, but sometimes without special favors, continued in the towns under the new school law of 1875, which did not exempt them from the general State law. A change began, however, when an act of 1879² exempted from the control of the State superintendent and

¹ 1831, chs. 206, 208; 1863, chs. 52, 54, 63, 65; 1886, ch. 457.

² Laws of 1879, ch. 46.

State board of education the incorporated schools of towns and cities: "This act shall not apply to any school or school district managed or controlled by an incorporated board of education, unless by special request of said board."

This provision first appears in the act of 1879 and is probably responsible for the unusual development of incorporated schools which took place in the next few years. It is evident that there was a considerable rush to attain this condition of semi-independence, for in 1883-84 the State superintendent, in protesting against the tendency of the day, said that the teachers of these incorporated schools were not required to attend State examinations or county institutes, and he argued that since they availed themselves of State funds they should not be exempt from State supervision.¹

There seems to have been no other legislation during the period that concerned incorporated schools in particular; but this large degree of local autonomy helped beyond question in their development, although it has made more difficult the task of the historian by making reports more complex and less uniform.

There follows below a table giving such statistics of incorporated schools as are available. As is often the case, these are incomplete and imperfect. As there was no distribution of money on a population basis, that item is generally omitted. The earlier reports show a gradual development in the city and town schools; they continue to expand through 1889-90. In the report for 1892 they are omitted altogether.

Statistics of incorporated (i. e. city and town) schools in Delaware, 1875-1890.

Year ending	Town.	Length of term in days.	Schoolhouses.	Teachers.	School population.	Enrollment.	Average attendance.	Income.	Expenditures.	Value of school property.	Average cost per pupil.	Average salary per month.
Apr. 1, 1876	Dover.....	204	6	.....	402	217	.....	.....	\$2,753	\$10,000	\$8.84	\$55.20
	Delaware City.....	200	3	.....	300	186	.....	\$1,384	1,384	900	4.61	38.08
Apr. 1, 1878	Dover.....	206	.....	.....	1,022	401	236	3,000	2,500	.....	7.50	.....
	Lewes.....	180	1	.....	400	283	185	.....	1,850	9,000	6.52	.....
	New Castle.....	223	7	.....	782	507	289	.....	3,941	.....	7.77	.....
Dec. 1, 1880	Delaware City.....	206	.....	.....	222	104	1,291	1,291	1,291	800	5.81	.....
	Dover.....	203	.....	.....	381	230	2,614	3,110	.....	.....	8.16	.....
	Lewes.....	186	6	.....	400	224	212	2,250	2,250	10,000	6.91	.....
	New Castle.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	273	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Dec. 1, 1882	Delaware City.....	200	3	.....	210	140	1,800	1,800	1,300	980	40.00	.....
	Dover.....	196	8	.....	355	210	.....	2,999	18,000	8.84	40.00	.....
	Lewes.....	166	.....	.....	280	220	.....	.....	.....	.....	38.76	.....
	Millford.....	200	4	.....	187	115	.....	1,600	3,000	8.55	.....	.....
	New Castle.....	205	9	.....	539	323	4,172	4,145	.....	.....	40.00	.....
	Seaford.....	188	4	.....	250	180	1,408	1,408	4,500	.....	35.90	.....
Dec. 1, 1884	Delaware City.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	Dover.....	197	.....	.....	458	280	.....	3,731	24,700	8.14	.....	.....
	Lewes.....	.....	6	.....	300	240	2,208	.....	10,000	.....	.....	.....
	Millford.....	.....	3	.....	188	103	3,150	1,450	2,500	7.80	.....	.....
	New Castle.....	203	9	.....	540	358	4,858	4,981	13,000	9.22	.....	.....
Seaford.....	180	4	.....	350	225	1,577	1,550	9,000	6.88	.....	.....

¹ Rep. for 1883-84, p. 21.

Statistics of incorporated (i. e., city and town) schools in Delaware, 1875-1890—Con.

Year ending	Town.	Length of term in days.	Schoolhouses.	Teachers.	School population.	Enrollment.	Average attendance.	Income.	Expenditures.	Value of school property.	Average cost per pupil.	Average salary per month.
Dec. 31, 1886	Delaware City.....	200	3		225	135			\$2,914	\$8,000	\$9.00	
	Dover.....	196	7		512	245			5,868	26,000	8.14	
	Lewes.....	180			123	245	\$3,025		3,025	10,000		
	Millford.....	203	4	9	540	358	5,968		5,968	2,000		
	New Castle.....	206	3	9	185	135	1,450		1,450	15,000		
Dec. 31, 1888	Newark.....	249			249				1,422	10,000		
	Seaford.....	204	4		235	157	2,927		1,610	800		
	Delaware City.....	204	3	8	493	251			4,079	21,300	8.36	
	Dover.....	180			343			2,777	2,387	9,000		
	Laurel.....	180	1	4	182	146			975	7,000		
Dec. 31, 1890	Lewes.....	206	3	9	550				5,498	15,000		
	Millford.....	200	1	4	215	166	2,543		1,475	8,500		
	New Castle.....	180	1	4	279	185	1,769		1,744	7,000		
	Newark.....	201	4		223	139	2,837		1,634	8,000	\$39.00	
	Seaford.....	197	2	9	447	272			5,687	21,300	5.36	
Dec. 31, 1890	Delaware City.....	170	1	5	300	268	190	3,257	1,710	6,400		38.00
	Dover.....	200	1	7	450	337	263			9,100		
	Laurel.....	202	1	4	260	208	140		1,565	7,000		
	Lewes.....	200	1	9	617	472	5,307		4,842	15,000		35.55
	Millford.....	200	1	4	233	162	2,556		1,550	10,500		35.75
New Castle.....	184	1	5	400	340	216		2,788	3,092	8,000		

When attention is turned from the smaller Delaware cities to Wilmington, it will be found that the favor which had been granted to them by the law of 1879, and which had made them semi-independent, had belonged to the larger city in an even larger degree practically from the beginning, for in writing the history of any phase of public education in Delaware it is soon apparent that the city of Wilmington has been educationally a law unto itself, independent of and unresponsive to the remainder of the State or to its school officers. This stage of independence was attained at an early period in the race for educational development, and has been assiduously maintained, although it does not appear that any effort has been made to reduce the city schools from independence to dependence on State authority.

The early history of the development and growth of public schools in Wilmington has been given already in an earlier chapter. There is little in the story that is spectacular. It is the story of a steady educational growth and development, with no mountain peaks and few hills that rise above the general level. It may be more accurately likened to a plain ascending with a gentle but more or less uniform slope toward the highlands of educational efficiency.

The educational development of the city in 1859 may be seen from the report of Judge Willard Hall in April, 1859. He says:

In schoolhouse No. 1 are two schools; one for boys and one for girls. In the boys' school are taught reading, writing, orthography, mental and written arithmetic, gram-

¹ See Rev. Code, 1815, sec. 2306; based on ch. 67, sec. 31, laws of 1898. ² See ch. 3, part 4, p. 69.

mar, composition, geography, history, astronomy, algebra, geometry, and philosophy; and in the girls' school the same branches with the exception of geometry and composition and the addition of drawing.

In schoolhouse No. 4 the branches in the boys' department are reading, writing, spelling and defining, mental and written arithmetic, and geography, and in the girls' department the same branches with the addition of grammar, composition, physical geography, history, physiology, philosophy, algebra, and drawing.

It was about this time also that the schools faced what was perhaps the greatest crisis in all their history. The story is told in the report of the board for 1861.

The city council, on the application of the school board, investigated the schools and found that their needs were outrunning their income. They asked the general assembly for authority to make a loan. This was given by the assembly, conditioned on its approval by popular vote, but on taking the vote it was found that the very persons for the benefit of whose children the measure was proposed had voted it down. The city council then applied to the next assembly to make a loan and was refused.¹

The Civil War was then on and attention was for a time distracted from the schools. Before the struggle was over, however, the act of February 11, 1863 (ch. 261), permitted the city to borrow \$12,000 to build a schoolhouse without requiring the school authorities to first submit the matter to a vote. In 1869 (ch. 422) they were permitted to borrow \$25,000 for increased accommodations. In 1871 the charter of the Wilmington city school board was extended for 20 years and was given the fullest powers in the administration and control of the city schools (ch. 43) and to borrow \$30,000 for new buildings and furnishings (ch. 46). In 1873, also, \$30,000 was borrowed (ch. 407).

Since that time the city has borrowed what it felt to be necessary to advance the interests of the schools. The city also anticipated the State in the assistance rendered toward the education of the newly enfranchised slaves and took up the subject with an honest interest. In 1866 was inaugurated the movement which resulted the next year in the organization of the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of the Colored People. In 1869 the city contributed \$5,000 toward the erection of a schoolhouse which had been undertaken by the Freedman's Bureau and in 1871 gave \$1,000 toward the support of their schools, which up to that time had been supported mainly out of private contributions. This contribution was renewed in 1872. In 1873 the Howard School became a part of the city system, and before long the absorption of all the colored schools was accomplished.

The organization of the city high school was begun about 1870, the first high-school class being graduated in 1875. The course then consisted of three years. In 1877 the general organization was as

¹ Wilmington School Report, 1875-76, p. 57.

follows: The primary schools were divided into 12 grades, which were intended to occupy 5 months each; in the grammar school 8 grades covered 4 years, so that the whole time required for preparation for the high school required 10 years. During the school year 1903-4 the high-school course was extended from 3 to 4 years and "for the first time in the history of the school pupils were permitted some choice in the selection of the studies which they wished to pursue." In recent years the curriculum has been divided, and there are now offered three courses of 4 years each: Classical, Latin-scientific, and general. There is a teachers' training school, and a department of manual training was opened in 1899. Then followed industrial training and domestic economy. Medical inspection has been introduced, and compulsory attendance is now enforced. The total expense of the high school in 1911 was \$39,144.14.

In 1888 the Howard School—named in honor of Gen. O. O. Howard, who through the Freedman's Bureau was instrumental in its first organization—was evolved from its humble beginnings into a colored high school. A three-year high school was established at first, but was by degrees developed into a full-fledged four-year course, the first graduates in the latter being the class of 1911. This school contains also a normal department for the education of colored teachers and a manual training department. The total expenses of the colored schools of Wilmington, including the primary, grammar, and high-school grades, was \$52,228.72 in 1911.

Taken as a whole, the schools of Wilmington have had the most even and uniform development of any schools within the State. In the early eighties there was considerable complaint over absentees and the lack of a sufficient teaching force. Evening classes were organized to meet a demand in this line, and in 1885, as a supplement to its work, a drawing school, supported largely by private gifts, was opened and reached an attendance of 133 the first year. The funds raised by taxation were supplemented from time to time by loans made on the faith of the city, and the development of the city's educational system has proceeded with more or less uniformity and continuity in matters of school accommodations, income and expenditure, total enrollment, and average attendance, total available school buildings and increase in the teaching force. All this increase has been brought about in harmony with the general growth and development of the city, the tax rate for schools being now less than 1 per cent more than in 1886-87.

This gradual and steady growth, this expansion and fairly uniform unfolding of a city system, is brought out more clearly in the attached table of Wilmington city school growth since 1872-73. Many other statistics are printed in the city reports, but they fail to give such important items as average salary and total school population.

THE ADMINISTRATIONS OF GROVES AND WILLIAMS.

Statistics of the public schools of Wilmington, Del., 1892-1916.

Years.	Length of term, in days.	School-houses.	Teachers.	Total enrollment.	Average attendance.	Total receipts.	Expenditures.		Value school property.	Tax rate, in mills.	Cost per capita:		High school enrollment.	Negro schools.	
							For salaries.	Total, including salaries.			Based on enrollment.	Based on attendance.		Teachers.	Total enrollment.
1872-73		15	82	5,920	3,355	840,577	\$32,548	\$54,782							
1873-74		16	90	5,778	3,565										
1874-75		17	98	6,033	3,505										
1875-76		16	97	5,947	3,720	119,220	43,201	41,854	\$265,339						
1876-77		18	106	6,687	4,454										
1877-78		18	110	6,831	4,435										
1878-79		18	112	6,802	4,387										
1879-80		18	113	6,863	4,427										
1880-81	203	19	116	7,065	4,385	75,104	53,498	65,541							
1881-82	202	19	117	7,123	4,600	105,668	54,444	86,370							
1882-83	202	20	122	7,075	5,197	80,664	51,823	72,379	314,749						
1883-84	201	22	135	8,259	5,718				328,661					11	817
1884-85	208	27	163	8,178	6,274									11	838
1885-86	208	27	162	8,174	6,274	120,713	60,362	116,759	396,660	3.25	\$10.47	813.20			
1886-87	207	24	167	8,814	6,170	124,041	69,839	124,700			12.11	15.06		12	870
1887-88	207	24	162	8,604	6,490	120,714	76,323	126,026			10.96	14.61		16	1,017
1888-89	207	25	168	8,994	6,233	147,175	80,623	150,720			14.33	14.33		17	1,140
1889-90	206	26	175	9,183	6,183	152,284	86,292	150,400			12.81	16.31		17	1,151
1890-91	206	27	187	9,568	6,491	160,043	92,598	147,666			12.61	16.91		20	1,263
1891-92	206	27	193	9,463	6,776	171,223	100,920	148,961			12.64	18.84		20	1,263
1892-93	206	25	199	9,622	6,902	157,602	101,891	146,508			13.33	18.84		22	1,308
1893-94	200	27	207	9,709	7,188	166,262	108,450	166,080			13.72	18.24		24	1,381
1894-95	202	27	208	9,784	7,318	168,262	109,847	168,160			13.84	18.48		24	1,381
1895-96	208	27	217	10,162	7,960	171,088	102,301	170,936			13.30	17.66		24	1,381
1896-97	201	28	236	10,740	8,404	175,666	118,261	170,643			13.84	20.16		31	1,542
1897-98	201	28	245	11,005	8,062	182,566	124,075	187,643			15.13	20.61		31	1,583
1898-99	202	29	245	11,025	8,078	226,005	134,304	247,298			15.24	20.80		33	1,583
1899-1900	202	29	270	11,230	8,476	231,612	141,566	261,060			15.76	20.44		34	1,541
1900-1901	197	29	270	11,230	8,476	231,612	141,566	261,060			18.45	24.60		38	1,646
1901-2	197	29	285	11,304	8,483	234,680	138,168	264,471			18.32	25.30		38	1,646
1902-3	196	29	285	11,304	8,483	234,680	138,168	264,471			17.42	25.30		38	1,646
1903-4	196	29	292	11,009	8,187	238,883	137,420	267,471			17.42	25.30		38	1,646
1904-5	196	29	292	11,009	8,187	238,883	137,420	267,471			17.42	25.30		38	1,646
1905-6	196	29	295	11,194	8,201	261,176	173,765	241,294			17.42	25.30		38	1,646
1906-7	197	29	299	11,102	8,219	325,666	173,955	290,657			17.42	25.30		40	1,646
1907-8	194	29	304	11,051	8,241	290,658	190,137	276,266			21.68	26.34		41	1,626

The totals on which these per capita figures are based will be found to be smaller than those given in the preceding columns of receipts and expenditures. The figures as given are reproduced from the Wilmington city reports.



Statistics of the public schools of Wilmington, Del., 1872-1916—Continued.

Year.	Length of term, in days.	School houses.	Teachers.	Total enrollment.	Average attend. aces.	Total receipts.	Expenditures.		Value school property.	Tax rate, in mills.	Cost per capita.		Negro schools.	
							For salaries.	Total, including salaries.			Based on enrollment.	Based on average attend. aces.	Teachers.	Total enrollment.
1872-3	122	26	207	10,908	8,271	\$225,115	\$192,400	\$218,001	\$1,015,949	4.8	\$22.79	890.21	42	1,472
1873-4	122	20	210	11,108	8,265	214,336	200,792	212,850	1,024,107	4.8	19.25	25.84	43	1,556
1874-5	122	20	212	11,119	8,199	203,314	213,717	262,468	1,046,977	4.8	21.16	21.00	44	1,658
1875-6	122	20	207	11,077	8,417	232,249	222,608	266,194	1,069,977	4.8	21.16	21.29	43	1,204
1876-7	122	20	211	11,859	8,544	257,245	200,858	247,772	1,127,558	4.6	24.16	21.12	43	1,481
1877-8	122	21	211	11,694	8,822	227,506	200,124	277,057	1,123,066	3.6	23.15	25.92	44	1,437
1878-9	122	21	227	12,571	9,343	222,549	203,146	315,427	1,123,066	4	21.57	25.32	44	1,456
1879-80	122	31	247	12,574	9,311	322,009	252,845	368,737	1,191,024	4.6	26.42	32.46	46	1,414

Since the average attendance for high and negro schools was not available the enrollment was used instead, with result that the cost based on average attendance as here given is a little too small.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF STATE EDUCATION FOR NEGROES.

Omitting the efforts of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the eighteenth century, it will be found that the beginnings of the movement for the education of the Negro in Delaware go back at least to the incorporation of the African School Society of Wilmington on January 20, 1824.¹ It was given the usual powers of a corporate body and might hold property up to \$5,000, but there is no formal statement that its purpose was to organize a school. In 1847 the authority was given the society to extend its holdings from \$5,000 to \$15,000,² but no reports on the actual accomplishments of the society have been accessible. There are indications that now and then negro pupils received a little educational training during the ante bellum period, but this was neither great in amount nor valuable in character. As late as 1866 there were only seven schools for Negroes in the State—three in Wilmington; two in Camden, one at Odessa, and one at Newport. In December of that year a movement was inaugurated in Wilmington by influential citizens of that city, including Mr. William S. Hilles, Prof. Wm. A. Reynolds, Mr. Howard M. Jenkins and others, together with Mr. Francis T. King and Dr. James Carey Thomas, of Baltimore, who were doing similar work in that city. The Wilmington movement resulted in the organization on January 3, 1867,³ of the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of the Colored People. The association celebrated its first anniversary on February 28, 1868, with an unusual address by Ebenezer D. Bassett, a colored man, who in a burst of enthusiasm declared that his youth had been spent among white children in New England and his maturer years in teaching colored children and that he could now say "emphatically and conscientiously" that he had "never been able to detect the least difference in the capacities of the two classes of youth to acquire and retain knowledge and thought."⁴

The work of the association was carried on through an agent called an actuary, and beginning with 1867 it undertook to accumulate a fund from which to pay the salaries of teachers in the colored schools. Many private subscriptions were made to its funds and the Freedman's Bureau in Washington donated sufficient lumber to erect some 10 schoolhouses. Rev. John G. Furey became the first actuary, and within six months the association had been able to increase the schools from 7 to 13, 7 being located in New Castle, 4 in Kent, and 4 in Sussex. The actuary had a general superintendence

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1824, ch. 210.

² *Ibid.*, 1847, ch. 135.

³ See Conrad, H. C.: A Glimpse of the Colored Schools, 1863, and Powell, L. P.: History of Education in Delaware, 1893, p. 108. See also some account of this work in Barnard's Report on Education in the District of Columbia.

⁴ Copy of Bassett's address in Library of Congress.

over the erection of buildings, the placing of teachers, and the general conduct of the schools. The association for its part agreed to provide for the salary of teachers, which averaged about \$14 per month; the colored people in the several localities agreed for their part to pay the board of the teachers and to meet the miscellaneous expenses of the schools. This was done by charging the pupils a small tuition fee. Mr. Furay was succeeded as actuary by Samuel Woolman and he in turn gave place to Abbie C. Peckham, who served from 1868 to 1874.

The first annual report of the association was published in February, 1868; others followed in February, 1869, and March, 1870. They are summarized in the reports of the United States Commissioner of Education, 1871-1874, from which the following accounts are taken:

In 1869 the association built a schoolhouse in Wilmington, \$5,000 of the cost being contributed by the city council to cover similar amounts given by the association and by Gen. Howard on account of the Freedman's Bureau. The house was finished in a thorough and substantial manner and was dedicated September 20, 1869. There were then 4 separate-day schools in Wilmington which were all united in the new building. There were in Wilmington 150 pupils in the primary grades, with 4 teachers, and 50 in the higher or normal grades with 1 teacher. In the State there were all told, as given in the reported summary, 29 schools and teachers, with a total enrollment of 2,104 and an average attendance of 1,221. Of these pupils 1,297 were in reading and spelling, 711 in writing, 586 in arithmetic, 285 in geography, 76 in grammar, and 273 in the alphabet and primer.

The receipts for the year amounted to \$10,483.24, of which \$2,440 came from the Freedman's Bureau, and \$3,833.58 was collected from the patrons of the school through a "weekly charge of 10 cents for each pupil" which was applied to the payment of board of teachers and the purchase of books and stationery. "Howard Associations" were also formed in the State to pay the tuition of poor children. They had 400 members who contributed \$40 weekly, enough to pay the tuition of 400 children.

The actuary urged the need of a normal school for the training of teachers, and on November 15, 1871, she reported for that year 20 schools with 22 teachers; 9 were located in New Castle County, 8 in Kent, and 3 in Sussex; as a rule they were in the towns. The city of Wilmington contributed that year \$1,000 toward the support of Negro schools. This sum and the gift of \$5,000 in 1869 for building seem to have been the first public contributions made to Negro education in the State.¹

¹ Report U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1871, pp. 115-118. The census of 1870 gives 1,196 as the number of negroes who attended school in 1870 and 11,920, 10 years of age and over who could not write.

The work of the Delaware Association for 1872 as summarized¹ is not so complete nor so encouraging as that of former years. Funds were shorter because the Freedman's Bureau and certain friends in England had withdrawn their support. For these reasons the association had to depend more on the school localities and patrons. Wilmington city again contributed \$1,000 to the work, although there was no provision made for the education of Negroes "by either the State or town authorities." Eighteen schools with 21 teachers were reported; the schools were in session from two to nine and one-half months. The teachers were all colored women except the principal of the Howard School. The highest enrollment reported was 984 in January, 1872, with an average attendance of 858; about half of these pupils were over 16. The total expenses were over \$5,000, the association paying about one-half and the patrons the other half. In conclusion the report says: "Throughout the State there is a marked decrease of unfriendliness toward our work exhibited by the white people."

The reports for 1873 were more encouraging than in 1872. In the latter year the State board of education took over and made a part of the public system the Howard School of Wilmington, which, as has been shown, already was organized through the joint efforts of the city council of Wilmington, the Freedman's Bureau, and private citizens. The president of the State board wrote also that he was favorably impressed by the benefits conferred by the Delaware Association in helping the local committees in the selection of teachers, in the purchase of uniform textbooks, and in making reports. He then adds: "I think it is not too much to assume that in consequence of this supervision the colored schools in some parts of the State are in better condition and more efficient in their work than the white schools."²

The association itself reported that for the year 1872-73 there were 21 schools with an enrollment of about 1,800; the average attendance was 866; the association spent about \$4,000, of which about \$3,000 was raised by private subscription in and near Wilmington, while the colored people raised and expended on their own account about \$5,000 for board and salary of teachers, repairs, etc.³

The association had 28 schools with 28 teachers and an enrollment of about 1,200⁴ in 1874 and with that year the first chapter in the history of negro education in Delaware comes to an end.⁵

¹ Rep. U. S. Commis. of Ed., 1872, pp. 55-56.

² *Ibid.*, 1873, pp. 58-59.

³ *Ibid.*, 1873, pp. 63-64.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1874, p. 56.

⁵ For the sources for this phase of education in the State, see the Delaware Association's reports transmitted to the U. S. Commissioner of Education and printed in his Reports for 1871-1874; Conrad's A. Olinpae at the Colored Schools (Wilmington, Del., 1908) and his History of Delaware (1908); III, pp. 816-819. See also, Powell, L. P.: History of Education in Delaware (1906), p. 166.

In 1875 private philanthropy begins to give way to State action. Up to that time all efforts had been the result of private initiative given through the Delaware Association, supplemented by such help as the negroes could themselves render. Up to 1875, with the exception of the help given in Wilmington, "there had been no donation made by the State; neither had there been any legislation that recognized in any way the colored children in the educational system of the State."¹

There had been, however, at least an attempt made to make such a connection. The sponsors of the State school bill proposed in 1873 had tried to effect this union, but failed. They had proposed that under given conditions the colored population of any neighborhood might be allowed to raise \$75 in the manner then prescribed by law. The effect of the proposed law would have been to organize a second county system, parallel with that of the whites, each race supporting its own schools. But this proposal went down with the defeat of the general law.²

In 1875 there came the change. Two acts of that session dealt with the question of Negro education. Chapter 48 allowed the levy courts to lay an annual tax of 30 cents on the hundred "upon the assessment of the real and personal property and poll of colored persons," the proceeds of which was to be set aside "as a separate and distinct fund for the support and maintenance of colored schools in this State."³ These taxes were to be collected in the usual way and paid over to the county treasurer, who was to keep them as a separate fund and pay them out to the treasurer of the Delaware Association by whom they were to be devoted "to the support and maintenance of colored schools," each county receiving such sum as it has paid in. Another act (ch. 47) allowed a tax on the dogs of negroes, to be collected in Sussex for the benefit of negro schools in that county.

As has been pointed out in case of the act proposed in 1873, the result of the acts of 1875 was to create a second educational system in Delaware, alike in scope and character to that which had been evolved for the whites through two generations of effort and differing from it only in the amount of its resources.

In the beginning the Negro schools seem to have made slight impression, for there is no mention of this phase of the work in the free-school report for 1875-76. Mr. Henry C. Conrad became actuary of the Delaware Association in May, 1876, and remained in charge of this work for about 16 years, when it was finally and completely absorbed into the State system. He made regular reports to the State au-

¹ Conrad: *Glimpses at the Colored Schools*, p. 7.

² Report U. S. Comm. of Ed., 1873, pp. 51-52.

³ An amendment of 1881 required each hundred to receive back again its own taxes paid in and no more, and the lowest number of pupils permitted was fixed at 15.

thorities, and as those reports are printed as a part of those of the State superintendent, it is possible to trace the steps by which the work was gradually taken over by the State.

In 1878 Mr., now Judge, Conrad pointed out that the school tax yielded only income sufficient to pay about one-third of the expenses of the schools, the other two-thirds had to be raised mainly among the Negroes themselves, but —

notwithstanding the stress of the times and the great scarcity of money among this particular class, in almost every instance the teachers' salaries and other expenses of the schools have been promptly met and the schools closed free from debt.

This was the situation of affairs from 1875 to 1881. During this period the Negroes were bearing the entire burden of supporting their own schools. The income of the Delaware Association had fallen off so much that it could now do little more than employ an agent. The employment of this agent or actuary was always deemed by the association as a wise and necessary action, for he looked after the selection of teachers, controlled the disbursing of funds, and was in entire control of the colored schools. He was in reality more of a State superintendent within the limits of his province than was the officer who bore the title.

The first direct participation of the State as such in the education of the Negro was through the act passed on March 22, 1881. This was doubtless in response to an appeal from Actuary Conrad for State aid. In the report for 1880 State Supt. Groves quoted with approval the reference of the actuary to the "self-sacrificing efforts the colored people of this State have been making for the last 12 years," and urged that the State respond to their request for financial aid. In response to this appeal, and largely through the efforts of Thomas N. Williams, then chairman of the house committee on education, later State superintendent, the State made a direct appropriation of \$2,400 for the general purposes of education among the colored population. It was provided that this money should be disbursed by the Delaware Association. It was to be divided equally, but no school should participate in the distribution of this fund unless it was open for at least three months and had had an average attendance of 20 pupils.¹

In 1883 another act was passed² which went a step further in fostering Negro schools. It charged the State superintendent with "the general supervision of the colored schools of the State" and provided \$5,000 per annum out of the State treasury for the promotion of negro education, instead of \$2,400 as under the law of 1881. The law of 1883 provided further that the State fund should be divided equally between the counties and between the various schools in the county. It was required that the school should be at least

¹ Laws of 1881, ch. 362, passed Mar. 22.

² Laws of 1883, ch. 48, passed Apr. 19.

three months in length and have an average attendance of at least 12 pupils. The taxes collected from Negro citizens were still kept separate.

The State superintendent reported for the year ending December 1, 1884, the income of colored schools as follows: State appropriation, \$4,987.34; colored school tax, \$2,873.69; Delaware Association, \$315.25; total, \$8,176.28. The average amount paid each school per month was \$24, and the term varied in length from four to eight months, but there was for the year no marked increase in attendance. Wet weather and bad roads were made responsible for this failure. It was reported that in some schools it was still necessary to charge a small tuition fee, but the increased appropriation from the State had brought these schools "much nearer to a 'free school' system." The report for 1886 was made under the same law. There had been "substantial and encouraging progress." There were 69 schools outside of Wilmington with an enrollment of 3,563, and \$7,166.69 had been received, of which \$4,655.63 came from the State appropriation and \$2,511.06 from taxes. "Well-educated, industrious, and earnest teachers" had been employed, and the average term was 4½ months. The actuary points out the schools of New Castle, Middletown, Newark, Smyrna, Milford, Seaford, and Lewes as strong, while the one in Dover would "compare favorably with many of the graded schools," but "more suitable and comfortable houses" were needed. It was suggested by the superintendent that "many of the schools in the larger towns might be made more efficient by allowing them to form local boards and to increase their facilities to meet the expenses of the schools."

This suggestion of the superintendent was evidently the basis for the legislation of 1887. In that year another phase of the movement appears in the incorporation of negro schools in Dover and Slaughter Neck. The former was a town, the latter a country district. Each was exempted from the general tax provision of 1875 relating to negro schools and was permitted instead to levy a special tax on all negro citizens within its bounds. Each was given also its share of the State apportionment for colored schools. Each had authority to elect its own board of directors and each entered on an official life similar in all respects to the incorporated white schools. This separate incorporation of negro schools had its highest development in 1889, when the negro schools in Seaford, Kenton Hundred, Lewes, and Milford received such charters. The Colored A. and M. College was founded in 1891, but no special charters were then granted, probably for the reasons intimated in the 1892 report of the county superintendent of Sussex, who says that in the matter of administration the negroes had "absolutely failed with the provisions of the law grant-

ing them power to levy and collect school taxes in certain districts. They are not sufficiently intelligent to deal with the matter of taxation." To prove this he cites the fact that while they levied \$1,449 in Sussex they collected only \$569. More effective methods of collecting the tax were needed, and it was suggested that each school district be required to contribute a certain amount of tax for its own support, as the white schools were required to do. It is evident that this view of the situation was accepted, for no acts of incorporation for negro schools were passed after 1889; and in 1893 all incorporated colored schools were abolished; and they were then subjected "to the same laws and under the supervision of the superintendent of schools for the county in which they are situate, in the same manner as now by law provided for unincorporated colored schools."¹

Another act of the session² of 1887 codified and extended the earlier acts. Provisions for a general tax of 30 cents on the hundred on "real and personal property and poll of colored persons" throughout the State were now made.³ Six thousand dollars was provided as a general contribution from the State, to be divided equally between the counties and equally between the schools in each county; the school taxes were to be expended in the hundreds where raised, and the county superintendents were given "general control and supervision of the colored schools in their respective counties." With this law the separate organization of Negro schools was completed and made parallel with that of the whites. The State and county superintendents had coextensive authority over each; there was the same uniform general tax levy required; special incorporated schools, independent of the State authorities, had been inaugurated; and a State fund, direct from the treasury, had been provided.

The actuary reported for the year ending December 31, 1888, that the recently incorporated schools at Dover and Slaughter Neck were "working satisfactorily to all concerned." Dover was the largest school in the State, with an enrollment of 142; Middletown had 123, and the other incorporated school at Slaughter Neck had 102. The total number of schools was 69, with an enrollment of 3,570. The total available funds were \$7,537.25, of which \$5,364 came from State appropriation and \$2,173.25 from school tax. It will be noticed that the Delaware Association had now ceased to contribute to the fund. Although Mr. Conrad was still in nominal control as actuary, the real control had been transferred to the county superintendents by the act of 1887, but inasmuch as Mr. Conrad had been the agent of the Delaware Association since May, 1876, and as he had directed

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1893, ch. 602, sec. 14.

² Ibid., 1887, ch. 91, passed Apr. 22, 1887.

³ Ibid., 1887, ch. 91.

all the work of the association and made its reports, he had been permitted to remain in office. There were, however, indications that the question of Negro schools was now getting into politics, and the county superintendent of Kent announced that the next year he should relieve Mr. Conrad of the work.¹

Up to this time the Negroes had had few schoolhouses of their own. They supplemented these few with quarters obtained in private houses, in churches, or society halls. In 1889 the State began to meet their needs in this respect by ordering the authorities of Lewes to contribute \$500 of public money toward the erection of a schoolhouse. The act of 1891 increased the annual appropriation from \$6,000 to \$9,000 per year and directed that of this latter sum \$500 per year for four years should be devoted to the repair of schoolhouses, provided local patrons would contribute half as much as the State; the auditor was now directed to audit the accounts of the colored schools; in the matter of free textbooks they were put on an equality with the whites, and by the same act the "entire management, control, and supervision of the colored schools" was put into the hands of the county superintendents.²

About this time also (1892) the work of the Delaware Association was brought to a close. There was no report in 1890 or 1892 from Actuary Conrad, for the colored schools were taking their place as a coordinate part of the dual school system of the State. The second chapter in the evolution of Negro schools had been closed.

The statistics of the colored schools from 1876 to 1892 follow below. They were compiled in the main by Henry C. Conrad, actuary for the Delaware Association from May, 1876, to 1892. No other items are given with sufficient uniformity to make a comparison of one year with another of any value. Certain other statistics of colored schools are given in connection with the schools of Wilmington, but in general in recent years, the statistics for the State as a whole have not been sufficiently differentiated to make them of service.

¹ State superintendent's report for 1888, p. 33.

² Laws of Delaware, 1891, ch. 66, and 1893, ch. 602.

Statistics of negro schools, 1876-1892.

Year.	Number of schools.	Average length of term in months.	Total enrollment.	Receipts from taxes.	Total available receipts, including balances.	Paid to teachers.	Total expenses.
1877-78:							
New Castle, 1876.....	15	5.0	679	\$1,034.03	\$735.00	\$620.00	\$642.75
Kent.....	18	4.8	912	862.75	1,048.42	885.00	883.85
Sussex.....	14	3.3	585	206.93	206.93	279.00	293.25
1879-80:							
New Castle.....	14	5.0	634	1,404.29	1,190.70	488.25	488.25
Kent.....	19	4.5	990	746.45	581.58	793.75	793.75
Sussex.....	17	3.0	630	500.00	465.68	365.75	365.75
1881-82:							
New Castle.....	15		610	751.91	1,454.26	636.00	
Kent.....	18		911	1,178.83	916.16	817.87	817.87
Sussex.....	13		476		99.63	338.00	338.00
1883-84:							
New Castle.....	24	5.7	1,738	998.60	2,665.93		
Kent.....	23	5.0	1,496	1,120.11	2,883.66		
Sussex.....	22	5.0	993	765.48	2,724.48		
1886:							
New Castle.....	24	5.8	1,872	754.39	2,421.95		
Kent.....	25	4.7	1,486	994.78	2,661.50		
Sussex.....	24	4.4	1,045	761.92	2,362.00		
1888:							
New Castle.....	19	5.0	965	690.00	2,210.25		
Kent.....	26	4.6	1,508	966.90	2,890.90		
Sussex.....	24	4.4	1,097	516.10	2,436.10		
1890:							
New Castle.....	27	7.5	2,023	474.45	2,474.45	26.11	
Kent.....	30	4.5	1,801	690.73	2,690.73	23.50	
Sussex.....	28	4.5	1,132	1,088.03	3,098.03	23.50	
1892:							
New Castle.....	22						
Kent.....	30	5.2	1,560	569.89	3,513.93	22.59	
Sussex.....	32	4.6	1,047				

* Includes \$657.90 tax for 1876 and \$376.13 for 1877.
 † Where the total in this column is less than the total in the preceding column, it means that the difference was used in paying debts contracted in the preceding year.
 ‡ Balance on hand from June 30, 1877.
 § Net school tax in New Castle in 1879 was \$1,260.53 (see Aud. Rep., 1880-81, p. 66); and in Sussex, \$571.34 (p. 124).
 ¶ The statistics as given leave it uncertain whether this and the amounts following were or were not the whole sum derived from taxation. It is entered as "amount paid from school tax fund."
 † Highest monthly enrollment.
 ‡ Average monthly salary.
 § Miscellaneous statistics of Negro schools for various years: Average salary of teachers in Wilmington, 1889 and 1890, \$40.79 per month; number of teachers, 96; in 1878, enrollment, 1,663; in 1880, population, 3,954, and enrollment, 2,218, excluding Wilmington; in 1882, population, 5,500, and enrollment, 1,997, excluding Wilmington; in 1884, population, 5,600; in 1886, population, 5,750; in 1889, population, 5,542, and enrollment, 4,756, average attendance, 2,851; in 1899-1907, enrollment, 4,897; available receipts, counties not differentiated (reckoned apparently on a different basis); in 1894, \$12,180; in 1895, \$11,418; in 1896, \$15,049; in 1897, \$13,959; in 1898, \$18,660; in 1910, \$20,420. When the Negro schools became thoroughly incorporated into the public-school system, separate statistics disappear.



Chapter VI.

THE STATE SYSTEM: ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, 1887-1898.

As shown in the last chapter, there was a State superintendent in Delaware from 1875 to 1887. This meant that there had been some growth in the idea of centralization in the State, but it should not be thought that this idea had taken a deep and abiding hold on the people. It is true that there was a State superintendent, but his powers of direction and control were limited. He had authority to visit the schools; he examined teachers and granted certificates; and there his power stopped. He had no authority over the levying of taxes. A small minimum tax for each district was demanded by State-wide law, but all beyond that minimum was still in the hands of the local school district electorate; and as they had done in 1830 they were still doing 50 years after that date—quarreling over the amount of the tax levy, with the poor man, the man who had little or nothing to be taxed and many children to be schooled, not on the side of a larger local tax which his rich neighbor would pay, but generally against such tax. And after the tax levy was finally fixed and the tax collected, neither the State superintendent nor his representatives had any voice in spending the same. This authority was in the hands of the local school committee; all the State could do was done through the veto power of the auditor before whom the accounts were brought once a year for settlement.

Then, too, the superintendent was appointed by the governor, and for one year only, thus making change in personnel or in policy subject to the caprices of political fortune or the personal whim of succeeding governors. It was plainly very difficult for any superintendent in this State to inaugurate and carry to completion any systematic plan of educational development, for his tenure of office was not long enough and his powers were not sufficiently great.

It follows, then, that when the State superintendency was abolished in 1887 and a return made to the older individualistic county system, the change was neither as great nor as serious in the matter of decentralization as might be imagined.¹

¹ This change did not meet with universal favor. As early as 1861 Gov. Reynolds recommended that the superintendency be restored. See his message for that year.

I. THE STATE SCHOOL LAW OF 1887—LATER LEGISLATION, 1891-1895.

Under the law of April 7, 1887, the positions of State superintendent and assistant State superintendent were abolished from and after April 13, 1887, the expiration of the term of the persons then in office. In their place the governor was given power to appoint annually a suitable person to be superintendent of free schools in each county, with a salary of \$1,000 per annum. These county superintendents were required to be of good moral character and "well qualified by their mental and scholarly attainments for such office."

It was the duty of the county superintendent to visit each school within his county at least twice each year. He was to note the condition of each school; the condition of the buildings, grounds, and fixtures; the efficiency of teachers; the conduct and standing of pupils; the methods of instruction and government. He was to advise with teachers, giving them such help and instruction as was deemed necessary, and might suspend any teacher who refused to comply with "reasonable directions" from him. He was to examine all teachers, by oral or written examinations or both. The field covered by the examinations and the grades of the certificates were not changed from the requirements established by the act of 1879. The certificate itself was now issued by the State board and countersigned by the county superintendent, and no teacher might be employed who did not hold this certificate.

The county superintendent was required to make an annual report to the president of the State board and was forbidden to purchase any books used in the public schools at the expense of the State.

The State board of education was made up of the secretary of state, who became its secretary ex officio, the president of Delaware College, who became president of the board, and the three county superintendents. It met once a year, heard appeals, chose textbooks for the schools, issued blanks and forms, and required returns to be made. The president was required to make a biennial report to the governor, beginning with 1889.

The county superintendents were required to hold in each county annually a teachers' institute of at least three days in length, for the maintenance of which \$100 was provided annually from the school fund. Both county superintendents and teachers were required to attend these institutes, and teachers were to make quarterly reports on their schools.

¹ In 1895 (ch. 13) this requirement was changed so as to read, "and shall hold a certificate of graduation from a reputable college or an unexpired certificate of the highest grade provided for by the laws of this State, and shall have had at least two years' experience as a teacher in the public schools of this or some other State."

² The manner in which this phase of the work was conducted was a source of irritation. Thus, in *Hourly Journal* for 1899, pp. 32-3, is the record of a spat on this question. Mr. Shallice complained over the character of these examinations and charged that the county superintendents gave catch questions. He thought the educational system was retrograding, and thought in a little while it would be back where it was a hundred years ago.

Books and papers of the State superintendent's office were to be turned over to the secretary of state, who was to sell all schoolbooks received and cover the money into the treasury. The county superintendents were to do the same, and these sections, when read in the light of the paragraph forbidding the county superintendents to buy schoolbooks out of public funds, show that the State was now abandoning the plan of supplying schoolbooks at cost, while still holding to the idea of State uniformity.

All acts and parts of acts not in conformity with this act were repealed, but all provisions for suits, etc., were continued in force and finally:

The provisions of this act shall not apply to any school or school districts managed or controlled by an incorporated board of education, unless by special request of said board.¹

It will be noticed that the act of 1887, by repealing all acts not in conformity with its own provisions, finally separated the State from the terms of the act of 1829, but in other respects the character of other phases of school legislation was not changed. All authority pertaining to the borrowing of money for school purposes, consolidating, dividing, or changing the boundaries of districts, etc., still went through the legislature. The people were held competent to manage the local money side of education, from levying the tax to spending the sums raised, but they were not thought competent to change school district boundary lines, although an act of 1891 (ch. 67) required a notice of 10 days for transfers of territory from one district to another and for the consolidation of districts.²

Hardly had the act of 1887 been put into execution before the usual process of amendment began. It will be recalled that the act of 1887 practically abandoned the scheme of free textbooks. The act of 1891 not only went back to the principle, but made textbooks really free. They were now to be bought by the State, and distributed to the school districts, and by the school commission loaned to the pupils or sold at cost when it was so desired. The colored schools were admitted to a participation in this provision, and their "entire management, control, and supervision" was put into the hands of the county superintendents, as already narrated in an earlier section. Their funds were increased and were to be examined and passed by the auditor just as was done in the case of the white schools, but because of inexperience in matters of finance it was thought best to repeal in 1893 the acts granting charters of incorporation to certain negro schools.³

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1887, ch. 67, passed Apr. 7, 1887.

² The auditor's report in 1894 (p. v) points out that the transfer of real estate from one school district to another was frequent and unjust; that this legislation was often effected without apparent opposition simply for want of funds to defray expenses of school officials while making such opposition. It was thought that the settlement of such matters should be left with the State board of education. In his message in 1891 Gov. Biggs recommended that no further changes in school districts be allowed except on application by a majority of the school voters in each district.

³ Laws of Delaware, 1893, ch. 602, sec. 14.

In 1891 the composition of the State board was itself changed, for the president of Delaware College ceased to be a member, and the governor of the State became its president ex officio, and finally the schools of Wilmington were exempted from the provisions of this act.¹

In 1893 came other changes. A general act provided a new basis on which the State money was to be apportioned within the counties. The share of Wilmington was to be predicated on 10,000 school children; in New Castle County each district was to receive \$150; and any remainder was divided on the basis of enrollment. In Kent and Sussex the division was to remain as already established by law. The income of the State school fund could be used only for the payment of teachers and at a rate not to exceed \$35 per month. The purpose of this section was clearly to encourage local taxation, and the purpose of the section which required unexpended balances to be deducted from the next year's appropriation was without doubt to break up the custom of hoarding balances for the sake of private speculation.

In 1893 the requirements for teachers' certificates were raised. They now include orthography, reading, writing, mental and written arithmetic, geography, physiology, history of the United States, pedagogy, and English grammar; and in addition to the above they included for the highest certificate algebra, geometry, civics, natural philosophy, and rhetoric. The grading was made a little closer, and the professional certificate was made good for four years.

In 1895 and 1897 the acts of most educational significance related to negroes. The most important in 1895 was that "to improve and promote the colored schools." This act made the county treasurers responsible on their bonds for the funds received under the act. The appropriation for negro schools was increased from \$9,000 to \$12,000 per year, to come out of the school fund. From the same fund there was also appropriated annually \$3,000 for textbooks and building purposes. This was to be divided equally between the three counties, and the three county superintendents were to act jointly as a building board, determine where repairs and alterations were to be made, and provide for the erection of new buildings when deemed necessary. The county superintendents were also confirmed in "the entire control and supervision of the colored schools." They were to decide on their location, to make rules for the examination of teachers, and to "appoint only such persons as teachers as are fully qualified in point of character and scholarship to fill the places." They were to make an estimate to their respective county treasurers showing the number and location, length of term, and amount of money required for and applicable to each school,² and were to appor-

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1891, ch. 66.

² This section was repealed by ch. 422, acts of 1897.

tion to each school an equal amount from the State contribution; the monthly allowance to each school was to be equalized as nearly as possible, and the amounts collected in any county in colored taxes were to be expended in that county.¹

In 1897 the State granted \$100 per year for the establishment, support, and maintenance of the Delaware Colored Teachers' State Institute, to be located in Kent County.² With these various acts the work of taking over the colored schools from the independent private organizations by which they had been begun and transferring them to the State administration was practically complete. The systems of colored schools now duplicated at most points the white schools. Two systems independent of and parallel to each other were administered by the county superintendents.

When a summary review is made of the legal side of the school situation between 1887 and 1898, certain contrasts and changes, as compared with the earlier period (1875-1887) become apparent. In these changes (1) the State board of education just about held its own. It gained the additional right to issue the teachers' certificates, but this was little more than mere form, since the county superintendents had the power to pass or not to pass the teachers examined. (2) The county superintendent's office was reestablished, after having been abolished by the act of 1875; the State superintendent's office was abolished; his powers were decentralized and given to the county superintendents. (3) The State system of uniformity in textbooks was maintained, but the State at first did not undertake to purchase and furnish books to all pupils at cost, although they went a step further in 1891 and made them entirely free. (4) Reports were now made biennial instead of annual, so that the published volumes covered the whole intervening period instead of a single year of a two-year period as was apparently the case in the annual reports between 1875 and 1887. (5) The support of the county institutes was made a regular and formal charge on the school fund, and a similar institute for colored teachers was also provided. (6) The colored schools were formally and completely transferred to the State system, but with their own organization independent and separate from that of the whites; the special acts of incorporation being repealed, all colored schools were now treated as a single unit. (7) Nothing was said in these laws in regard to the financial side of the schools. This was still a purely local matter, and he who controlled the sinews of war of necessity controlled the system. So little did the idea of centralization impress the new system that for some years there was no summary of statistics for the whole State; and so little did the ques-

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1896, ch. 17; amended in minor particulars by laws of 1897, chs. 423 and 422.

² *Ibid.*, 1897, ch. 423; amended by ch. 70, laws of 1898.

tion of finance impress the county superintendent that in some cases there were no county statistics dealing with income and expenditures.

When taken as a whole the State system in Delaware was then about as follows: A State board of education with small advisory powers, and under the State board three practically autonomous republics, each administering a system for white schools and a corresponding system for colored schools, each of the six systems independent of all others, and obeying only its own head. Then in each county was a series of "independent districts" for whites which were not subject to the laws of the county systems unless they chose to be and made "special request" to come into the general system. Paralleling the series of white "independent districts," there were, until 1893, corresponding colored "independent districts," not so numerous as the white independents, but with similar powers. And finally, in addition to all of the above, came the city of Wilmington in most respects separate and distinct from everything else, independent of everybody else, and a law unto itself alone.

This anomalous situation makes itself felt even in the biennial reports of the State board. Those for this period are divided substantially into three parts. The first is a short and imperfect discussion of the free schools as a whole and with little attempt at correlating and unifying the separate reports and out of them evolving a single, concatenated, fully systematized whole. The statistics are brief and incomplete and fail to give a connected picture of the situation in the State. The second division presents the reports of the three county superintendents with such statistics as are available, but unfortunately neither uniform nor complete, and sometimes with similar reports on the colored schools. Then comes a report of the city of Wilmington, and then another on the schools with incorporated boards.

The duty of the historian, then, is to evolve a connected story out of the elements presented by these rival systems. The Delawareans have themselves never as yet had the hardihood to face this confused situation, prepare a detailed report that will cover the whole field, and reduce this complex system to a single, simple whole—*hoc opus, hic labor est.*

II. PUBLIC SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT, 1887-1898.

The period now under consideration, 1887-1898, is represented by three printed reports. These are for the biennial periods 1887-88, 1889-90, and 1891-92. Apparently there were no reports published for the years 1893-1898, and the history of that period must be reconstructed from the governor's messages, the auditor's reports, and other sources.

Fortunately some of these messages are full of valuable material. Such is the message of Gov. Jones in 1887,¹ in which he reviews the status of the school fund for that period.

The receipts of the school fund for the previous year were \$101,027.57. The expenditures were:

New Castle County.....	\$32,358.26
Kent County.....	23,256.59
Sussex County.....	28,136.10
Education of the blind ²	1,040.00
Total expenditure.....	84,790.95
Balance on hand.....	16,236.62

The principal of the school fund was then invested as follows:

Farmers' Bank stock, 5,000 shares, at \$36 per share.....	\$180,000
Farmers' Bank stock, 2,439 shares, at \$50 per share.....	121,950
Smyrna Bank stock, 114 shares, at \$50 per share.....	5,700
National Bank of Delaware stock, 37 shares, at \$465 per share.....	17,205
Union National Bank, 254 shares, at \$36 per share.....	9,144
School fund bond ³	156,750
Loan to Sussex County ⁴	5,000
Total in 1887.....	495,749

The same valuation was given in 1889. In 1893 the fund had increased in value to \$544,742, and in 1897 to \$546,577.

The report for the biennial period 1887-88 is signed by A. N. Raub, president of the State board of education. It is more precise and definite, fuller, and more detailed than some which follow, but while this general supervisory body had authority to supervise and inspect, it had little power to enforce obedience. As is natural, the schools of Wilmington were far ahead of those in the smaller towns, and in general New Castle County had the best organization, the best buildings and furniture, and the best schools. The reports from that county showed the keenest interest and closest analysis of the situation and undoubtedly its schools were ahead of those of other

¹ House Journal, 1887, p. 12 et seq.

² The education of deaf, dumb, blind, and imbecile children is provided for in institutions outside the State. The number of imbeciles is limited to 14, at \$200 each, making \$2,800. The number of the deaf, dumb, and blind is limited only by the amount of the appropriation. See governor's message, 1903.

³ This item was in the form of a bond issued to the fund July 1, 1877, by the State of Delaware. This sum of \$156,750 was made up of two items: One of \$131,750 received from the sale of stock in the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore R. R. and covered into the State treasury; and the other of \$25,000 proceeds of the sale of stock of the New Castle & Wilmington R. R. Co. Both of these items belonged to the school fund, but were both covered into the State treasury. In payment the fund was given a bond for \$156,750, due July 1, 1906. See treasurer's report for 1881-82, pp. 4-5. On July 1, 1906, this bond was redeemed, a balance of \$22,036, proceeds of the liquidation of the Farmer's Bank at New Castle and belonging to the school fund was added to the principal and a new bond for \$178,786 was given by the State to the school fund, with interest at 6 per cent payable in 1931. See ch. 19, ass. laws of 1905.

⁴ This loan to Sussex County came out of the surplus revenue and was made soon after the receipt of that fund. By act of Feb. 6, 1877 (ch. 486, sec. 1), the county of Sussex was required to set apart out of its general revenue \$300 which was counted as interest on this debt, and was then given back to the county to be used on its schools. The remainder of the annual school fund derived from the surplus revenue of 1837 was divided equally between the three counties.

counties, but these facts do not necessarily imply criticism of others. New Castle County has less than one-fourth the area of the State, but it has the only city, more than half the population and wealth, and more than its share of the educational leaders. Within its restricted area organization has been possible which could not be carried out in the more rural sections.

One of the matters which impressed the president of the board as of the greatest significance in 1887-88 was teachers' certificates. It was thought that the distance between the third and the second grades was too great, and it was proposed to decrease the gap by bringing down by 5 numbers the requirements for the higher grade and raising those for the lower by 10 numbers.

For the first time compulsory attendance is mentioned. It was being discussed in other States, but as Groves had opposed it a decade before, so now Raub found that he could not "recommend such a law for Delaware." He thought it might be possible in a city "backed by a constabulary force," but "it has never been either effective or popular in communities chiefly agricultural, and it would not probably be so in this State."

The president of the board pointed out that the system of separate school districts then in force in the State represented a unit too small for the best results. More or less progress was reported all along the line, it is true, but that progress was uniform neither chronologically nor from school to school. This irregularity was made possible because of the freedom of initiative allowed to the school district unit; but unfortunately desire, ambition, and knowledge were not equal in all sections; opportunities and facilities were not uniform; individual initiative not equal; wealth and resources not the same. As one county superintendent said, the schools were good, bad, or indifferent according to the district, and little hope of improvement was to be indulged in while the district remained as it was.

The president of the board pointed out that the State system "would be greatly benefited by making each hundred a school district." This hundred system would compare in a general way to the township system of other states:

In Delaware this same system would greatly increase the efficiency of the schools. Either of two plans might be adopted. The hundreds, as at present constituted, might each be made a separate school district, in which each school under the general board of control would offer the same educational privileges and facilities as its neighbors in the same hundred. At present one school in a hundred may give 40 weeks' instruction during the year, while its neighbor in the same hundred, * * * may offer to the children only 30 weeks. The hundred system would correct all such inequalities.

A modification of this system might be made probably equally effective by dividing the hundreds as school districts into incorporated boroughs and rural districts. Thus a hundred with one incorporated borough would have two school districts. * * * This is really the township system of such States as do not have the separate district

systems. Wherever adopted it makes more efficient schools, equalizes the taxes, and does away with the jealousy which seems inevitable between the boroughs and the rural districts.

By no means the smallest gain of this system would be the ultimate establishment of hundred high schools.¹

The school authorities had now arrived at that stage in their development when they began to realize the disadvantages of their highly decentralized system. It is evident that they felt the need of greater concentration, even if they were not yet ready to demand a general law providing that all school administrative systems be brought under a single head. The president of the State board says further:

The school system of Delaware would be more efficient and the results more satisfactory if all the schools were under the jurisdiction of the county superintendents, excepting, of course, such districts as have their own superintendent. Practically, at present, the schools having incorporated boards of education are without supervision except that given by the commissioners and their teachers are exempt from examination unless the local commissioners decide to the contrary. In fact, the act providing for the appointment of county superintendents and the examination of teachers and the supervision of schools by these officers specially exempts . . . these districts . . .

This singular feature of the school system of Delaware, of course, destroys the unity of the whole system and makes it specially difficult to form an accurate estimate of the actual progress of the schools.

It would be much better for these incorporated boards if they would unite in a demand for a hundred system, toward which their action practically tends, and then place all the schools of a county under the jurisdiction of the county superintendent, except those which have an officer who is distinctively superintendent of the schools of the town or city in which he is located, and who exercises the superintendent's powers in examining teachers, granting certificates, visiting schools, and the like. It would be greatly to the advantage of all districts, incorporated or otherwise, if the whole system could be harmonized and unified in the way suggested.

The county superintendents themselves were not less emphatic in their condemnation of the existing system. Levin I. Handy, county superintendent of Kent County in 1887-88, charges most of the weaknesses of the schools at the time to the smallness of the unit of administration. Among these evils he reckons as hindrances to progress: The constant changing of teachers, which was so bad in some districts that four different teachers would be in charge of a single school within a single year; the lack of uniformity in the certification of teachers, for each county superintendent was a law unto himself and if one refused a certificate the applicant might be licensed in another county or given a teaching position in one of the incorporated schools which lay alongside of, but were entirely independent of, the regular school districts.

The above troubles, and also the lack of system and classification, the neglect of school property and furniture, the unwise parsimony of

¹ Report for 1887-88, pp. 9-10.

² Sec. ch. 46, laws of 1879, and ch. 67, sec. 17, 1887.

school officers, the surplus—all these evils are charged up by Mr. Handy as due to the smallness of the unit of school administration. In place of the school district there was an insistent demand for the hundred—the township of most States—as the basis. The school district had now been outgrown. It was time for a larger unit.

The governors in several cases went even further than the county superintendents. In 1891 the outgoing governor complained of the custom of incorporating school districts and thus removing them from the jurisdiction of the supervisory authorities, while the incoming governor, Reynolds, suggested the reestablishment of the State superintendency. This recommendation he renewed in 1893, and in 1897 Gov. Watson recommended the repeal of the special acts of incorporation, on the ground that these schools had not kept pace in development with those over which the superintendent had jurisdiction.

These complaints reveal the fact that the situation was in some respects a very curious one. Among others, it was found that there was no lack of money. The State school fund produced more money than could be "properly or economically spent" in some parts of the State under the existing laws, without even touching the local fund which the district was required to raise by taxation. This situation had been brought about in the main by the act of 1889 regulating the sale of intoxicating liquors.¹ The tax on licenses was by this act increased and as it went to the school fund, the income from this source was raised from \$23,689.57 in 1889 to \$65,783.34 in 1890.

With this sudden increase in funds came difficulty from "the lack of knowledge how to spend the money judiciously, or what is more probable, an indisposition to spend the money for purposes which all admit to be judicious." It was recommended that the county tax levy for schools be lowered, for it was thought that the school fund, through the large increase in the liquor license tax, would before long make any school tax unnecessary.

Another recommendation was that this growing surplus be used to supply free textbooks to all the children of the State, and to this use a part of this surplus was devoted in 1891-92.²

Nor was this surplus without its dangers. The custom grew up among the school clerks in whose hands these balances were to loan them for their own advantage. This would naturally make them more indisposed to spend the funds on hand, and it followed that the

¹ This act was passed Apr. 21, 1890 (ch. 555, laws of 1890, p. 677). It revises and extends the act of Apr. 10, 1871.

² In 1891 Gov. Reynolds, in his message, reports the balance then on hand as \$79,737.76. In June, 1892, the surplus reported as being in the hands of the clerks in the school districts was given by the governor as: New Castle County, \$23,643.41; Kent County, \$10,952.79; Sussex County, \$16,837.26; total, \$51,433.46. The reduction from the figures of 1891 is presumably due mainly to free textbooks, for which \$22,965.18 was spent during the year 1891-92.

district with the largest surplus sometimes had the poorest buildings and furniture. There was complaint also that salaries were very low, and the surplus was pointed to as one of the causes thereof.

The difficulty seems to have been met by the act of 1893, for in 1895 all moneys received from the State were "payable to the party entitled by orders or drafts upon the State treasurer"¹ and no longer passed through the hands of the local school clerks.

Another cause of complaint and a hindrance to progress was, as the president of the State board points out, the absence of a normal training school—one empowered to grant diplomas. Says the president:

Our sister States are * * * leading us in this matter. * * * Many of our brightest young men and women drift to the State normal schools of other States for their training, * * * most of these teachers remain in other States after receiving their training, and teach where their diplomas are recognized as valid without further examination.

This need was felt as strongly by the governors. In 1887 Gov. Stockley recommended the establishment of such a school and in 1895 Gov. Reynolds, after demanding more efficient teaching, thought "a reasonable amount of instruction in school organization, school government, and the art of teaching" should be added to the requirements, and in order to furnish this recommended a training school for teachers. In 1897 Gov. Watson recommended more funds for teachers' institutes.

It was pointed out that while the hostility to the system experienced in earlier days had now disappeared, there was still in some places a lack of interest on the part of teachers and school commissioners and a disposition to leave the matter in the hands of the teacher, who was frequently neither guided nor upheld by the local authorities. There is much sameness in the reports from year to year, as is to be expected, but the general direction was upward and Gov. Reynolds said in 1895 that "great progress" had been made in the last four years.

One law of the period met with universal commendation. This was the act of 1891 providing free textbooks for all pupils. State uniformity had been secured and before 1887 books had been sold at cost, but between 1887 and 1891 the State held aloof from supplying textbooks. Popular demand, in addition to gubernatorial recommendation, brought a new law in 1891 and the increased surplus furnished the means.

¹ Governor's message, 1895. See ch. 602, laws of 1893.

The first cost for the year ending August, 1892, was:

New Castle County.....	\$6,349.58
Kent County.....	6,378.88
Sussex County.....	10,256.72
Total for first year.....	22,985.18

This law produced the "most gratifying results." It removed many obstacles and made for improvement by helping to better attendance and better grading as well as a considerable reduction in expense.

All of this progress was "encouraging, but not satisfying," nor was it uniform. Some schools had fine houses and excellent furniture, while others were kept in houses that were not worth \$10; and the institutes were cramped and injured for lack of money. Gov. Reynolds complained in 1893 that the progress of the negro children was not "commensurate with the advantages offered," but added that this failure was due in part at least to "crude and imperfect" laws. One superintendent boldly declared that the incorporated districts were harmful because they lowered the standard, since their teachers were not subject to examination by the county superintendent, and in 1897 Gov. Watson recommended the repeal of these special charters of incorporation, for the schools so favored had not kept pace with others.¹

The State report for 1889-90, while pointing to progress, declared the system had by no means attained to a position where it might rest satisfied with its attainments:

There has been a steady improvement during the last two years in the general condition of the free schools of the State, but neither the State school system nor the administration of it has reached anything yet like perfection. The district system is necessarily weak. The adoption of what in other States is known as the township system, and what might here be properly called the hundred system, would greatly simplify our present school machinery and * * * greatly increase the efficiency of the schools.²

Of the county superintendents the president says:

The county superintendency has now had a four years' trial in Delaware and the work of the superintendents has, in the main, been of such a satisfactory character that it would be unwise to think of adopting any other system. Indeed, if any change is needed for the better, it is that of still closer supervision. This is especially true in the county of Sussex, where the schools are most numerous and the school term shortest.

To increase the efficiency of the county superintendents it was suggested that the term of service be increased from one to two or from one to four years; that qualifications as to scholarship and successful experience in teaching be fixed by law, and that the salary

¹ Wilmington was exempted from this proposed law.

² Report for 1889-90, p. 5.

be increased. The county institutes "have been doing good work," says the president of the board, and two recommendations of the governor are worthy of notice. In 1895 Gov. Reynolds proposed that advanced pupils be given the advantages of the town high schools and that "these central high schools should receive a reasonable compensation out of the general school fund to defray the additional expense of the pupils thus admitted." By this arrangement it was expected to relieve the pressure of congestion in the lower schools and at the same time make the town schools the centers of higher instruction. In 1897 Gov. Watson points out that certain schools had not extended their term as long as the funds received from the State would justify, and therefore recommends that the aid given by the State be made to depend on the length of the school term, inaugurating a per diem distribution.

Some efforts, not very successful, had been made to collect statistics. It was found in 1891-92 that approximately the school population 6 to 21 was, white, 33,589; colored, 5,542; that 80 per cent of the white and 84 per cent of the colored was enrolled; 51 per cent of the white were in daily attendance for 8½ months, and 51½ per cent of the colored for 5½ months, including the city of Wilmington. It was reported that the State then had \$56,000 of surplus school money and that the new license law would be likely to add \$50,000 a year to this fund.

The president of the State board points out the difficulties in the matter of reports:

There has been some difficulty in gathering and arranging statistics under the operations of the new law. This is due partly to the meager requirements of the law and partly to the fact that the incorporated boards are under no legal obligation to furnish any statistics to the county superintendents. It would be well if the provisions of the law could be made general, so that there might be a uniform method of gathering statistics, comparing facts, and reaching results. The statistics here given are the best that can be offered considering the difficulties under which they have been gathered.

The report for 1887-88 represents the high-water mark for that period. The next one repeats and emphasizes its suggestions, often in the very same language. The third (1891-92) marks the ebbing of the tide, for in 1891 the composition of the State board of education was changed. The president of Delaware college, a professional educator, then ceased to be president of that board and the governor of the State was put in his place. The first biennial report after this change in the law was that for 1891-92 and the disastrous effects of the law appear at once. The general summary and review, the attempt at correlation made by the former president of the board now disappear, for the governor, who now signed as the ex officio president of the State board of education, contented himself with a half-page letter of transmittal. He refers to his message to the as-

sembly in 1891, for the reforms recommended by him and transmits without further comment the reports of the county superintendents.

The statistics for the period—those dealing with the school fund, its increase and its expenditures—are to be had from the reports of the State treasurer and State auditor, but neither of those documents analyzes or even reports in particular, such funds as were local in both origin and destination. It is impossible, therefore, to learn from any available printed reports how much was raised in the counties by contribution and how much by taxation. We must content ourselves with the general statements contained in the auditor's reports. But we have evidence that the amount then raised by taxes was in general much larger, in many cases several times larger, than the legal requirements. The statistics given at the end of this study, Table 3, are all that are available on the phases considered. They give us the enrollment, but not the average attendance; they do not differentiate between whites and blacks. They are printed as they are given.

Value of school grounds, buildings, and furniture.

1891:		
	New Castle (including Wilmington, \$523,000).....	\$653,744
	Kent.....	115,852
	Sussex.....	80,996
		850,592
1894:		
	New Castle (including Wilmington, \$630,000).....	786,352
	Kent.....	
	Sussex.....	
1895:		
	New Castle (including Wilmington, \$693,917).....	836,637
	Kent.....	155,798
	Sussex.....	114,725
		1,107,160
1896:		
	New Castle (including Wilmington, \$702,937).....	839,842
	Kent.....	130,395
	Sussex.....	109,821
		1,080,158
1897:		
	New Castle (including Wilmington, \$702,937).....	848,447
	Kent.....	128,700
	Sussex.....	115,020
		1,092,167
1898:		
	New Castle (including Wilmington, \$675,505).....	800,785
	Kent.....	129,385
	Sussex.....	100,908
		1,031,078

Chapter VII.

THE STATE SYSTEM: REORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT, 1898-1913.

The decade treated in the last chapter is one of increasing dissatisfaction and growing realization of the deficiencies of the school system then in use. The period of self-satisfied content was gone; the thinking men in the State were now beginning to realize the shortcomings of their system and to demand something better. Matters could hardly be worse. There was a State board of education with little or no supervisory power. There were three county superintendents and one city superintendent, practically equal in authority. Each of these four administered what were to a large extent two parallel and rival systems, one for whites and the other for blacks. There were practically no coordinating forces above them, and nowhere does this lack of coordinating authority make itself more keenly felt than in the reports, statistical and other, which were printed from time to time. In these there is so little uniformity when one is compared with another or year with year that it is almost impossible from a study of the same to reach any conclusion except that of confusion worse confounded. The system was without system. Some schools had more money than they could use; some had fine houses and good furniture; some had good teachers, kept them, and paid them a fair wage. In other districts the schoolhouses were disreputable, the salaries disgracefully low. The percentage of the school population enrolled seems to have been a fair one as enrollment goes in the States, but the figures of attendance are too imperfect for even a guess at its relative proportion. A majority of the districts levied and raised by taxation much more money than the letter of the law demanded. The law would order that \$25 be raised by taxation; the district would raise \$100 or more; in some cases it was 5 times as much, in others 10 times, and in at least one instance more than 100 times as much.¹ These figures demonstrate that hostility to the school tax had practically disappeared.

Then, if there was little hostility, if there was a willingness to be taxed and a resultant sufficiency of money, why did the schools show such relative inefficiency and failure? The answer seems to lie in the one word which has characterized these schools from the day of

¹ See reports of New Castle County and school district in auditor's report for 1897 (Appendix V), p. 3.

their inception in the act of 1829, and has followed them with its debilitating influence from that day to this—decentralization. There was too much freedom; every county superintendent was a law unto himself; in matters of finance every school committee was a law unto itself. There was insufficient supervision and therefore little opportunity to locate and remedy weaknesses. As a result the schools showed all degrees from high-grade success to wretched failure. But so strong had this spirit of local school administration and local government always been in the State that it was difficult for its citizens to recognize the proper diagnosis. Their ability to do this was perhaps advanced by the educational clause in the new constitution, which was adopted June 4, 1897.

Prior to this time the people of Delaware had been living contentedly under the organic instrument adopted in 1831. But that date was before the rise of the modern public school, and as a consequence the constitution of 1831 not only had none of the spirit of the new renaissance which made the public school possible, but was itself an inheritance without change in form or spirit from the constitution of 1792. In 1792 it was still sufficient for the organic law to declare that the legislature should provide "for establishing schools and promoting arts and sciences." And in 1831, since the legislature had made but a few feeble efforts to obey this particular injunction, its solemn repetition as a part of the new instrument of government was still thought to be sufficient for a free, independent, and self-governing people.

But by 1897 the viewpoint of 1792 and 1831 had been outgrown and the constitution of the latter date drew the broad outlines of a modern system:

The general assembly shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a general and efficient system of free public schools, and may require by law that every child, not physically or mentally disabled, shall attend the public school, unless educated by other means.

The constitution assigns the income of the public-school fund to the support of the schools and forbids its use for any other purpose; it directs the annual payment of not less than \$100,000 out of State funds for their benefit and provides that these sums should be used for the payment of teachers' salaries and the furnishing of free textbooks only; there was to be no distinction on account of race or color in the apportionment, but separate schools for white and colored children were to be maintained; no portion of any fund raised by taxation for education might be used for any sectarian, church, or denominational school, but "all real or personal property used for school purposes, where the tuition is free, shall be exempt from taxation and assessment for public purposes."

With the new constitution in working order and with growing discontent at the manifest failure of the old school systems, a thorough and radical revision of the school law was evidently necessary. This revision was enacted at the adjourned session of 1898 and was approved May 12, 1898.

I. THE REVISED SCHOOL LAW OF 1898.

The act of May 12, 1898, was the most elaborate school law which had ever been enacted in the State.

The general supervision and control of the free public schools of the State was vested in the hands of a State board of education consisting of the governor, as president, the secretary of state, the president of Delaware College, the State auditor, as secretary, and the senior member of the county school commissions as created by this act. These were all ex officio members and received no salary, but, excluding the governor, the secretary of state, and the auditor, they might receive by way of expenses up to \$30 per year. This State board was to meet quarterly; it was to compile one set of examination papers for white teachers and another for the colored, and in case of graded-school teachers the examinations were to be graded to suit the various grades of work offered. The State board was to adopt textbooks and hear appeals from the county school commissions. When appeals came up from the free colored schools the president of the State College for Colored Students was to sit as a member of the board in place of the president of Delaware College, but at no other time.

The free public schools in the counties, both black and white, were under the general supervision and control of the State board, while their particular supervision was vested in a county school commission for each county. This commission was composed of three members, not more than two of them from the same political party; they were to be appointed by the governor for a three-year term. They were to hold quarterly meetings and their duty was to investigate the school system in the county, the method of instruction and discipline, the way the school officers performed their duties, and the condition of school property. They had authority to visit the schools, including the incorporated schools, examine the papers and reports of the county superintendent, who was their executive officer, receive complaints, and act as a sanitary commission over all school property. They received no salary, but might be paid up to \$100 each per year for actual services and expenses. It was made an immediate duty with these commissioners to divide the counties into districts for colored schools, but the number of such districts was not to exceed the number of colored schools in existence at that time.

It was provided that property might be transferred from one district to another by petition; school districts might unite and all school districts in existence at the passage of the law were continued as such; women were admitted to the ballot in school elections on the same terms as men, but whites did not vote in elections in colored districts, nor colored in white districts, and the amount to be raised by taxation was still decided by ballot in the district.

The supervision and control of the free public schools in each district was vested in general in the State board and the county school commission and in particular in a district school commission composed of a clerk and two commissioners, who were elected for three years. They had immediate charge of the school. They selected the site, built the schoolhouse, provided furniture and fuel, employed and dismissed teachers, visited the school, kept it open for 140 days in the year or longer, collected the money raised by the district and expended the same, administered the free textbooks act, made settlements with the auditor, and saw that the detailed requirements of the State law were met. They received \$1 per day for actual service.

It was provided that certain incorporated schools should receive into their upper classes the more advanced pupils from other districts, and it was the duty of the white district school commissioners to make assessment lists for their districts. These lists consisted of the rates of the white males over 21 and the rates—

of the personal property of all the white inhabitants of the district; of the rates of all the assessable personal property within the district owned by any association or corporation; and of the clear rental value of all the assessable real estate within the district owned by white persons, associations, or corporations.

The property of colored citizens was listed by their school commissioners in the same way. Every white school district in New Castle and Kent was required to raise \$100; every district in Sussex, \$60. The requirement placed on the colored districts in this regard was just one-half of the above.

The general superintendence of all the free public schools of the county was vested in a county superintendent of schools. He was to be appointed by the governor for two years and received a salary of \$1,000 per year. It was stipulated he should be of good moral character and mentally and morally capable of performing his duties. He must have had 20 months' experience as a teacher and be a graduate of a reputable college or normal school. His duties were to visit, advise, and assist the teachers, create interest in the schools, prepare examination papers for the State board, conduct examination of teachers, countersign certificates, suspend or withdraw them when necessary, and hold teachers' institutes. For these institutes \$150 per year in each county was now provided, as was \$150 for the Delaware Colored Institute, located in Kent County.

The teachers passed three examinations according to the certificate desired: I. Orthography, reading, writing, mental and written arithmetic, geography, physiology and hygiene, with special reference to alcoholic stimulants and narcotics, history of the United States, Federal and State Constitutions, pedagogy, and English grammar; II. Algebra, geometry, physics, natural philosophy, and elements of rhetoric; III. "Such other branches and subjects as the State board of education shall direct to be included in such examinations."

The successful passing of these examinations with a grade of 90 per cent for I and 75 per cent for II and III was rewarded by a professional certificate, good for 10 years; the successful passing of I and III with the same grades won a first-grade certificate, good for 5 years; while a grade of 75 per cent in I and III secured a second-grade certificate, good for 2 years. It will be noticed that this law did not seek so much to extend the requirements for teachers as to change the valuation of the examinations passed.

It was provided further that, in distributing the share of money due to each county among its districts, there should be no discrimination between the districts for whites and blacks. The State treasurer was by this act constituted as trustee of the school fund. It was his duty to place the funds due each district in the Farmers' Bank for that county, and it was paid out by him by check only, and any balances on hand were deducted from the appropriations for the next year. In this way the accumulating balances disappeared and the school clerks no longer had the temptation to save funds in order to loan on private account.

Such was the school law passed in 1898. It was evidently a great improvement on earlier attempts at legislation. Under it there was evident effort toward a closely coordinated State system; at the top was a State board, made up of State officials and the senior members of the county school commissioners. These county school commissioners as such were the agents of and reported to the State board. Their authority bore the same relations to the county that the State board bore to the State. Within the county the county superintendent was their agent and executive, and in his turn he supervised and directed the local district school commissioners, who came in direct contact with the schools, supervised and directed them, and were directly responsible for their success or failure. This law, much more certainly than any earlier law, laid the foundation for a real State system.

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to showing how these plans were worked out in action, and what additional legislation supplementary to that end was enacted during the following decade.

II. DEVELOPMENT AND LEGISLATION, 1898-1913.

Information on the actual workings of the school system under the law of 1898 comes mainly from the few and irregular reports of the State board of education, 1898, 1899-1900, 1901-2, 1903-4, and 1910. While these are the main sources, they are both incomplete and unsatisfactory.

The new State board was organized under the law of May 12, 1898, on June 25, 1898. It started in well and struck in its opening sentences at the very foundations of the troubles before it:

Owing to the fact that the present board differs so widely from all preceding boards, both in its constitution and its powers, in conjunction with the extreme scantiness of material and data on school matters left by such former boards, it was deemed expedient that the present board should make an entirely new beginning in school work for the State. * * *

The board is convinced that its first and most important duty is the compilation of reliable facts and figures showing the present condition of our schools as a whole. * * *

The board finds an utter absence of reliable statistics throwing light upon the simplest facts concerning our schools. For example, there is no certain information as to the percentage of illiteracy among either the citizens of this State or the children of school age, nor whether such percentage is on the increase or decrease; nor, further, as to the percentage of children not taking advantage of the free education offered by this State.

In accord with this purpose the board compiled and sent out blanks asking for information in regard to education and grouping it under certain headings. They collected a great mass of statistics of every kind, arranged and correlated it under proper headings, and printed it as a part of their report for 1899-1900. In that report statistics occupy 192 pages and make a statistical display such as had never been attempted before in the State. It seems to have been the purpose of the board to make such a presentation once in 10 years. They were gathered again and presented in the report for 1910, but in that case, although more complete than in the earlier report, they are not totaled, and are therefore of limited value.

The State board in its report for 1898 discussed further its plans and purposes. These included a gradual elevation of the standard of qualifications for teachers:

Delaware still suffers the great hardship of having no State normal school to qualify and test the capabilities of the instructors of her children. In most instances, therefore, school commissioners are compelled to rely entirely upon the teachers' certificate obtained on examination (never an entirely satisfactory test) by the county superintendent. For this reason the board has, through one of its committees, carefully examined all the questions given by the three superintendents in every examination of teachers held since the passage of the present school law, and made such changes in and additions to those questions as to it seemed proper. It has, moreover, added botany and drawing to the list of subjects upon which teachers must be examined.

There was complaint also by the board on the textbooks used. These were furnished by the State but—

nevertheless when the board began its labors under the law, it found the State list remarkable for its inclusion of a great number of the poorest, out-of-date schoolbooks, and for its exclusion of very many of the best and latest publications.

The board provided for the revisal and consolidation of the school law into a single whole, thus making it more simple and easy of access, and recommended amendments only in matters of minor detail, while the county boards reported that in accord with the directions of the law their first work after organization had looked toward the proper reorganization of the colored schools. This had now been done, and there were reported 25 districts for Negro schools in New Castle County, 32 in Kent, and 33 in Sussex, making 90 in all. The crying need of the Negroes was still for schoolhouses. Few were owned; churches, halls, and private houses were occupied by courtesy; furniture was poor or lacking altogether and in some cases the only desks available were those improvised out of benches by requiring the children to sit on the floor. The extreme inequality in the distribution of the colored population was also a serious drawback, and the lack of uniformity in advancement and progress was so marked among whites as well as blacks that the superintendent of Kent County was led to exclaim: "It is almost literally true, therefore, that even with the free public schools of this State the education of the child is dependent upon the accident of birth."

The most important school legislation in 1899 was that which sought to advance the grading of schools. It appears that grading of schools, without particular sanction of law, had now advanced to such a point as to be formally recognized. An act passed March 9, 1899,¹ directed the State board to select certain graded schools in the various communities and make them the centers to which children without graded-school facilities might repair from all districts in the county or from such particular districts as should be designated by the board. The graded schools accorded this privilege of admitting outsiders were to be certified by the State board and were to receive from the State \$15 per term for each pupil up to 150 pupils per county.

In this way the State provided advanced primary and high-school instruction for at least 450 pupils; it encouraged the development into high schools of the institutions that were already graded and opened the way for others to advance in the same direction. In putting this act into execution the State board selected 11 schools in New Castle, 19 in Kent, and 11 in Sussex as such graded schools, assigned the rural districts to them and carried out the law without friction. During the first year 67 pupils were thus admitted in New Castle County at a total cost to the State of \$817.87, which was

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1899, ch. 219.

something less than the cost provided by the State. In the same year 54 were admitted to the schools in Kent at a cost of \$668.76 and 46 in Sussex at a cost of \$559.31. The next year (1900) the admissions were 67, 53, and 31, respectively.

The system soon became popular and within the next few years the admissions into the graded schools were actually greater than the 150 provided for by law. By an amendment in 1909¹ the number to be admitted was increased from 150 to 250 per county and the compensation was fixed at 20 cents per day for not less than 140 days, instead of the \$15 per term of the old law. This provision for encouraging pupils to extend their courses and schools to grade their work was a wise one, for it relieved the congestion in the lower ungraded schools, encouraged the grading of the larger ones, and laid the foundations for the transportation of pupils and the accompanying compulsory attendance. Delaware was beginning to awake to modern life and methods.

At this time also a beginning was made in providing traveling libraries. A committee of the State Federation of Women's Clubs took the matter in hand and were given \$100 per year for advancing the circulation of such libraries among the public schools.² This was followed in 1901 by the establishment of the Delaware State library commission, whose powers were enlarged in 1903.³

For the first two years the new State board was occupied mainly in collecting the statistics which it published in its report for 1899-1900; in the selection and adoption of better textbooks and in organizing and systematizing the work of the public schools. In doing this it found that there was a great need of more money and of "a more just and equitable distribution" of the school funds. In his message in 1899 Gov. Tunnell points out the need for more money and that enough should be raised by local taxation to run the schools for eight months in the year. He then continues:

Owing to the increased number of colored schools and the equal distribution of the school fund among them, each district's share is less this year than last, but when it is considered that the State is still paying more than three-fourths of the expenses of the schools,

it is not to be expected that the districts would raise money locally unless required by law and it was reported that some districts actually expended only \$25 of the amount raised by taxation.⁴

Gov. Tunnel said in 1899 that the new school law, "with its many new and modern provisions, seems to be well adapted to our needs." But in 1901 he was also forced to say that—

Ignorance, selfishness, and a lack of appreciation of the great benefits derived from higher education have retarded its progress and crippled its usefulness.

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1909, ch. 85.

² Laws of Delaware, 1899, ch. 220.

³ See its reports in S. J., 1903, p. 208.

⁴ House Journal, 1899, p. 307.

The people lacked enthusiasm; they had not done their duty, and had not raised by taxation a sum commensurate with the State contribution.

Nor was the method of distribution satisfactory. The funds were still distributed among the counties "according to their white population as ascertained by the census of 1830." The school income at the time (1900) was \$134,396.50, of which \$100,000 came as a lump sum appropriation from the State and \$34,396.50 represented the income of the invested school fund. As divided that year, New Castle, including Wilmington, received \$50,345.44, Kent \$33,693.96, and Sussex \$47,954.05. In New Castle \$150 was given "to each and every single district and to each district contained in every united, consolidated, and incorporated district." The remainder was then distributed among the districts according to the number of children enrolled. In Kent and Sussex the distribution was different. The fund was first divided into as many parts as there were districts (including those embraced in consolidated, united, or incorporated districts). To each single district one part was given, but the amount set apart for the districts embraced in consolidated, united, or incorporated districts was united and then distributed among the consolidated, united, or incorporated schools according to the number of children enrolled. Then, too, certain schools, by authority of the legislature, were allowed to receive more than their just share, being given a single district's share for each district embraced in that school.¹

The result was that some districts with a given school enrollment got twice as much money for schools as other districts with substantially the same enrollment. It was this indefensible favoritism that the law of 1901 undertook to correct. It sought first of all to provide for a more equitable division of the proceeds of the school fund.² It required an annual settlement by each school district with the State auditor and a detailed report of the same. It then provided that the income of the State school fund and the money appropriated by the State for the free public schools and increased by this act from \$120,000 to \$132,000 per year³ should be divided among the school districts, "including consolidated, united, and incorporated districts or schools," according to the number of teachers employed for at least 140 days during the previous school year. To be entitled to receive a share of this apportionment the district—

shall have raised by taxation or subscription for school purposes during the previous school year, if a white school district, at least \$100 for each teacher employed, and, if a colored school district at least \$50 for each teacher employed.

¹ Report for 1899-1900, pp. 4-6.

² Laws of Delaware, 1901, ch. 112.

³ See also Laws of Delaware, 1903 ch. 339.

If an assessment had been made for additional teachers, they were to be counted as employed, while payment for textbooks and balances on hand were to be deducted, and proportionate deductions were to be made for all teachers employed less than 140 days.

The annual report of the board for 1901-2 reviews the results of this law and pronounces it "a decided improvement on all former plans." There were then employed in New Castle County 240 white and 29 colored teachers, in Kent, 148 and 34, in Sussex, 235 and 35, making 623 white and 98 colored teachers, or a grand total of 721, including Wilmington, and the dividend for each teacher in 1902 was \$232.20.

The board said at that time

There are still defects in our system that must be remedied. The isolated, ungraded school is the chief defect. It is getting more and more difficult to obtain and retain the services of competent and enthusiastic teachers for these ungraded schools. . . . We believe that the system of rural graded schools would in a great measure eliminate this defect. The idea is that of centralization.

This was the beginning of the movement which a little later eventuated in the consolidation of country schools, the transportation of pupils to school at public expense and their companion piece—compulsory school attendance.

In 1901 the sum of \$6,000 annually for two years was provided by the State for building and repairing schoolhouses for the colored schools. The money was to be expended under direction of the county school commission and was of the greatest service. Other sums have been provided from time to time since that date.¹

The necessity for and importance of normal training was again emphasized, and it was recommended that superintendents should have "power to grant certificates to teach in the county to persons holding certificates of graduation from normal schools, good in other States, or holding diplomas from a respectable college." But since it was thought the cost of a normal school was too great for the State to incur, it was proposed that the State provide funds by the use of which pupils might attend normal schools in other States.

In 1903 this idea was enacted into law. It was provided that State funds, not to exceed \$1,000 per county per annum,² might be expended under the direction of the county school commissioners to assist in meeting the expenses of normal school pupils in unnamed normal schools in other States. The assistance rendered was not to exceed \$2³ per week and the beneficiaries of the fund for their part

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1901, ch. 115. See also laws of 1903, ch. 342, where the act of 1901 is reenacted; ch. 351, which authorizes a colored district in Kent and another in Sussex to borrow up to \$600 each for furnishing and repairing their schoolhouses. In 1909, \$1,000 was granted for the colored school buildings of Sussex (ch. 90) and in 1911 \$2,500 per year for two years for building and repairs throughout the State; in 1913, \$2,000 annually for two years (ch. 106); in 1915, \$1,750 annually for two years.

² Raised in 1911 to \$1,500.

³ Raised to \$2.50 per week in 1911.

were to enter into obligations to teach in the schools of the State.¹ By an act of 1905 (ch. 90) they might be chosen from any part of the State, but in 1915 the whole system was abandoned,² a normal department having been established in Delaware College.

In the report for 1903 and 1904 the State board turned all of its eloquence toward the solution of a single question:

The great bane of our schools and the greatest handicap on their efficiency is irregular attendance. In some districts of our State and that often, too, in the districts [where] by reason of poverty-stricken conditions, the public school is the sole hope for social betterment by the children, the monthly attendance will not be one-fifth of what it should be. The State money is practically wasted in trying to maintain an efficient school under such conditions.

The solution of the problem lay in the enactment of compulsory-attendance laws and in the consolidation of schools and the transportation of children to school at public expense. The arguments for consolidation and transportation are given at length, backed up by many quotations from the experience of other States. The argument had no immediate effect apparently. No consolidation and transportation law was passed at that time, but in 1907 came the first compulsory-attendance law.³ This subject had never been much discussed in the State; Groves was against it in the eighties; Raub was against it in the nineties, and little had been said in its favor, but its time had now come. It was provided that children between 7 and 14 should attend "a day school, in which the common English branches are taught," at least five months each year, but it was permissible under certain conditions to reduce this to three and the law was not to apply to pupils who lived more than 2 miles from the schoolhouse unless free conveyance was provided. Violation of the act was treated as a misdemeanor subject to fine or imprisonment. Attendance officers were provided and special schools might be established for habitual truants. The boys might be sent to the Ferris Industrial School, and incorrigible girls might be sentenced for a definite time to the Delaware Industrial School for Girls. The State treasurer was instructed to withhold one-fourth of the State dividend due to any district that neglected or refused to enforce the act.⁴

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1903, ch. 341. The length of teaching service demanded was fixed at 2 years in 1911.

² Sec. ch. 163, laws of 1915, which repeals the whole section of the code (ch. 71, sec. 29) providing for these pupils in extra-State normal schools.

³ Unimportant amendments made in 1909, ch. 33.

⁴ Laws of Delaware, 1907, ch. 121, and *ibid.*, 1909, ch. 83. The Delaware Industrial School for Girls was incorporated by ch. 637, laws of 1898. It was a reform school for girls up to 21 years of age, who were to be committed by proper legal authority. It was granted \$1,000 by the State (increased in 1897 to \$1,500, ch. 449). See also ch. 363, laws of 1903, and chs. 126 and 127, laws of 1913. It now receives from the public 40 cents per day for each person in the school. The Ferris Industrial School for Boys receives support at the same rate, with a minimum payment of not less than \$1,000 per month. See the Code of 1915. The Ferris School was incorporated by act of Mar. 10, 1885. See also acts of Mar. 14 and 27, 1905, and Feb. 23, 1907.

Another act of 1907 provided the machinery by which school districts might vote on the question of borrowing money for building, repairing, and furnishing schoolhouses. On petition the question was to be decided in an election where every person who had a right to vote in a regular school election and every woman freeholder might "cast one vote for every dollar and fractional part of a dollar of school tax assessed for the year in which such election is held against him or her respectively."¹

This law took the power of decision out of the hands of the propertyless class and gave it to those who paid the tax. It was, therefore, more favorable to the schools than if left to manhood suffrage.

The efforts to secure free libraries in the State were at first less successful than those looking to other phases of the problem. These began in 1901 (ch. 136) with the enactment of the first law. It proved unsatisfactory and was largely amended in 1903, while other amendments followed in 1905 (ch. 114). The lawmakers took a rest in 1907 and in 1909 the law was perfected (ch. 106).

By this act a State library commission was established. It was composed of nine persons appointed by the governor for five years. The State librarian was its secretary ex officio, but had no vote, and the members received no salary. The commission was given general supervision over all libraries in the State established under the act and over all circulating libraries. All the school districts in the State, single, united, consolidated, and incorporated were classified according to the amount of taxation for school expenses that each might levy. The classes were seven in number, including a few arbitrary assignments to particular classes:

Class 1 was made up of those districts which raised \$6,000 or more for school expenses. They might levy and raise for the use of libraries from \$500 to \$1,000;

Class 2, \$4,000 to \$6,000; might raise \$150 to \$400;

Class 3, \$2,000 to \$4,000; might raise \$100 to \$300;

Class 4, \$1,000 to \$2,000; might raise \$75 to \$200;

Class 5, \$500 to \$1,000; might raise \$50 to \$150;

Class 6, \$200 to \$500; might raise \$40 to \$100;

Class 7, less than \$200; might raise \$25 to \$75.

The districts might, when they so desired, vote on the question of establishing and maintaining a public library, and when so authorized were required to levy and collect the necessary tax according to the class to which they belonged. They were then to elect a school district library commission, which was to have control of the erection and equipment of the building and the administration of the library

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1907, ch. 122; *ibid.*, 1909, ch. 89.

and they might borrow money for the purchase, erection, or repair of a library building or for the purchase of books.¹

In 1913 the State fund for use of the commission, in addition to expenses and printing, was fixed at \$2,000 per year, and it was provided that whenever a school district should raise a certain amount of funds for library use by taxation the commission should contribute a fixed amount to the use of the library (ch. 116).

The first decade of the twentieth century was in Delaware pre-eminently the age of improvement in public schools. As we have seen, there was in the State much hasty and tentative legislation, laws were passed at one session only to be revised and amended beyond recognition at the next. These laws touched all phases of the educational problem, but had to do in the main with material and administrative rather than educational matters. Many acts allowed individual schools, including at least two schools for negroes,² to borrow money on the faith of the district to repair and improve old buildings or for the erection of new ones. In 1907 an act standardized the conditions under which the vote to decide on borrowing money might be taken.

But the work of the State board was not satisfactory, not even to itself. In its report for 1910—the only one published between 1904 and 1913—it is said:

As at present constituted, the State board of education is not a success in the administration of its duties; being an automatic body, the senior member of the county school commissioners is barely initiated in the work when he retires and is succeeded by another, and the evolution continues, and the board is deprived of the best services of its members.

As a result of this feeling, and in accord with the wishes of the State board, that board as then constituted was abolished in 1911 and a new board created. Under the law of 1911 (ch. 94) the general supervision and control of the free public schools of the State, including those for colored children, was vested in a State board of education of seven members, who were to hold office for a full term of seven years from April 1, 1911. They were to be appointed by the governor, and were to serve without pay. It was their business to systematize and harmonize the work in the free schools, to render the schools more useful and efficient, and to raise the standard of instruction and education. They might make and enforce the regulations necessary to attain these ends; they had power to prescribe and furnish textbooks; regulate the curricula; determine the conditions under which county superintendents were to issue certificates to teachers; regulate the sanitary equipment and inspection of school

¹ In April, 1916, a campaign was carried on in Wilmington to raise money for a new library building. Sums varying from a nickel to \$34,000 and amounting to \$326,000 were raised. The building will be the exclusive property of the library.—*Library Journal*, June, 1916, p. 426.

² See Laws of Delaware, 1908, ch. 351.

buildings; and take such other steps as seemed necessary "to promote the physical and moral welfare of the children of the free schools." The State board was required to investigate facts and conditions in regard to the needs of the schools and might require teachers and school officers to furnish needed information, and it might, if deemed necessary, employ "a trained educator or educational expert" to advise and assist in the performance of its duties. The board was to hear appeals and make reports to the governor. The State auditor was to be secretary to the board, but without vote or pay, and the board was to fix the conditions and regulations under which the county superintendents issued teacher's certificates.

In 1910 the State board pointed out the greatest weakness of the system as it then stood—local self-government and taxation on rental values, instead of on values:

Local self-government is recognized as the greatest evil of our present system, and until the administrative part of the schools is entrusted to other hands the improvement must be necessarily slow and not productive of any great good.

A system which, it is hoped, will be recommended to the incoming legislature will in a great measure do away with the criticism of insufficient school buildings, unequal taxation, unsuitable location of schoolhouses, unequal salaries of teachers, and give the taxpayer and children of the county more nearly equal privileges. After having inquired diligently into this phase of the question, we do not hesitate to say that because of the system now in vogue, especially in Sussex County, there are numerous instances of where the most valuable land does not pay a cent toward the support of the school in the district in which it is located, because of the fact that it is timbered and untenanted. Changing the basis of taxation from "rental value to real value" will rectify and remedy this injustice and tend more to equalize taxation than any one step that can be taken as far as we, in our judgment, can see.

The board declared further that "the great need of our schools" at the time was "more money and a more just and equitable distribution of the school funds." For the year 1909-10 the funds of State origin consisted of \$132,000 given by the State and \$29,809.55 coming from income from investments, which were divided among the counties as follows:

New Castle, including Wilmington.....	\$69,290
Kent.....	43,460
Sussex.....	60,885

Of these sums \$11,815.45 was reserved for the purchase of textbooks. The board remarked that—

great inequalities undeniably exist in the distribution of the State's aid to schools, but it seems next to impossible to evolve and develop a system in which there are no irregularities and inequalities.

The provision for the admission of pupils to the high schools had not been altogether satisfactory. It was at first provided that \$15 should be paid to school for each pupil admitted; later this sum was dropped and 20 cents per day for each day of actual attendance was

substituted, and "while this plan has cost the State a greatly increased amount, over the per capita system, a great many gross irregularities and inequalities have arisen which have caused the system to be in disrepute." It was then proposed to make payment to the high school in the same way that it was made to the districts, on the basis of the teachers employed. The schools were to be graded into four classes: Those of the first class to receive \$1,000; those of the second, \$750; the third, \$500; and the fourth, \$250.

The report of the board continues:

Taken as a whole there is a noticeable betterment in all things pertaining to schools, and especially with regard to the advancement of the grades and curriculum, and there is not much to choose from as between the schools of the several counties, as far as competency and proficiency is concerned. There are several high schools in the State (outside of the city of Wilmington) that have three and four teachers each, and there are several that will increase their quota before the beginning of the next school year.

A commercial course had been opened in one of the high schools, and courses were now offered in typewriting, bookkeeping, and telegraphy. A manual training-school for each county was recommended, and it was thought that outside of Wilmington the compulsory attendance law had increased the size of the schools by 25 per cent, and salaries were improving, for in 1910 (p. 9) it was reported from Sussex that while in 1901 but one teacher in the single districts received as much as \$40 per month, now out of 296 teachers 110 received from \$40 to \$50, and but 6 teachers in the single districts received as little as \$35, and everywhere school buildings were improving.

In 1911, besides the law reorganizing the State board, one act provided that a half hour per week be devoted to moral and humane teaching, instruction in "kindness, justice, humane treatment, and protection to birds and animals and of their important part in the economy of nature." Vivisection was forbidden,¹ and lectures on good health were delivered.²

It is evident that with the close of this period of Delaware public school educational history in 1913 progress was being made. Appropriations from the State were at the highest, the income of the school fund was larger, and the districts were more than ever disposed to levy taxes for the benefit of schools. The schoolhouses and school furniture were improving, schools were being graded, high schools were developing, and the work as a whole was better organized, but the schools were still ruled by a purely local self government. There was little or no authority exercised by the State, and the people

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1911, ch. 93.

² Report 1910, p. 6.

had not yet come to realize the weakness of decentralization, but they were going in that direction. They had not yet arrived at a fixed equilibrium in the matter of central control, the pendulum was still likely to swing back over its old route, but when we compare the situation in 1910 with what it was down to 1875 it will be realized what tremendous strides had been taken already toward the organization of a real State system.

Chapter VIII

THE REORGANIZED STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ITS REPORT OF 1913; THE STATE SUPERIN- TENDENCY REESTABLISHED; THE MOST RECENT LEGISLATION.

The general assembly of 1911, after providing for the reorganization of the State board of education, outlined the phases of educational endeavor which it was desired the new board should seek to advance. First and foremost it was to make a report on the condition of the schools, together with a revision of the school law; the other two requirements were added by joint resolution: (1) To prepare and present to the next legislature a revised charter for Delaware College and (2) to evolve a feasible plan for the higher education of women in Delaware. The second and third of these duties concern us but indirectly, for the scope of the present study confines itself in the main to the evolution of the public school.

Gov. Pennewill approved the bill providing for the reorganization of the State board of education on March 14, 1911. In accord with the terms of that act he appointed as members of the new board Dr. George W. Twitmyer, of Wilmington, who became chairman; Henry Ridgely, of Dover; George S. Messersmith, of Lewes, who became secretary pro tem.; Prof. Harry Hayward, of Newark; Henry Clay Davis, of Laurel; John W. Hering, of Milford; and Frederick Brady, of Middletown. These gentlemen organized in Dover on May 2, 1911, and entered upon the duties of their office. Committees were appointed to consider the educational needs and problems of the State, among which were mentioned the grading of schools, improvement and sanitation of school buildings, unifying of courses, aid to normal students, and the examination and certification of teachers. The work which they have already accomplished has been such that it may be fairly characterized as epoch-making, while the report which they have issued as a result of their survey of the educational development, progress, and position of the State will entitle them to rank among the chief educational statesmen of the Commonwealth.

This report was published in 1913, and as it is addressed to the general assembly it may be taken as substantially the last official word

from the State on the subject of the public schools. The subjects discussed by the board include graded and rural schools; better supervision; the larger school unit, or the "representative district" plan versus the school district plan; the assessment and collection of taxes; the need of more money for the rural schools; State aid; the salaries of teachers; sanitation of schoolhouses and summer schools for teachers.

This was the first report of the new State board as reestablished and constituted by the act of March 14, 1911, and it is remarkable in that it boldly and frankly faces the educational conditions which it finds and reports them as they were without glozing or extenuation; no earlier report had ever presented the situation with such frankness, and it may be assumed that it gives a true picture of the situation in 1913; for this reason large extracts from the report are presented here.

I. THE REPORT OF THE STATE BOARD IN 1913.

One of the first duties of the board was to work out a new scheme for the examination of teachers. It was adopted and the first examinations held on April 6, 1912. The scheme provides that all teachers in the State shall be examined in the same subjects on the same day. The grade of the certificate issued is conditioned upon the nature and quality of the examination passed and the experience of the candidate. There is liberal provision for granting permanent certificates, and for validating normal school and college diplomas upon evidence of successful experience. All certificates are now valid in any county in the State when properly countersigned by the county superintendent. In connection with these examinations, and as preliminary to them, there has been outlined a course in professional reading for teachers.

The results of this readjustment have been to make examinations uniform throughout the State and to make certificates interchangeable between the counties. Examinations and certificates have now been reduced to a State basis.

The board reports that there has been "a marked increase in the quality of the work of the graded schools," and says that it is due to the unusual interest taken by the towns in their schools:

Perhaps at no time in the history of our State have the people of the urban communities known so much about the actual state of instruction and discipline and been more keen in their desire that the schools should adequately serve the community * * * there are few towns in which additions have not been built or improvements installed.
* * * The instruction has increased in efficiency.

These improvements have been due to a more careful selection of teachers; among these teachers there have been more who are college or normal graduates; the supervision in the graded schools

has been closer; the amount of money raised by incorporated schools has increased and has been used in providing better salaries and increased facilities:

The increase in the efficiency of the graded schools is especially seen in the changed character of the high schools. Every town of over 1,000 people has a high school with a course of three or four years, and some of the smaller towns maintain creditable schools. The quality of the teaching in the high schools has improved materially in recent years and the courses are being strengthened and rationalized.

The condition of the graded schools was said to be satisfactory. They showed a healthy growth. What they then needed most was a "flexible, sensible, and modern course of study with a minimum requirement in every subject." This would help standardize the work of both the high and graded schools and make it easier for pupils to pass from one school to another in the State. For these reasons it was thought that the incorporated schools were not in need of legislation.

While the work in the graded schools was satisfactory and that of the incorporated school needed no legislation, such was not the case with the rural schools, for "those most familiar with the actual work of these schools know that they are deplorably inefficient in many respects." It was said that the blame for their condition was not to be laid on individuals nor on the executive school officials, for "under the existing conditions, as determined by our school laws, the most earnest official could accomplish little." The system under which they were operated was antiquated, the pay was poor, and bills proposed by the board in 1911 for their improvement were not enacted into law:

Leaving Wilmington out of consideration, the great majority of the pupils in our State attend rural ungraded schools. Measure after measure has been passed for the improvement of the graded schools, but the rural school has been allowed to remain under an antiquated system of administration and under what, to most people, appears an unjust system of taxation.

Some of the existing ill conditions which could not be changed under the law then in force were poor supervision; the small school unit; the compulsory assessment of real property at rental values and of personal property at real value; poor collections and large cost; separate-school assessment in every single district; inexperienced teachers who have no supervision by commissioners; inequalities in taxation in adjoining districts; poor schoolhouses, bad sanitation; inadequate supplies in the matter of books and illustrative apparatus; no definitely outlined courses of study; poor home accommodations of teachers.

The first necessary step in the improvement of this unfortunate situation was thought to be through better supervision: (1) By provision for a State commissioner of education, who shall also be secre-

tary of the State board of education; (2) by the election of county superintendents by the State board of education instead of their appointment by the governor.

The board presents an extended and convincing argument in favor of these proposed reforms:

During the last two years the board has been hindered from time to time by the lack of definite actual facts concerning the schools of the State, and they have been compelled by extraordinary efforts to gather information which should have been provided for them by an officer under their direction. The members of the board are all men engaged actively in business or professional work, and though they serve without pay on the board, have held frequent meetings and have undertaken to perform, as far as possible, the duties ordinarily exercised by a paid commissioner of education.

Delaware is unique among the States in that it is the only one which does not have a commissioner of education or State superintendent of schools, who under the State board of education, is the chief educational executive in the State. Those who are most familiar with the school problem in our State have realized for a long time the necessity for an officer who could be held responsible for the full and complete execution of the school law. Until such an office is created by law the State can have no definite educational policy, no economy of administration, and no absolute and uniform enforcement of the law.

After the most careful consideration of all that is involved in this matter the board urgently recommends the creation of the office of State commissioner of education. This officer should be the secretary of the board and primarily its executive officer. He should formulate a definite educational policy for the State and be its authorized leader. He should be an experienced teacher, having broad scholarship and technical knowledge of educational processes and administrative methods; he should be an adept in school legislation and an easy, forceful speaker; he should be able to harmonize and vitalize all the educational forces and instrumentalities of the State. He would gather statistics and accurate information as to the condition of the schools as a whole and specific information as to the needs of different communities. As secretary of the board he would conduct its correspondence, which up to the present time has been done by individuals on the board at great personal sacrifice, and would as such perform such other duties in relation to the schools (except auditing school accounts) as are now performed by the State auditor. In conjunction with the county superintendents he would see to the closer supervision of the schools and to the enforcement of uniform standards in the schools of the three counties. He would maintain an office in which the school records of the State would be preserved and from which would be issued bulletins for the teachers, giving specific information and suggestions in modern methods of school administration. He would, above all, be responsible for the complete and uniform execution of the school law in the State.

It has long been felt that the office of county superintendent should be removed from politics. So long as this office is appointive by the governor it is only natural that political considerations should enter somewhat into the appointment; but there is a more important reason than this. An appointive officer will, for human reasons, not be as strict in his enforcement of law as he should be. He will be hampered in a measure in the performance of his duty by considerations of expediency. If he is elected by a board which will be cognizant of the fact that he has performed his duties wisely and well, he need have no fear that malcontents for the time being can have him removed from the position in which he is actually doing his proper duty.

It will be shown later how far this earnest appeal was successful in its demand upon the assembly.

In the next place the State board presented the arguments in favor of a larger school unit. The school districts outside of Wilmington then numbered: Unincorporated districts, 73 in New Castle, 81 in Kent, and 136 in Sussex; incorporated districts, 11 in New Castle, 17 in Kent, and 19 in Sussex; colored districts, 24 in New Castle, 31 in Kent, and 32 in Sussex. There were in all 47 incorporated districts.¹

The State board then continues:

The boards of education in incorporated districts have from 3 to 12 members and have from 3 to 16 teachers in their employ. These boards are generally made up of representative men in the community, who, in many instances, have children in the school. They hold monthly meetings, have more or less complete reports from the principals in charge of the schools, visit the schools at intervals, and on the whole are fairly well acquainted with the work of the individual teachers and the actual condition of their schools. An examination of the lists of directors of the incorporated schools will show that in most cases the communities show reasonable discrimination in the management of school affairs entrusted to them. The 47 incorporated districts may well be left alone to act under the charters they now hold.

A different situation prevails in the rural districts. There are 290 unincorporated districts in this State, each with a board of 3 commissioners, making a total of 870 commissioners. In 19 of these unincorporated districts 2 teachers are employed, so that in the rural schools there are practically three times as many commissioners as teachers. It is probable that this system was devised to interest more fully each community in its own school, but it has failed completely to accomplish this purpose. We will point out briefly the reasons why a larger unit should be established.

1. The three commissioners in each district hold practically only two meetings during the year—one at the time of the annual school election in June, and one to make the assessment. Once the school is started the commissioners hold no meetings, have no report from the teacher, and the clerk confines his activity to making out the monthly salary check.

A great many of the commissioners are substantial farmers and business men who really want a good school. A great many also are men whose only interest is that the school shall be kept open seven months, so that the State dividend may be secured. In a few instances do they visit the schools, and if they do, many are hardly in a position to judge the character of the work. The whole responsibility of the school devolves on the teacher, who has no assistance or supervision, except in the annual visit of the county superintendent. The result is that the school has no supervision, buildings and outhouses are neglected, and frequently the school sessions are cut short by uninterested teachers. The only argument in favor of a local board of commissioners for every school is that it would carefully look after the home school. The system has been tried in this State for years, and the evidence is conclusive that it absolutely fails to do this.

2. There are 290 separate school assessments in the single districts and 290 collectors. But this does not tend to accurate and close assessments and collection of taxes as might be supposed. The assessment lists in the majority of cases are very carelessly made out, a great deal of property is not assessed, and in some cases, though the instances are few now, no actual assessment is made. The only purpose seemingly is to raise enough money by taxation to secure the State dividend and to keep the school open seven months. A further and more flagrant wrong in this system is the unequal

¹ On this subject the governor said in his annual message in 1915 (H. J., 38): "Including the city of Wilmington, this State has 524 school districts. Fifty of these are town schools, which the law terms incorporated (they are practically consolidated). This leaves 474 rural schools, or one-teacher districts."

assessments made and the unequal amount of taxes levied. The making of 290 assessments by 290 different persons involves many unnecessary and unjust inequalities in the valuation of all kinds of property and the collection of the taxes by 290 different persons is uneconomic if not wasteful; the work might be accomplished by a much smaller number more effectively.

3. In many instances, the number of children in a district decreases until there are only from 3 to 12 pupils in the school. These pupils could easily be sent to near-by schools and not have to walk farther. Instead, the district, through a false local pride, will keep the school open, pay the teacher a smaller salary, and subject the pupils to the deadening routine of the usual small school. If the representative district is the unit of government, very small schools can be closed and pupils can be assigned to a near-by school at a great saving of money, and to the advantage of the district. When population shifts so that the school is again necessary, it can be reopened by the board in the representative district without any formality.

4. Under the present system, if two or more rural districts wish to consolidate, it requires a two-thirds vote in such districts before the consolidation can be effected. Under this provision of law, there have been very few instances of consolidation. Local prejudices will not allow it to be done even though the majority believe it to be best. Wherever graded schools have been established in town or country in this State, there is not an instance where the people would wish to revert to the old system. The representative districts as the unit of government would merge the interests of all the people in the district, and the way would be open for consolidation whenever the people desire it. Until the representative district is made the unit of administration there can be no marked increase in the efficiency of the rural schools.

We therefore recommend strongly that the representative district be made the unit of school administration in the State, the present incorporated districts as they now exist to remain as they are.

It was thought that by the representative district plan the centralization of the schools would be forwarded. School affairs would be under the direction of 30 boards of education of 5 members each (10 boards in each county), instead of 290 boards of 3 members each. The boards would be composed of men more interested and capable than were now generally found on the local boards; they would hold monthly meetings, require monthly reports from the teachers, visit the schools more regularly, take better care of the school buildings and furniture; more economies could be introduced, and the schools could therefore have more money without increasing taxation; the new system could be put into execution without commotion or disturbance and would tend to approximate that of the incorporated districts, which were then the most successful phase of the school work in the State.

Of no less significance or importance was the discussion on "the present antiquated system of assessing and collecting school taxes." Here indeed was to be seen the perfection of decentralization:

In June of every year, the school voters in the 290 rural districts of the State meet at the schoolhouses and determine how much money shall be raised by taxation for the coming year.

After the school meeting, 290 boards of commissioners make the 290 separate assessments. The commissioners in the 290 districts then fix the rate which is usually different in each of the 290 districts. They then designate tax collectors, whose

commissions average about 8 per cent. The collectors turn over the tax, less their commission, to their respective boards of commissioners.

In making the assessment the law requires it shall cover the real property assessed at its rental value, personal property assessed at real value, and the rates of persons, or polls.

To remedy this situation the board recommended (1) that the local single districts be abolished and the representative district be made the basis of school government and taxation; (2) that the county assessment be made the basis of taxation on real property, and on personal property if so decided by the board. The county assessment had to be made for other purposes; it was more nearly accurate and generally covered all the assessable realty or personalty and the polls, and would do away with all separate assessments; (3) that the voters in the separate districts should determine whether real property be taxed at its real or its rental value and if at the rental value this was to be 10 per cent of the real value. Previous bills had made county assessment the basis of taxation, but made the assessment of real property at its real value obligatory, and on this rock all school legislation aiming to relieve the situation had been wrecked; (4) that the tax rate in each representative district be fixed by the board of commissioners and that the taxes be collected by the county tax collector or clerk of the school commissioners.

In the same manner the State board discussed the need for more money in the rural schools and showed that while in 1910 for 2,152 pupils the graded schools raised \$27,058.39, the rural schools raised only \$20,447.47 for 2,989 pupils, and that, while the average expenditure per child in the graded schools was \$12.57, in the rural schools it was only \$6.86. This was the proportion in New Castle County: in Kent only one-third as much was spent on the rural as on the town pupil; in Sussex it was a little more than one-half as much. In view of this situation the board asked if it was startling that the graded schools should have increased in efficiency while the rural schools had remained stationary?

It was shown further that in general the State was then paying "more than 50 per cent of the cost of maintaining the schools in the rural districts," and it was suggested that the need was not "so much for more aid from the State as for raising of more money in the rural districts." How this desirable object was to be obtained was not suggested.

The question of rural salaries is taken up in the same connection. In New Castle the highest rural salary was \$55, the lowest \$30, the average \$39.90; in Kent the highest was \$50, the lowest \$33, the average \$38; in Sussex the highest was \$60, the lowest \$35, the average \$40.50. It was also noted that the smallest salary paid in Sussex was \$35 per month and in New Castle \$30. The per centum of

salaries in Sussex below \$40 was 24 per cent; in New Castle it was 33 per cent, and in Kent nearly 50 per cent.

In commenting on these figures the State board remarks:

It is not true, as one might suppose, that the poorer districts pay the lower salaries. In many cases, an actual examination of the auditor's report shows, it is the districts with a large assessed value of property which pay the small salaries. The low salaries are as a rule paid in the districts where the commissioners, having no interest except to keep the school open, bid for a cheap teacher, and they get one.

In their report the State board considers also the question of the sanitation of schoolhouses and their discussion is more forceful than pleasing. They neither try to conceal nor to glose over a discreditable situation. They say:

Under existing law the authority to enforce proper sanitary conditions in the schools is vested in the State board of health, in the county school commissions, and in the State board of education. This conflict of authority has made it impossible for any of these bodies to remedy serious conditions which exist at some of the schools.

In various reports of superintendents and county school commissions attention has been called to the poor [accommodations] at some schoolhouses, some of them hardly habitable. But of special importance is the condition of the outhouses at some of the schools. Notwithstanding frequent notices to improve conditions, there are schools still where the commissioners have failed to provide separate outhouses for the sexes and where the outhouses themselves are in an unmentionable condition. This is more than a sanitary problem, it is so bad at some places that it is a moral one and a scandal in the community.

The authority to oversee these matters should be vested in the State board of education, as the natural body. It will have the organization to enforce proper measures in the commissioner of education and in the county superintendents. The conditions can then be corrected without additional administration expenses.

The last subject pertaining to the public schools discussed in this remarkable report is that dealing with the training of teachers: "A larger and more efficient administration for the rural schools, more money for their maintenance and better teachers to work in them; these are the needs of our rural schools," says the report. Better teachers were needed, but "the State for a time must depend on its present body of teachers." The county superintendents had for some years conducted a summer school at Dover. It was suggested that this be discontinued and that \$1,200 be granted by the State to Delaware College for maintaining a summer session of not less than five weeks. This suggestion was accepted by the assembly of 1913 and the \$1,200 asked for was granted.¹ The summer school opened in 1915 and continued for six weeks. Elementary instruction in fundamental school subjects, including methods of teaching, is offered to teachers in the primary grades, and advanced instruction to teachers in the higher grades. Each course is in charge of a specialist who is also a skilled instructor. The faculty is drawn largely from that of Delaware College.

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1913, ch. 122.

The sections of this report dealing with the new charter for Delaware College and that which discusses the college for the higher education of women are of direct interest in a study of the public schools. After consultation with various women's federations and organizations the board recommended that a college for women affiliated with Delaware College and located at Newark be provided at a cost of approximately \$125,000. Three courses for women students were proposed, one leading to A. B., one to B. S., and a four-year course in education for the training of teachers, also leading to the B. S. degree. The report continues:

It is intended that the course in education shall be flexible enough to meet the needs of the teachers of the State. In addition to the above courses, it is proposed to provide short courses open to women who are unable to meet the entrance requirements for the above-mentioned courses or who are unable to spend four years in pursuing a systematic course of study. The short courses will be adapted especially for those women who wish to prepare themselves for teachers or home makers.

It was suggested that the expense incurred might be met in part by devoting to this affiliated college the \$4,500 which under existing laws was appropriated annually to provide instruction for the young women of Delaware in the State normal schools of other States.¹

This suggestion of the State board was accepted by the assembly of 1913. It determined to establish an affiliated college for women in connection with Delaware College and created a commission to acquire a site and erect the necessary buildings; it authorized them to borrow on the faith and credit of the State the sum of \$120,000 and provided \$30,000 a year for five years as a sinking fund.² The Woman's College was opened with the session of 1914-15. In 1915-16 it had 86 students in arts and sciences, education and home economics. It is supported by both State and Federal funds.

In further accord with the recommendations of this report the assembly of 1913 reincorporated Delaware College, and, as has just been told, not only provided an affiliated college "for the instruction and education" of women, but also instructed the trustees of the college to organize "a department of education which shall be a part of the public school system of the State, and which shall have for its object the education of teachers for the public schools of this State." The course of study was to be arranged in cooperation with the State board of education; and the courses of study of the high schools were to be adjusted by the State board and the trustees of the college "in so far as they are related to the terms of admission to Delaware College."³

¹ This suggestion was acted on in 1915 when the assembly repealed (ch. 163) the act by which aid was given in attending extra-State normal schools.

² Laws of Delaware, 1913, chs. 117, 124.

³ *Ibid.*, ch. 117. See also 1915, ch. 186, where the language of the act of 1913 is somewhat modified.

With the execution of the provisions of the acts looking toward the rehabilitation of Delaware College, the opening there of a summer school for teachers in 1913,¹ and the establishment of the affiliated College for Women in 1914, the State can boast that it is now prepared to give within its own borders extended and sufficient courses to all who seek preparation as teachers.

It will be noticed that the assembly in 1913 and 1915 saw fit to carry into execution almost literally the recommendations of the State board so far as they concerned Delaware College and the affiliated woman's college. These were institutions which touched the public schools mainly through the preparation of teachers.

It now remains to be seen how far the assembly accepted the suggestions of the board in matters pertaining directly and immediately to the public schools themselves; how far did the assembly feel itself justified in adopting the recommendations of the board?

In line with the recommendations which have been summarized, the State board presented to the general assembly of 1913 a bill providing for a revision of the school law of the State. It proposed that all incorporated school districts then existing in the State be retained, but that all others be abolished from the last Saturday in June, 1913. In their place the representative districts into which the various counties were divided should be declared school districts. These new school districts were given corporate powers. They were to be administered by a board of five school commissioners who were to be chosen for a term of three years by the legal voters of the district, including both men and women. The voters were also to determine by ballot whether real value (i. e., county assessment value) or rental value should be the basis for school taxation. A majority of the votes cast on this question was to settle it for three years. The electors were to decide by ballot also "whether any sum above that levied by law" should be raised for the use of the schools for the ensuing year, and, if so, how much.

Special meetings of the electors might be called when the school commissioners saw fit, and their duties were particularly and minutely defined. They were to have general control and direction of the schools of the district; provide, repair, and furnish buildings; keep the schools open at least 140 days in the year; employ and dismiss teachers; expel pupils; make up the assessment list and determine the extra taxes; provide free textbooks; make school reports; settle financial reports with auditor; take steps to enforce compulsory attendance, and maintain oversight and regulation of the schools.

The State board was to appoint before June 1, 1913, a State commissioner of education who was to be secretary of the board and its

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1913, ch. 122.

executive officer. His duties were defined. The board was instructed also to appoint the county superintendent. He was to be given a salary of \$1,500, an increase of \$300. He was required to make reports, but his duties were, in the main, advisory rather than mandatory in character.

This bill was presented to the general assembly in amendment of and to take the place of the act of 1897 (ch. 67, vol. 21), but unfortunately neither the detailed report of the State board, which bears date of February 10, 1913, and has been reviewed in this study, nor the above bill was favorably received in the assembly or in the State. The report commanded little attention and the bill was felt to be wrong in some of its proposed measures; and because of this hostility was not reported out of committee. The districts were not changed, and the county superintendents failed to secure their increase in salary.

It was found impossible to get better pay for the county superintendents for reasons that were then well understood. The newspapers were in favor of this measure as a rule; they understood that the salary then paid was entirely insufficient to attract the kind of men needed, but they were not enthusiastic and apparently the people in general felt the same way.

Consolidation failed because the idea was too new to the people and to the assembly. The people could not be convinced that it was real economy to do away with the old single school district, and with the one-room school. All they could see was that it would cost more money to have consolidation of schools, that control would pass out of their hands, that it was impracticable to transport children to school. They did not realize sufficiently the real advantages of the graded school. The landowners apparently did not oppose the bill; the great body of the people who would have been benefited by consolidation did not properly understand what it meant and were therefore against it.

As to the most important item in the recommendations of the State board, the proposal to change the basis of taxation from rental to real values, a citizen of the State who urged the enactment of the amendment, writes:

Everybody knew that the system of taxation was unspeakably unfair; that it could not be fair to tax personal property at its real value and real property at its rental value. As a matter of fact through all its history the land in Delaware has been owned in large tracts by fairly well-to-do families. Most of the farmers are tenant farmers. It was the old idea that the tenant living on the farm, and whose children went to the rural school, was the one who got the benefit from the school and should therefore pay the greater part of the tax. The tenant therefore paid school tax on the real value of his farming implements, stock, etc., while the owner of the land paid only on the assessed rental of the land.

The landowners have always been more powerful in the general assembly than any other element, and our attempt was the third strong attempt made to change the system of taxation. As the previous assembly had almost passed such a bill, we felt quite sanguine. The opposition was not open; the newspapers did not oppose the change in taxation; most of them were entirely silent on the point, for they were probably told to say little about it. The active opposition came from the large landowners who knew that the change would increase their taxes. They did not say much, but as they were almost all men of influence they worked quietly and effectively. The landowner is often the bank president or the bank director or the employer, and he is in a position to gain his end often without threatening, often without even suggesting. Nothing that could be said or done could make many of the best men see the public-spirited side of the matter. They knew the old way was wrong, but they would not consent to a change because it meant more taxes.

II. THE STATE SUPERINTENDENCY REESTABLISHED.

After it became evident that the assembly of 1913 would not increase the salaries of the county superintendents, consolidate the school districts, nor abandon the rental value system, a separate act was secured providing for a State commissioner of education, whose appointment was placed not in the hands of the State board of education, but in those of the governor. This bill even met with much opposition on the ground that it merely created a new and useless State officer. The newspapers, however, did not oppose the measure; they rather encouraged the project of having some one to really direct the actual work of the schools, but the bill would never have passed if the governor had not used his influence in getting it through. The act¹ provided that the governor should appoint "some suitable person" to be commissioner of education of the State and secretary of the State board of education. His term was to be for two years, and he was required to be—

a person of good moral character and well qualified mentally to perform the duties of his office. He must have had, at the time of his appointment, at least five years' experience as a teacher; and must hold a certificate of graduation from some reputable college or normal school.

The duties of—

said commissioner shall be such as shall be prescribed by the State board of education and shall be directed toward the betterment and standardization of the free schools within this State. As secretary of the State board of education he shall keep and file all documents, reports, communications, and other papers of said board and shall conduct the correspondence.

The choice of the governor to fill this important office was Charles A. Wagner, Ph. D., who entered upon his duties as commissioner of education for the State about the middle of June, 1913.

It will be seen that this act made the State commissioner the executive officer of the State board. He was to take orders from them,

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1913, ch. 103.

to act as their secretary, and as their agent to execute their decisions. The law fixed the salary of the commissioner at \$2,000 and gave the board \$500 for expenses.¹

An act of 1915 which had in view the general improvement of the schools in accord with the report of 1913 was that which provided \$10,000 a year, beginning with 1915, to enable the State board to participate by way of aid to the "altered districts" in the erection of new or in the alteration of old school buildings, and the furnishing and equipment thereof. The board was not permitted by the law to contribute more than 20 per cent of the cost or to invest more than \$2,000 in any one altered district nor to expend more than \$10,000 in one year.²

The same act, after making most elaborate and detailed provision for "the alteration of the boundaries of school districts by union or otherwise," permitted the State board to come to the aid of any of these altered districts (either by union or consolidation) which was seeking to establish a four-year high school by contributing to its support annually a sum not exceeding \$1,000. The total expenditure for this work in the State was not to exceed \$5,000 per annum.³

In addition to the above acts of general application passed in 1913 and 1915 there was the usual number of acts of local application providing for consolidation or authorizing the boards of cities and towns to raise money by taxation or bonds, to increase school facilities, and erect school buildings. These acts concerned in particular the schools of Wilmington, which city was preparing to borrow \$150,000 for the erection and equipment of an addition to the high school.⁴ This school was also becoming a center, a clearing house, for the schools of the surrounding country: nonresident pupils were now by invitation following its courses, and for payment for this service the assembly this year voted to its board of public education the sum of \$4,638.30, earned by the instruction of nonresident pupils during the scholastic years 1912-13 and 1913-14.⁵ A teacher's contributory pension system had been established in that city in 1911,⁶ but the schools were apparently not doing as well as was to be expected. Supt. Twitmyer reported in 1913 that nearly one-third of the pupils were retarded because of the faults of parents or because of ill health coming from curable defects. Others pointed out about the same time, however, that the cost of public-school

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1913, ch. 106 and 107. An act of 1915 (ch. 159) raised the salary of the superintendent to \$3,000 "while said office is held by the present incumbent," and another act of 1915 (ch. 160) increased the fund for miscellaneous expenses from \$500 to \$2,000.

² Laws of Delaware, 1915, ch. 164, sec. 2811V, sec. 30V.

³ *Ibid.*, ch. 164, sec. 2811W, sec. 30W.

⁴ *Ibid.*, ch. 165.

⁵ *Ibid.*, ch. 166. The sum of \$4,025.80 had been paid in 1913 (ch. 109) for 1910-11 and 1911-12.

⁶ Laws of Delaware, 1911, ch. 208.

education in Wilmington was considerably less than the average of 195 other American cities, although the average cost of textbooks was higher. It was proposed in the assembly of 1915, in the interest of efficiency, to reduce the city school board from 13 to 7 members to be elected practically from the whole city. The board itself proposed its own abolition and that its duties be transferred to the city council. Neither proposal prevailed, and the matter is still a subject of discussion (Jan., 1917).

The assembly of 1915 further encouraged the development of town high schools by voting sums in payment of the tuition of non-resident pupils and to make up deficiencies to the Lewes board of education, to those of Frankford, Rehoboth Beach, Wyoming, DuPont, and to the Millville High School.¹ Other acts of 1915 concerned the public schools in Newark, New Castle, Smyrna, Dover, Milford, and Georgetown. The limit of taxation set in earlier laws was raised; districts were incorporated; and progress was general along educational lines, especially in case of the incorporated and graded schools.

Nor were the Negro schools neglected in the special appropriations. In 1913 the usual appropriation for the purpose of building and repairing schoolhouses for the colored children was extended for two years, carrying with it \$2,000 per year. It was again renewed in 1915, carrying \$1,750 per year.² In 1913 the sum of \$3,000 was granted the State College for colored students for a similar purpose, and in 1915 the assembly repaid to the college a debt of \$2,000 which it had incurred in maintaining a summer school for colored teachers. This summer school had been organized in 1907 and maintained by private subscription for two years. It was then taken over by the State College for five years and maintained at a cost of about \$500 a year. In 1915 the assembly gave the college \$2,000 in settlement of this account and provided \$500 annually for the continuation of the school.³

But the careful student has noticed already that these acts concerned the colleges with pedagogical courses for teachers, the schools of the cities and towns, the incorporated and graded schools; that this later legislation helped such schools as the above to raise more funds, to secure better accommodations, and in general to advance the interests and class of work for which they stood. The more progressive schools were thus helped by this legislation to still further advance and develop their work. But what of the lower schools—the rural and ungraded schools—what service came to them from State legislation in 1913 and 1915? First of all was the State superintendent. The reestablishment of this office undoubtedly made for

¹ Laws of Delaware, 1915, ch. 184.

² Laws of Delaware, 1913, ch. 108; 1915, ch. 161.

³ *Ibid.*, ch. 126; 1915, chs. 125, 191, 192.

progress among the rural schools by increasing the possibility of supervision and making for a closer correlation. The increased powers given to the State board looked in the same direction, but beyond these two lines of improvement the ungraded rural schools were in 1915 where they were before the board made its report in 1913.

III. THE CAMPAIGN OF 1916—DISCUSSIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS.

Within recent years surveys, discussions, and investigations looking to the general improvement of the schools in Delaware have been almost continuous and have been conducted by both State and county school officers. They have not been without good effect. One, looking to the improvement of schoolhouses, was conducted by A. R. Spaid, superintendent of schools for New Castle County.¹ He published in 1912 a study on the school buildings of that county with special reference to number, character, and location. He found the majority of them unsatisfactory in one or several particulars and pointed out the necessity for consolidation and transportation. He even went to the extent of locating the proposed consolidated schools. In the centers proposed each school was to have ample playgrounds and gardens, and it was suggested that forenoons be devoted to lessons with books and the afternoons to doing things, while lunches should be served by the school.

Supt. Spaid was not satisfied with the physical and sanitary arrangements of the school buildings of the county:

From the specific arrangements which you requested me to make, based on the measurements of school buildings, you will learn of the great need for immediate improvements in many school districts. I might say that few districts have made any effort to improve the sanitary conditions of their school grounds. Many outhouses are as small, dark, and filthy as ever. * * * I recommend that your commission take steps to enforce the rules. * * * The heating and ventilating of rural schools is a serious proposition. * * * Our present system of heating the schoolroom should be changed. * * *

Then follows a detailed list of all the public schoolhouses in the county, showing the defects and shortcomings in each. Few were found to be satisfactory, and most were lacking in light, air, or floor space, or in all.

In the same way State Commissioner Wagner has sought to increase the general efficiency of the schools through a careful study and detailed discussion of the subject of school attendance. His conclusions have been published in two pamphlets, the one entitled "Public School Attendance of Delaware Children in the Year of 1912-13: A Study and an Appeal" (Wilmington, 1914); and the other as "Some Damaging Effects of Poor School Attendance on Delaware

¹ Supt. Spaid resigned about June, 1913, because the salary received was too small.

Children: Conclusion of the Study of Attendance, Year 1912-13" (Dover, ca. 1915):

It is thought that the conclusions of these papers are worthy of being summarized. In preparing the statistics on which the first of these studies is based, the city of Wilmington was omitted from consideration and the remaining schools were divided into two classes, the incorporated schools, which were in most cases town schools, and the rural or unincorporated and ungraded schools. The statistics used do not cover the total number of incorporated and rural schools in the State. For this study there were taken 11 incorporated schools and 10 rural schools from different sections of the State and such as were thought to be fairly representative of the whole.

It was found that in the incorporated schools the length of school term was 177.3 days; that the average attendance per pupil was 127.5 days, or an average attendance of nearly 70 when measured in terms of per cent. In town schools an average attendance of 90 per cent is regarded as low. To have attained an average of 90 per cent in Delaware would have required a daily average attendance of 159.5 out of 177.3 instead of 127.5 days:

The difference between 159, which they should have attended, and the 127 days which they did attend shows how broken and irregular or discontinuous is the incorporated school attendance. Nor must the mere arithmetical difference, 32 school days, be regarded as expressing the difference. Thirty-two school days is more than a month and a half of school! This is more than one-ninth of the term!

When consideration is devoted to the rural schools, the situation is considerably worse. The length of term for the rural schools for the State was 156.3 days. The average attendance was 89.7 days, or 56.8 per cent of the total available period the schools were open. When the incorporated and rural schools are taken together, it is found that the 17,122 white children in these two classes of schools were in attendance only 63 per cent of their time.

The situation in the colored schools was still worse. The average length of the school term was 137 days; the average attendance for the State excluding Wilmington, was 57 days, or 42 per cent. The waste, then, in the case of the colored schools amounted to 58 per cent. As the entire sum devoted to the colored schools was \$29,408, it appears that 58 per cent, or \$15,191.57, was wasted by failure in attendance. Of this failure the commissioner remarks: "Better husbandry than this indicates should be one of the first requirements for these funds, the larger part of which is given by the State."

The commissioner translates these wasteful expenditures, brought about by poor attendance, into dollars and per cents of the school revenue and makes the following exhibit:

Waste from poor school attendance in Delaware.

Counties.	Total expenditure.	Per cent of attendance.	Usefully spent.	Waste-fully spent.	Per cent of waste.
New Castle County:					
Incorporated schools.....	\$48,355	74	\$35,802	\$12,543	26
Rural schools.....	39,084	62	24,604	15,080	38
Kent County:					
Incorporated schools.....	56,692	70	39,684	17,008	30
Rural schools.....	29,874	53	15,833	14,041	47
Sussex County:					
Incorporated schools.....	53,635	70	37,604	16,031	30
Rural schools.....	48,022	55	26,412	21,610	45
Colored schools:					
New Castle County.....	7,147	51.7	3,695	3,452	48.3
Kent County.....	11,395	45.9	5,230	6,165	54.1
Sussex County.....	10,806	48.7	5,292	5,514	51.3
Total white.....	272,232	65	179,939	96,313	35
Total colored.....	29,408	48	14,218	15,191	52

Of this waste in the white schools the commissioner remarks:

The waste is almost 35 per cent of the entire sum. That is, of every dollar spent for schools and education last year, the children got the benefit of \$0.65 and the other \$0.35 was wasted. In addition, they received lessons of careless use of this money, irresponsibility, indifference, slowness to perceive an advantage and to make use of it, which will hinder them all their lives.

For the State at large the commissioner estimates that 37 cents out of every dollar spent for the education of children did the children no good "because they are not in school."

In the first of these studies by Commissioner Wagner most attention is given to a vivid presentation of the school situation in the matter of attendance with forceful arguments and appeals for improvement. In his second study he points out some of the results of poor attendance: "Such partial and irregular attendance has very damaging effects, indeed it has almost none but damaging effects," for it brings about retardation and this again reacts on the pupil and makes him still less inclined to attend regularly and more inclined to leave school at an earlier age. Town schools are better than rural schools because attendance is more regular, reaching 90 per cent or more, and for this reason promotions are more regular. The pupils in the rural schools recognize this superiority themselves by crowding into the town schools. The State provided that 250 pupils per county from the rural schools be received in the town schools for admission to the high-school grades, but the enrollment totaled about 350 per county instead of 250. This superiority of town over rural schools was placed at about 25 per cent.

Commissioner Wagner discusses also the high-school enrollment in the State and points out that while regularly about one-third of the children should be in the high schools, Delaware had outside of Wilmington about one-half of that number, or 16 per cent, in the high schools. He adds: "This is a good showing when we remember that

no rural district has any high school. The showing justifies the purpose of the legislature in securing high-school privileges in the incorporated schools for the rural children."

It was shown in another table, moreover, that one out of every five children who were attending the public schools was of high-school age, but was attending the grammar grades to get the instruction given there. This retardation, the commissioner remarks, "is the price our children are paying for slack and indifferent attendance during the early grades of school."

In all this discussion, based as it is on sound reasoning and moral suasion, there is insistent urging looking toward the permanent betterment of school attendance. A school attendance law, passed in 1907 and revised in 1909, required attendance for five months per year between the ages of 7 and 14. It seems to have been fairly well enforced, although little discussion on the subject is to be found, but it is evident that the commissioner based small hopes on this law for bettering the general situation.

The commissioner has apparently but one suggestion. He says:

In the incorporated schools the decrease in both numbers and in attendance occurs only after the fifteenth year. In the rural schools the break occurs after the fourteenth year. This apparent year longer—that is, this continuing in school after the compulsory age has expired—is probably due to the fact that many parents permit their children to complete the eighth or last grade of the rural schools, which they do just about a year behind time on average. If this is a correct surmise, then practically the children are left in school only as long as the law keeps them there. If this is correct, the manifest duty is upon those who would safeguard the interests of the children and the State to raise the compulsory age to 15 or 16 years, even if for the last two years only partial school attendance be required. With the coming of consolidated schools and good high-school departments, the wisdom and propriety of such a requirement could not be doubted, and it should unhesitatingly be enacted.

There was organized at the Delaware College in April, 1915, a supplementary agency, which promises to be of service in advancing the cause of the schools. This is the Delaware Cooperative Educational Association, which has Prof. Harry Hayward as the guiding spirit. Prof. Hayward is also a member of the State board, which about that time asked the county superintendents for a report on the consolidation of rural schools.

Commissioner Wagner announced the following program for consideration of the assembly in 1917:

1. A permanent card record system of pupils' work.
2. Relieving schools that are too large.
3. Assistants for the county superintendents.
4. Establishing standard requirements of conditions for schools.
5. Basing proportion of State dividend given a school district on its percentage of attendance of the children.
6. A minimum attendance law based on age and grade of pupil.
7. State payment toward cost of tuition of all high-school pupils.

8. Appointment of a State high-school inspector, who shall be assistant to the commissioner of education.
9. More exact report of cash received and expended by school districts.
10. Levy school taxes on real value of real estate, as is now done for county purposes.
11. Regular health inspection of school children by their teacher.
12. Permission for county teachers' institute to be held jointly, or combined, in any county of the State.
13. Increase of salary for the county superintendents.
14. Revision of plan of management of the money affairs of the colored schools.
15. Appointment of a commission to revise the entire school system.
16. The establishment of a textbook depository within the State, where schools could order and secure regular supplies of textbooks.

This program has been published and called to the attention of the leaders of the State. It has been accompanied by two pamphlets prepared by the State commissioner and entitled a "Discussion of the State board of education's proposals for school legislation, 1916," and "Delaware's school-tax system: An inquiry and its answer, 1917," and by many short contributions to the State press.

The proposed changes most emphasized in the campaign for the advancement of school interests were the revision or codification of the schools laws and the revision of the method of State taxation for schools.

In the matter of school law, the State commissioner points out:¹

The existing body of school laws is lacking in unity, in consistency, in harmony, and adequacy. * * * What is needed is not revision, but reconstruction, so as to exclude contradiction and disagreement among the various acts and to introduce simplicity, harmony, and completeness by making the parts conform to the general principle of organization of the whole system. * * *

As constructed, law after law from 1829 up to 1911, the ruling idea and purpose was to leave as much power and authority in the trust of local school committees and to put as little as possible into the trust of any central board of authority. The act of 1911, by which the State board was reconstructed, marks the definite beginning of the policy of putting into trained and experienced hands those duties and offices which should be performed by someone specially trained and experienced in that kind of duty. The act creating the office of commissioner of education is a still further application of the principle of authority centered and power placed in the hands of a central body, to fix rules and regulations in matters where special knowledge and skilled judgment are needed. This does not mean that all power and authority shall be taken from the local districts or from the local school committees. All matters which can and may be decided by the common sense of the average citizen can and should be left to the local commissioners; all matters requiring special knowledge, skill, training, or experience should be put into hands having this knowledge, skill, training, or experience. The harmony which needs to be worked out, therefore, is to bring the laws passed before 1911 into relation, agreement, and congruence with the new principle recognized and established when the acts of 1911 and 1913 were made law, and put over the entire system a central authority with power to regulate in matters requiring expert knowledge and skill.

¹ In Delaware State News, Jan. 11, 1917.

Of equal dignity and importance with the reconstruction of the school laws of the State is the reconstruction of the State system of taxation for schools. Says Commissioner Wagner:¹

The present plan of school taxes dates practically from the establishment of the system in 1829. For school purposes it assesses the "clear rental value of lands," the value of personal property (as horses, cattle, etc.), and a certain assessment as a head-or capitation assessment. . . . Since the assessment of farms then yields only a very low total assessment for a school district it must necessarily be true that the tax rate will be relatively high; therefore, at the high rate, the amount of taxes paid by the personal property owner and by the capitation assessment will be very high in comparison with what it would be if land were assessed at its real value. . . . The high rate on the school assessment bears very hard on the personal property owners and capitation taxpayers and very lightly on the payers on "rental value."

Higher school taxes are not generally opposed, but higher school taxes under conditions where the biggest part of the burden falls on one class, this is bitterly opposed where there is a rankling sense of injustice felt toward the system. Given a tax system that is regarded as fair and just, bearing equally on every class of citizen, and increases of amounts of taxes levied are not only probable, but very certain. . . . By far the most forcible single objection urged to consolidation roots itself in the tax system.

When this was written the State board of education had not fully decided to propose a change in the tax laws to the next legislature. Many citizens in all parts of the State have unhesitatingly and unequivocally expressed their belief that reform should begin with that feature, since that is fundamental.

In his latest pamphlet, "Delaware's School Tax System: An Inquiry and its Answer" (Wilmington, 1917), Commissioner Wagner proves with more detail the inherent injustice of this tax system. He takes a certain school district and shows how for county tax purposes the assessment was \$48,990, while for school-tax purposes the assessment of this same district, identical in all respects with that used as the unit for the county tax, was only \$13,655. The result was that the men who pay only a personal property and capitation tax "pay grossly out of proportion to their just dues under an equitable system." It was pointed out that in the city of Wilmington and in the towns of Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, Laurel, and Seaford real estate was already being taxed for schools at its real and not its-rental value, and it was insisted that the tenant class had no reason to be frightened over the threatened rise in rents, for all landholders were on the same level.

At the end of 1916 the forces of reform had not yet been closely consolidated, for the commissioner was careful at that time to point out that the school board was not then a unit in the belief that the reorganization of the tax system should be regarded as the basic necessity. The rental value idea was as old as the school system; natural conservatism, love for and pride in the past, a dislike of

¹ In Discussion, etc., pp. 12-14.

increased taxation on real estate, and, most of all, lack of understanding among the people themselves have retarded and delayed but not destroyed progress toward the goal.

Commissioner Wagner, however, has insisted that when the taxing system was placed on "a basis of equity, disregarding class ideas and distinctions, and incorporating fairly and fully the recognized principles of taxation in a democracy," the most important improvements desired "would logically follow or would be easily obtainable."

This meant the organization of a campaign of education among the people with the hope of bringing them to an understanding of the real situation, with the belief that when the demand from the people became strong enough the desired changes would follow.

With this object in mind, Commissioner Wagner inaugurated a campaign covering the State and conducted by the commissioner, the county superintendents, the school principals, the leading teachers, and with the assistance of the press and the pulpit, the granges, the parent-teacher associations, the new century clubs, the home leagues, the debating societies, the institutes, and other public forums, and all other leaders and organizations for the purpose of enlightening the masses of the people and encouraging them to demand from the general assembly the enactment of the proposed reforms. The campaign was enthusiastic and State wide, and almost from house to house in its scope.

IV. THE SCHOOL LEGISLATION OF 1917.

After this story of the struggles of leaders in Delaware for advanced educational legislation had been written, the general assembly met in regular session in January, 1917, and the following brief summary of its educational activities, with comments, has been furnished by Hon. Charles A. Wagner, formerly State commissioner of education in Delaware, but by recent appointment now superintendent of schools of Chester, Pa. Dr. Wagner says:

Two agencies proposed new educational laws in the recent legislative session: One was an advanced public sentiment expressing itself through legislators themselves; the other was the State board of education and the sentiment behind its program. Among the enactments that originated outside of the State board of education were these: Paying all expenses of teachers at summer school; fixing the minimum teacher's salary at \$45 per month; increasing the annual appropriation for public schools from \$132,000 to \$250,000. The governor of the State, Hon. John G. Townsend, proposed and even demanded the payment of expense of teachers at summer schools. Of course, the State board of education heartily indorsed these measures and threw its entire influence for their enactment.

Among the bills proposed by the State board and passed were these: Increase of salary of county superintendents from \$1,200 to \$1,600 (the proposal was for \$2,000); appropriating \$1,500 annually for the education of foreign-born citizens; appropriating \$2,000 a year for standard schools, at the rate of not more than \$50 to each school; lengthening the county institutes to five days and increasing the appropriation therefor

to \$200 for each institute; providing \$15,000 to equal the Federal appropriation of a like amount for the installation and extension of agricultural and industrial education; providing for teaching first aid to the injured; providing that the tax levy without recourse to the voters be raised to \$100 in each district in Sussex County, thus making the tax required in all districts equal; providing for education of the feeble-minded; changing the school tax system so that taxes shall be assessed on real value of real estate instead of rental value; providing for the appointment of a school-code commission of five to unify, harmonize, and reconstruct the school system, and appropriating \$5,000 for the expenses of such commission.

The backbone of the effort for new legislation centered in the last two bills. An inequitable, iniquitous, and inadequate school tax system is thus ended, after many years of injurious operation. More money for schools and a more friendly, because more righteous, interest in schools will be sure to result. This change was easily of first importance and also the most difficult to secure. Through the new code commission it will be possible to simplify and unify present more or less chaotic control and management, so that a complete, congruous State-wide system of control and operation shall emerge.

Dr. Wagner having resigned, the Hon. A. R. Spaid, sometime superintendent of education in New Castle County, was chosen his successor and entered upon his duties as State commissioner of education in July, 1917.

Chapter IX

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

Having traced with more or less detail the course of the public schools in Delaware from the earliest times to the present, it is now desirable to indulge in retrospect and find if possible the thought which may be said to characterize the schools of the ante bellum as well as those of the later periods. What was the idea for which the Delaware schools stood, and for what do they stand to-day?

When the schools during the period ending with the opening of the Civil War are considered, it is plain that the whole may be characterized by a single word—empiricism. It was a period of experiment and of trial; the work itself was known to be tentative and liable to rejection at any step.

The efforts of the ante-bellum period may themselves be divided into two periods. The first comes down to 1829; the second dates from 1829 to 1861. The first was again divided into two shorter periods, during the older of which the foundations for the State school fund were laid, certain sources of income assigned to it, and the fund itself slowly and painfully, but faithfully, built up. During these years also the first efforts toward public education were made, but the State imbibed from the spirit of the times, from church influences, from historical continuity, and from their neighbors the idea that public education was only for those who were unable to educate themselves. With this idea in mind the acts of 1817, 1818, and 1821 provided for the organization and establishment of schools for the education of the poor, and automatically the population was divided into two classes—those who could educate their own children and those who could not—and with the result which might have been expected. The rich did not have to patronize the public schools and the poor would not. Schools were organized and put under the administrative care of leading citizens of the section, who visited their poorer neighbors and urged them to accept the educational gratuity put at their service, but this attempt to induce "a free-spirited and independent people to have their children schooled as paupers proved a failure." The law allowed only \$1,000 to each of the three counties, but this sum was more than enough to meet all demands for schools of this sort, and it was found necessary to cover back into the treasury a considerable part of the allowance.

The law of 1821 sought to galvanize the system back into life, but it was dead, so dead that the county officers seem not to have thought a report of significance or value.

Fortunately by this one experience the leaders of Delaware came to realize that in their first effort at public education they were steering the ship of state on the wrong tack, for the people would not follow.

The leaders were wise enough, therefore, to change their course. The idea of a public-school system for paupers was promptly abandoned. Echoes of the idea are heard now and then through the next decade, but never again was the horizontal division of the citizenry of the State into pauper and nonpauper classes for the purpose of education seriously proposed in Delaware.

Since the poor stoutly refused to be educated as paupers, the act of 1829 proposed to educate all the people at the expense of all the people so far as available funds would permit. Judge Hall drew the bill, but he faced difficulties on the very threshold. The school fund was not rich enough to bear all the expense; the remainder was to be raised by taxation or private contribution; it was feared that a bill with a provision for additional taxation would fail, and the provision for local taxation was stricken out. The bill became a law without it. The schools were to depend on the school fund and on private contributions, and it broke down the first year. But the sober, second thought of the people was stronger than the legislature had realized, and in 1830 there was passed a law permitting the school district to raise by taxation such part of the required supplement to the school fund as a majority of the voters of the school district might deem proper. But already the enthusiasm of the advocates of education was beginning to slacken, for while the act of 1829 required the school district to raise a sum equal to that to be received from the school fund, the act of 1830 cut this requirement in half and still further reaction was inevitable. This came in 1837, when a general requirement of \$25 for each school district in the State was fixed as a proper contribution from the district. It must be kept in mind, moreover, that this law did not mean that each district should raise \$25 by taxation; it meant that before receiving its share of the school fund the district must raise \$25 by contributions or taxes, or, by doing neither, might be allowed to forfeit its share of the school fund, and this way of escape was often availed of by the less progressive communities. In general, however, this provision of the law met with a fair degree of acceptance and was for the most part fairly well executed.

The question of voluntary taxation being disposed of, a new one soon came to the front and remained in an acute stage till the end

of the period. This was that of general administrative policy. Judge Hall had drawn the law of 1829. He had deliberately and purposely carried it to the very limits of decentralization in order to encourage local interest. He had provided for county superintendents, but had given them neither a salary nor power, and it does not require a great stretch of the imagination to estimate their educational activities. He had left the entire movement of the schools to the decentralizing forces of the individual districts. There was no power above them to say what they should do or how they should do it. As Judge Hall himself expressed it, his purpose was to give each district power to say whether it should have a good school, a poor school, or no school at all. It was not hard to predict what would be the general fortunes of a system administered on such a theory. The results were true to form; some districts had good schools, some had poor schools, and some had no schools at all. The seed which was planted bore fruit each after his kind.

The leader of this experiment in educational individualism was of course, Judge Hall. He opposed a normal school for the training of teachers; he objected to all supervision; he fought every proposition that carried within it anything that seemed to make possible a centralization of power; he argued that the people must do these things for themselves, and when the State had given them the necessary authority its work was done. Devoted attention and good leadership won their reward. These conservative decentralizationists remained in power for a generation, 1829-1861.

But during most of these years they were not without opposition. Their opponents, however, labored under handicaps. They were at first not as numerous, and they advocated views that were more or less contrary to the general political doctrines of the day, and, what was still more important, they were not always fortunate in the matter of leaders. In the early forties Charles Marim, then county school superintendent in Kent, came forward as a leader of the progressives and gave great promise of usefulness. In him Judge Hall would no doubt have found an opponent worthy of his strongest efforts, and the State law requiring general State taxation for schools would have doubtless been enacted at a considerably earlier date, but Mr. Marim soon ceased to be county superintendent, and the progressives were again without a leader who stood forth as such and who gave promise of being able to win from the conservatives what they wished.

After Marim withdrew, no marked leadership was developed on the side of the progressives, but it is evident that from 1840 progress was being made by them. The laws were becoming more liberal; the idea of State support and State control was being strengthened; efforts were being made to foster State-wide institutions like

teachers' associations, educational associations, and an educational press; men were coming to think educationally in terms of the State, rather than in those of the county and the school district; and the social solidarity of the whole was beginning to be realized. Finally, in 1861, out of a system which was in the highest degree decentralized, and where every district was a law unto itself to do or not to do, came a new law which set the educational drift toward a closer State control. This law required that each school district in the State should raise by taxation a given amount before it might receive its share of the State school fund. By this law a greater assurance was given to the schools that each would receive the funds necessary to maintain it; the drift of education was at last turned away from decentralization and individual independence toward centralization and a more active participation of the State as such in affairs educational in character. The second phase of the struggle for public-school education in Delaware now came to a close. The first period ended with the recognition of public-school education by all for all; the second with recognition of the idea that this education was to be the work of the State as such, rather than the work of a few individuals acting under the sanction of the State which still held itself aloof.

The year 1861 saw the passage of the first general State law ordering a tax levy in all the counties for public education, and it therefore inaugurated a new era in Delaware educational history. The period between 1861 and 1875 was then one of changing ideals, and a preparation for that which followed. Under the law of 1861 the school districts were *required* to levy a minimum tax for schools. They were *allowed* to levy, when so authorized by popular vote, an additional tax to increase the efficiency of the schools, and were also permitted to borrow money for the same purpose. This gave the more ambitious town communities the opportunity to take over what was left of the old-time, local, private academies, and with them as a basis to incorporate and organize a system of local schools that were destined to become real State institutions. In this work Wilmington took the lead, and the smaller cities followed after. During this period also the first efforts looking to the education of the colored race were made and the feeling which looked to a general State organization began to make itself manifest. Agitation began which demanded the appointment of a State superintendent and county superintendents with real powers of direction, supervision, and control. It was demanded also that the annual elections, held to fix the sums needed for school use over and above the minimum required by law, should be abandoned and that school taxes should be levied and collected just as other taxes and not by the elaborate and special machinery then in use.

These idealists were then still far ahead of their day, but those who had the interests of the schools at heart and most realized their real needs were most insistent on the necessity of some action which should make for greater centralization as represented in the State superintendent. They failed in their efforts in 1869; they were again unsuccessful in 1871. They presented an interesting bill in 1873, with all the details of such a system worked out, but while they again met defeat, their work was not without results. The public was slowly but surely forgetting the doctrines of decentralization in which they had been reared. They saw that the policy of let-alone had not produced good schools; they realized that the old doctrine to which they had listened so often—that the people might be safely trusted to do what was for their best interests—was not true and that a serviceable school system for the State as a whole could be bottomed only on general State law with close State supervision. The State was thinking, and as a result of this self-examination was passed the act of 1875, which provided a State superintendent and closer supervision for a system which was now for the first time becoming a real State system.

The school act of 1875 provided some of the requirements of a modern system. A State board of education was created, and a State superintendent, who was in reality its executive officer, was appointed. The law required him to visit and examine all the schools at least once a year, to confer with the teachers, correct their weaknesses, and report on their schools. He was made a real supervisory officer, but his duties were much more than he could perform until an assistant was appointed in 1881. The superintendent was also empowered to examine, grade, and certify all applicants to teach. This was a long step in advance, for before this there had been no qualifications demanded of teachers except the good will of the community. Responsibility to a common head made them at once responsive to the general desire for their improvement; graded certificates enabled the superintendent to properly place blame and reward, while the county institutes for teacher training which he was required to hold gave them the opportunity for further study and professional improvement. There was inaugurated, also, during these years, the movement which evolved a little later into a system of uniform and free textbooks. The amounts required to be raised from each district under the law were also increased, and in 1879 was inaugurated the policy of releasing the stronger town and city schools from State control, and in this way giving them the opportunity of striking out for themselves at a rate as fast as ability and inclination could carry them.

It was during these years also that the State began to make contributions apart from and in addition to the school fund for the support of the public schools. These contributions, assigned at first to the white schools only, were by degrees broadened so as to admit

the Negro schools as well. These by degrees came to take their coordinate place as part of a general State system, and it was even said by no less an authority than the State superintendent that in some parts of the State the colored schools were in better condition and more efficient than those for the whites. But with all of these steps forward, the old law of 1829, with its decentralizing ideas and individualistic tendencies, was not repealed. It was merely modified and given a modern turn. There were still in the State various systems practically independent of each other. The counties were independent of each other; within the counties were two systems, one for whites, another for blacks, both being without the coordinating authority of a county superintendent; the white system in turn was divided into incorporated and unincorporated schools and so were the blacks. The county systems, white and black, acknowledged only the common authority of the State superintendent. The city of Wilmington was entirely independent of the State system. It had no lord or master except its own board and city superintendent and the laws under which they administered its educational affairs.

Unfortunately, moreover, the progress accomplished under the administration of a State superintendent was not sufficiently appreciated to insure the permanency of his office. It was abandoned by the act of 1887 and the schools were left under the care of a State board which had no agent to carry out its will. In the place of this general State agent there were to be appointed county agents—superintendents. But while this was a backward step it was perhaps not so great as it might seem, for the State superintendent had not had any control over receipts and expenditures, and his authority had been in the main hortatory only. The superintendent's duty of visiting was taken over by the new county superintendents, who also examined the teachers, but certificates were now issued by the State board. The county superintendents were, within the limits of their jurisdiction, practically independent, and the school districts within the same limits entirely so, and while it might have been possible to fuse the various local units of the public schools into a single county system, there was now no controlling superior authority to coordinate and weld them into a single State whole. This might have been done by a strong State superintendent with extensive powers, but his office had been abolished and its place taken by a State board which had small power and was composed of individuals who had their own private affairs to demand their attention. It would seem that the good work done toward unifying the system under Groves and Williams was all to be lost and that the heyday of decentralization was coming into its own again. Nor was this supposition far from right. The county systems, the city, town, and independent systems all went at their own gait. They gave little attention to the

county superintendents, less to the State board, and if we are to judge by the printed reports these State and county authorities gave little to them, for while there were biennial reports published between 1887 and 1892 there was apparently no other till 1898, when the decadent condition of the schools forced the friends of public education to exert themselves vigorously in its behalf. The school district was still the basis for educational administration and taxation. That it was too small was acknowledged, but conservatism was still more powerful than all the agitation of school leaders; the incorporated districts were loth to give up any of the privileges which they had secured, and decentralization was still doing its deadly work.

The agitation resulted, however, in the reorganization of 1898, which gave the State board a new lease of life, and on a basis essentially different from what it had had during the preceding 11 years. Quickened and enlivened and with such new lease of power, it bestirred itself and attained success in building up the schools, but the main difficulty—the old one of decentralization—had not been removed.

The State board of 1898 was an improvement over its predecessors; the new board of county school commissioners with a county superintendent as their agent was a step in advance. The State board set various ideals before it toward which it was working. These included the elevation of the standard of qualification of teachers, and in the next few years the State provided that certain candidates for teachers' positions should be prepared for their work in schools outside the State at State expense; it improved the quality of the textbooks used; it provided for the revisal, consolidation, and publication of the whole body of school law; it advanced the grading of schools, and encouraged certain selected incorporated institutions to develop into high schools by sending to them at public expense the more promising and advanced pupils in the lower schools. But there was a lack of money, and the methods of distributing the State funds were antiquated. The law of 1901 undertook to correct this situation by fixing on the number of teachers and the length of school terms as the proper basis of distribution. The State now began also to enter more and more upon a deliberate plan to provide better schoolhouses, especially for the Negroes, and this was followed a little later by a forward move in the matter of the consolidation of rural schools and transportation of pupils. These in turn preceded the doctrine and practice of compulsory attendance (1907), while serious and successful efforts were made to hasten the development of traveling and free libraries.

In the matter of funds little advancement had been made, for funds were still entirely in local hands; they were raised and distributed locally; there was no accounting to a central authority;

and on the financial side the ways of thought were still along lines of decentralization. In the supplemental agencies, however, there was during the first decade of this century very much advance, while the character and extent of the general progress between 1880 and 1910 may be shown statistically by the following extracts from the census:

Total number of illiterates 10 years of age and over:

1880.....	19,414, or 17.5 per cent.
1890.....	18,878, or 14.3 per cent.
1900.....	17,531, or 12 per cent.
1910.....	13,240, or 8.1 per cent.

Native white illiterates 10 years of age and over:

1880.....	6,630, or 8.1 per cent.
1890.....	6,068, or 6.2 per cent.
1900.....	6,072, or 5.6 per cent.
1910.....	3,525, or 2.9 per cent.

Foreign white illiterates 10 years of age and over:

1880.....	1,716, or 18.5 per cent.
1890.....	2,118, or 16.8 per cent.
1900.....	2,476, or 18.3 per cent.
1910.....	3,359, or 19.8 per cent.

Negro illiterates 10 years of age and over:

1880.....	11,068, or 57.5 per cent.
1890.....	10,692, or 49.5 per cent.
1900.....	8,983, or 38.1 per cent.
1910.....	6,345, or 25.6 per cent.

Illiterates 10 to 20 years of age, inclusive:

1880.....	5,017, or 15.6 per cent.
1890.....	3,197, or 8.9 per cent.
1900.....	2,171, or 5.8 per cent.
1910.....	1,223, or 2.9 per cent.

In 1911, in response to a demand from the State board itself, that organization was abolished by law, and another, with longer tenure of office and more centralized powers of action, was constituted in its place. This is the board now in existence. Their first duty was to systematize and harmonize the work of the schools. They began by securing the appointment of a new executive officer—a State superintendent, or as he is called in Delaware, a State commissioner of education. They have been seeking also to advance the cause of centralization in the State, and there has been also noticeable improvement in the matter of grades and curriculum.

When the State board was reorganized in 1911, its work along three lines was marked out for it. The first was to make a report on the public schools, the second had to do with Delaware College, and

¹ 10-19 years inclusive.

² Estimated.

the third with the question of the higher education of women, but none of these plans had to do in particular with the hope for a greater centralization of the public-school system. Their report was published in 1913, and in it they boldly and frankly took their stand against the pet hobby of the old system—the independent school district. They pointed out that the unit in use was too small and advocated the “representative district” as a more suitable unit. They secured in 1912 a general and uniform examination of teachers. The graded and incorporated schools were then satisfactory, but the rural ungraded schools were not satisfactory, and this was due neither to individuals nor school officers, but to the law, to the prevailing theories of local self-government and taxation on rental values. This was the rock wall against which they found themselves, and while the board won its point in the matter of Delaware College, in that of the college for women, and in that for the appointment of a State commissioner, it then failed in those pertaining to the larger unit of organization and taxation for schools.

The State board and the State commissioner, though defeated in 1913, renewed their efforts in 1915, but with small success. Then came the vigorous and aggressive campaign of 1916-17, engineered and organized by Commissioner Wagner and promoted by all friends of education. The campaign then undertaken met with more than the anticipated success. The main bulwark of the conservative element—taxation on rental values—has been repealed, the burden of taxation is now more evenly distributed, and it seems evident that a new era of prosperity has dawned for the schools of the State.

PUBLIC SCHOOL STATISTICS, 1832-1914.

TABLE I.—School population, teachers, property, school year, enrollment, attendance—
In white schools only.

Year.	School population, 6-21.	Teachers.	Schools.	Monthly salary.	Days in school year.	Value of all school property.	Total school enrollment.	Average school attendance.	Per cent in average attendance.
1875.....		527	370	\$29.53	144		21,587		
1877.....	31,849	513	404	33.08	160	\$484,261	23,587		
1878.....	31,849	513	507	33.08	160		23,630		
1880.....	31,505	536	512	27.84	180	440,786	25,058		
1882.....	33,133	545	515	30.95	186	453,274	23,450	16,556	66.3
1884.....	35,067	546	544	32.31	187	608,056	27,037	17,952	64.4
1886.....	36,468	685	662	32.40	168	783,032	29,421	19,235	65.4
1887.....							26,578	16,369	61.6
1888.....			428		167		26,342	16,369	62.0
1889.....	33,589	605			175	811,749			
1890.....	33,589	605			175	811,749			
1891.....			469		175	850,592	28,667		
1892.....									
1893.....									
1894.....			649		173		28,412		
1895.....			685		172	1,107,160	29,850		
1896.....			715		176	1,080,168	31,181		
1897.....			677		166	1,092,107	29,353		
1898.....			704		182		30,367		
1899.....									
1899-1900.....		579	430			368,472	25,870		

1 Men only.
 2 Figures used are those for Kent and Sussex, same in 1887 and 1888.
 3 Excludes Wilmington.

TABLE 2.—School receipts and expenditures, State only.

Year.	Delaware school fund.					Total paid for free text-books
	Dividends and interest received.	Total receipts.	Total disbursements.	Balance.	Market value of fund	
1876		\$30,904.15	\$30,904.15		\$448,999	
1882		39,141.72	39,141.72		488,749	\$5,879.45
1887	\$29,993.25	101,884.21	80,195.93	\$21,688.28	541,720	
1888	30,385.00	111,615.21	96,846.94	14,768.27	541,720	
1889	30,376.80	101,866.01	96,098.31	15,458.70	546,880	
1891	30,638.50	126,882.60	106,452.15	20,410.45	546,880	
1892	30,182.50	179,812.47	146,244.97	33,567.50	544,742	17,228.20
1893	30,638.50	162,421.54	138,146.72	44,274.82	544,742	12,608.73
1894	32,382.80	221,133.86	212,923.42	8,210.44	544,742	7,007.14
1895	30,790.60	165,963.67	136,262.69	29,701.08	544,742	8,826.00
1896		196,788.69	186,771.36	10,017.33		
1897		173,947.69	137,793.97	36,153.72		
1898	29,818.80	240,643.29	222,868.23	17,775.06	546,577	5,910.42
1899	29,744.50	180,958.49	98,266.06	82,702.43		9,336.49
1900	20,119.25	198,728.88	174,698.57	24,030.31	692,930	10,482.97
1901	23,727.00	181,884.35	136,414.54	45,469.81	638,542	18,746.40
1902	34,019.75	177,011.16	134,097.50	42,913.66	900,672	8,510.55
1903	34,467.00	177,400.22	170,088.24	7,311.98	900,672	17,266.67
1904	40,757.75	180,757.75	166,364.63	14,393.12	918,016	12,667.99
1905	40,058.50	187,100.50	164,589.25	22,511.25	914,922	5,536.17
1906	54,308.50	208,018.41	198,541.09	9,477.32	938,097	11,416.60
1907	40,714.55	188,207.44	172,001.12	16,206.32	938,171	11,408.01
1908	41,375.00	196,710.99	174,229.97	22,481.02	944,407	11,638.29
1909	26,649.35	180,130.07	174,948.89	5,181.18	944,407	11,507.48
1910	56,201.86	193,383.63	177,638.60	15,745.03	944,407	12,217.67
1911	41,375.00	180,220.63	178,635.00	1,585.63	944,407	11,816.45
1912	44,675.00	180,700.85	174,490.34	15,210.51	944,407	11,686.19
1913	41,089.85	188,355.49	178,673.65	14,681.84	944,407	12,036.86
1914	42,051.85	188,733.69	173,146.79	15,586.90	944,407	12,754.63
1914	41,576.60	189,355.07	174,315.71	15,039.36	944,407	12,216.21

1 Includes \$25,000 direct appropriation from State.
 2 Includes loans to State repaid.
 3 Includes temporary loans to State.
 4 From auditor's reports, 1896-98; other figures from treasurer's reports.
 5 Includes direct appropriation of \$120,000 from State.
 6 Includes \$47,000 pars appropriation under constitution of 1897.
 7 Includes \$100,000 direct appropriation from State.
 8 Includes \$42,702.43 paid to general fund.
 9 Includes \$5,000 loan to school fund.
 10 Includes direct appropriation of \$132,000 from State. The total State and county receipts for education and the total State and county expenditures for the same, 1905-1907, were as follows: In 1905, receipts, \$228,801, expenditures, \$319,351; in 1906, receipts, \$532,457, expenditures, \$501,746; in 1907, receipts, \$600,636, expenditures, \$553,249. Unfortunately for the student, the Delaware system does not demand detailed statements from the local authorities and they are seldom made.

TABLE 3.—Statistics of public-school education in Delaware, by counties, 1832-1914.

Year	County	Amount raised in districts, including taxation.	Amount received from fund.	Total available school funds, including balances.	Miscellaneous expenditures.	Salaries of teachers.	Total expenditures.	Number of districts.	Schools taught.	Average length of term, in months.	Number of pupils.	Amount paid for Sunday schools.	Property assessed valuation.	Market value of school fund.
1832	New Castle	84,705	82,083	\$10,109	\$2,114	\$7,264	89,477	66	45	+ 6	2,932	\$200.44		
	Kent	4,105	1,913	3,072	1,913	4,077	6,391	45	32	+ 8	1,913	80.40	\$13,125,000	\$153,782
	Sussex	2,082	2,089	4,069	1,900	2,964	4,144	73	31	+ 5	1,578	41.80		
1833	New Castle	6,861	2,891	9,752	2,053	6,877	8,930	70	38	- 10	2,083	191.20		
	Kent	4,402	2,082	7,084	1,825	4,670	6,495	40	29	- 9	1,975	79.70	2,718,353	176,642
	Sussex	2,207	1,681	4,134	1,024	2,439	4,044	73	28	+ 5.6	1,156	88.13	1,802,713	
1834	New Castle	6,602	3,261	9,923	2,707	6,086	8,912	72	39	+ 6	2,050	68.00	13,785,000	178,418
	Kent	4,281	2,319	6,560	783	4,909	5,772	45	35	+ 8	1,976	134.00		
	Sussex	2,845	3,884	6,679	1,909	3,977	5,886	76	51	+ 5.3	2,551			
1842	New Castle	8,053	10,846	18,899					72		3,926			
	Kent	3,290	17,426	20,716					48		3,120			
	Sussex	2,679	7,121	9,804					78		3,413			
1846	New Castle	5,764	11,449	17,213	1,765	1,269	9,034	74	63	+ 5	3,796	262.88		
	Kent	1,981	7,616	2,597	3,597	2,732	3,349	48	28	+ 3	2,783	268.25	17,344,000	379,273
	Sussex	2,539	3,410	4,949	1,229	2,744	4,983	76	70	+ 3	2,833	309.77		
1848	New Castle	9,784	10,405	20,189	3,056	6,883	19,619	74	75	+ 9	5,870	304.29		
	Kent	4,278	7,708	11,983	1,683	9,501	11,136	50	50	+ 9	3,191		17,663,000	328,273
	Sussex	2,309	8,445	10,664	986	6,870	9,556	78	72	+ 6	3,452			

The statistics in this table are based in the main on the auditor's reports, supplemented by the superintendent's reports. In some cases the years do not always exactly agree with the school period, but there is substantial agreement.

The numbers in this column give the number of districts according to the serial numbers assigned them. The actual number, because of consolidation, was somewhat less. From Hall's letter of June, 1843, to Henry Bernard. He adds: "In New Castle the dividend to each school district last year was \$145.73. In Kent, in Sussex, \$49.26. The falling off of income in this year as compared with 1834 and 1846 would suggest error, but the figures here given are the sum of those given in the audit report in 1846 (see House Journal, 1847, pp. 304, 320, 435). They seem to represent the sums settled for on a given date, for the same report (p. 304, etc.) gives as paid to school districts in New Castle in 1846, \$3,784.17; in Kent, \$323.54; in Sussex, \$2,336.16. In the same way the amount reported as due at the distribution on Aug. 1, 1848 (see auditor's report in House Journal, 1848, p. 47) at New Castle, \$9,913.16; Kent, \$7,862.07; Sussex, \$6,343.03. In 1850 (auditor's report in House Journal, 1850, p. 486) they were: New Castle, \$6,704.64; Kent, \$7,946.57; Sussex \$6,261.92.



TABLE 3.—Statistics of public-school education in Delaware, by counties, 1852-1911—Continued.

Year.	County.	Amount raised in districts, including taxation.	Amount received from fund.	Total available school funds, including balances.	Miscellaneous expenditures.	Salaries of teachers.	Total expendi- tures.	Number of dis- tricts.	Schools taught.	Average length of term in months.	Number of pupils.	Paid for primary schools.	Property assessed valuation.	Market value of school fund.
1850	New Castle	811,885	910,428	822,263	85,119	916,603	921,722	74	72	+10	5,216	\$302.00	\$17,783,000	\$239,359
	Kent	8,579	8,016	12,257	1,578	11,409	12,998	52	55	-10	3,981	441.00		
	Sussex	2,919	9,554	12,473	1,710	10,964	12,574	85	85	+6	4,804	400.00		
1851	New Castle	12,360	9,704	23,064	5,420	18,571	21,941	74	81	+9	3,944	402.12	2,077,000	442,006
	Kent	5,005	7,946	12,951	1,647	11,225	12,874	52	57	-8	2,012	400.00	1,925,000	
	Sussex	3,111	9,001	12,112	1,982	10,869	12,874	89	91	+5	3,979	400.00		
1852	New Castle	12,650	10,120	22,770	5,598	18,185	23,773	76	85	+7	3,638	392.75	18,344,000	435,508
	Kent	5,109	7,854	12,943	1,597	11,350	13,077	52	58	+6	2,619	400.00	2,077,000	
	Sussex	3,879	9,198	12,700	1,729	10,991	12,629	88	93	+6	3,973	400.00	1,925,000	
1854	New Castle	19,114	9,581	28,695	6,340	20,650	27,000	77	79	+2	2,861	494.92	19,010,000	435,506
	Kent	6,597	7,528	13,705	2,040	11,814	13,860	53	59	+6	2,441	497.86	5,377,000	
	Sussex	3,879	9,083	13,442	1,674	10,953	12,627	91	97	+6	2,981	497.86	5,377,000	
1869	New Castle	27,443	12,119	39,562	12,366	27,774	40,140	84	85	+1	6,151	534.16	19,438,120	387,744
	Kent	8,048	8,425	16,473	4,253	12,731	17,023	63	61	-2	2,738	497.06	16,008,200	
	Sussex	4,117	10,826	14,943	2,735	12,439	15,194	101	97	-4	4,889	500.00	16,008,200	
1890	New Castle	27,821	12,673	40,494	11,063	30,172	41,235	87	84	+3	6,225	499.53	18,795,150	431,262
	Kent	9,243	9,087	18,370	3,728	15,258	16,996	84	80	-4	4,641	437.56	16,008,200	
	Sussex	4,814	11,579	16,393	2,756	13,008	16,767	131	125	+6	5,068	500.00	16,008,200	
1902	New Castle	34,085	12,900	46,985	15,946	31,126	47,065	88	91	+3	5,285	517.40	23,447,000	431,262
	Kent	10,927	8,828	19,755	3,089	15,796	18,884	96	82	-14	3,678	498.92	16,008,200	
	Sussex	6,051	11,217	17,268	3,096	13,921	17,012	144	136	-8	5,913	498.92	16,008,200	
1903-04	New Castle	33,241	11,644	44,885	23,956	30,715	54,671	99	95	-4	4,741	514.79	24,036,000	476,142
	Kent	11,611	8,505	20,116	4,222	17,226	21,448	96	92	-4	3,283	609.07	16,008,200	
	Sussex	5,648	10,470	15,116	2,069	13,450	15,979	151	143	-8	4,349	602.50	16,008,200	

1865-66	New Castle.....	47,630	12,870	69,500	21,094	38,957	59,723	6,651	497.35	25,998,000
	Kent.....	14,828	10,661	25,318	3,784	21,138	24,922	4,222	46.44	7,079,000
	Sussex.....	7,594	12,983	24,577	3,170	18,719	21,499	6,393		
1867-68	New Castle.....	54,097	12,146	68,233	23,692	45,338	69,020	8,55	905.94	25,964,000
	Kent.....	20,205	9,644	29,849	7,412	22,850	30,262	98	1,914.20	
	Sussex.....	9,253	10,899	20,124	4,205	15,001	22,206	149	1,615.09	7,158,000
1869-70	New Castle.....	84,636	10,143	94,778	27,447	44,932	72,279	150	7.42	567.71
	Kent.....	19,997	8,301	28,198	5,793	23,099	28,112	98	5.91	645.43
	Sussex.....	9,740	11,601	21,146	3,808	14,504	22,310	152	6.52	260.38
1872	New Castle.....	131,770	10,049	141,828	78,938	69,397	127,245	98	10	269.91
	Kent.....	21,840	8,737	30,577	4,798	25,569	30,265	102	2.23	362.86
	Sussex.....	9,063	10,327	19,992	1,960	17,563	19,315	151	6.23	420.61
1873-74	New Castle.....	127,296	12,739	140,066	70,943	69,350	140,293	104	9.4	438.80
	Kent.....	22,126	8,941	30,999	6,216	25,324	31,540	105	5.075	480.24
	Sussex.....	10,309	11,402	21,711	3,194	19,043	22,259	159	6.54	473.54
1876-80	New Castle.....	108,393	9,710	116,092	18,799	84,181	102,920	122	9.2	11,954
	Kent.....	18,298	8,708	32,022	6,250	26,038	34,268	115	8.4	5,416
	Sussex.....	16,044	10,047	24,091	3,167	22,992	28,179	172	5	7,147
1887-88	New Castle.....	147,792	27,312	175,104	48,699	127,922	176,611	281	10	14,288
	Kent.....									
	Sussex.....									

1 By my own addition; auditor's report contains errors.
 2 This decrease in the local school fund from Kent, Delaware, is due to the failure of the auditor to list certain stocks held by the fund; these were: 37 shares, Bank of Delaware, 114, Bank of Pymms, 254, Union Bank of Wilmington, 800, New Castle and W. Sussex, 100. In 1854 these stocks were valued at \$22,762. Failure to report would indicate a sharp decrease in value. In 1860 they were again reported. In 1858 the fees "applicable to the school fund" included marriage and tavern licenses, licenses to export and import slaves, to travel stallions of nonresidents in the State, and to sell liquor.
 3 The census of 1860 given the real estate valuation in Delaware as \$48,943,634; the personal estate as \$24,769,218, total, \$73,592,747. By counties it was: New Castle, \$45,641,246; Kent, \$15,444,690; Sussex, \$11,507,735.
 4 So the report of A. J. Culley, State Auditor (A. R. for 1864, pp. 4-5). This report on "Funds belonging to the State, applicable to the school fund" apparently duplicates 2 items in the fund amounting to \$270,000. In the corresponding report for 1852 there is apparently a distinction between a fund of \$33,750 "belonging to the State, applicable to the school fund" and another of \$431,292 called simply "school fund." In other respects the reports of the two years are identical. In the corresponding report for 1851 (A. R. for 1854, p. 24) one of these items is entered under the heading "Investments from which revenue is derived for the State."
 5 Payment made for 3,222 pupils; number not given for Kent County.
 6 Received for 3,069 pupils.
 7 Received for 4,386 pupils.

TABLE 3.—Statistics of public-school education in Delaware, by counties, 1892-1911—Continued.

Year.	County.	Amount raised in district, including taxing special.	Amount received from fund.	Total available funds, including balances.	Miscellaneous expenditures.	Salaries of teachers.	Total expenditures.	Number of pupils.	Schools taught.	Average length of term, in months.	Number of pupils.	Paid for Sunday schools.	Property assessed valuation.	Market value of school fund.
1898.	New Castle.	\$159,543	\$28,640	\$188,183	\$40,856	\$118,507	\$157,364	99	108	- 10	4,689	\$470.25	\$45,861,000	\$496,769
	Kent.	37,283	31,228	68,511	19,228	49,283	67,511	123	125	- 8.5	5,785	500.00	12,617,000	
	Sussex.	24,068	24,067	48,135	6,249	41,886	48,134	194	185	+ 6.5	8,041	500.48	10,166,000	
1899-00.	New Castle.	146,304	30,486	176,790	59,942	116,848	166,782	108		10	14,168			
	Kent.	162,354	30,208	192,562	76,860	115,702	162,562	99	125	- 10	14,548	247.05	45,893,000	
	Sussex.	28,648	35,284	63,932	9,349	54,583	63,931	200	200	+ 7	8,738	543.50	10,501,000	532,956
1900-01.	New Castle.	169,000	40,000	209,000	77,971	131,029	198,992	87	208	9.9	14,061	588.76	54,673,000	
	Kent.	31,056	24,200	55,256	14,409	40,847	55,256	97	139	8.7	6,083	449.53	12,148,000	
	Sussex.	24,113	36,000	60,113	11,273	48,840	60,112	136	202	7.45	8,178	505.86	10,825,000	546,577
1904-05.	New Castle.	179,680	40,286	219,966	72,681	147,285	219,966	103	346	9.75	15,300	455.00	54,883,000	
	Kent.	31,677	25,996	57,673	15,655	42,018	57,672	97	136	8.7	8,269	498.85	12,148,000	
	Sussex.	28,304	35,546	63,850	9,630	54,220	63,850	157	203	7.4	8,202	492.00	10,860,000	546,577
1906-07.	New Castle.	192,400	39,201	231,601	85,241	146,360	231,601	163	269	9.75	15,555	499.95	12,200,000	
	Kent.	31,723	24,142	55,865	13,611	42,254	55,865	94	139	9	6,505	499.95	10,874,000	
	Sussex.	34,635	28,746	63,381	11,611	51,770	63,380	157	207	7.7	9,121			546,577
1908-09.	New Castle.	162,847	36,763	199,610	43,344	156,266	199,610	103	337	9.8	14,311		52,773,000	
	Kent.	35,175	23,661	58,836	16,700	42,136	58,836	98	139	8.75	5,868	493.56	11,833,000	
	Sussex.	28,074	31,190	59,264	10,344	48,920	59,264	101	201	6.4	9,124		10,576,000	546,577
1909-10.	New Castle.	208,287	41,689	249,976	37,847	212,129	249,976	108	356	9.4	15,988		44,845,000	
	Kent.	31,853	23,732	55,585	17,000	38,585	55,585	132	147	9.3	6,193	491.34	11,881,000	
	Sussex.	24,010	45,678	69,688	12,647	57,041	69,687	190	201	8.5	8,304		10,860,000	543,965

1899-1900.	New Castle Kent. Sussex.	34,768 26,307 24,310	21,619 24,082 34,002	54,855 51,890 29,215	13,178 12,153 11,319	45,411 41,906 48,910	58,599 53,991 33,229	109 129 192	.164 .183 .242	6,510 8,280 11,088	408.72 528.78	46,933,000 11,528,000	635,542
1904-5.	New Castle. Kent. Sussex.	245,464 56,888 35,933	68,419 29,159 52,176	326,305 59,440 90,651	137,454 24,869 16,629	204,492 61,627 71,856	332,744 97,550 89,057	128 145 228	.454 .195 .205	17,295 7,169 10,659	469.45 508.56	42,328,000 12,821,000 11,576,000	938,007
1906-7.	New Castle. Kent. Sussex.	244,625 60,797 37,028	68,139 28,377 52,049	345,431 87,697 99,899	90,375 21,657 22,008	299,297 68,163 74,576	319,772 84,630 98,154				463.26	11,630,000	938,171
1908-9.	New Castle. Kent. Sussex.	340,798 99,089 51,567	68,693 29,945 50,653	409,475 88,911 102,250	155,295 21,249 22,161	212,922 44,124 76,273	328,229 85,935 98,117					28,140,000	944,407
1909-10.	New Castle. Kent. Sussex.											57,822,000 13,827,000	944,407
1910-11.	New Castle.	39,143	59,240	87,832	26,791	66,155	92,946		.175	16,450		57,026,946	944,407

* Balances included to 1898. * Excludes Wilmington. * Teachers.



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[2] 1877-78, Wilmington, 1878, 8 p.; [3] 1878-79, Wilmington, 1879, 8 p.; [4] 1879-80, Wilmington, 1880, 8 p.; [5] 1880-81, Wilmington, 1881, 8 p.; [6] 1881-82, Wilmington, 1882, 12 p.

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[2] 1877-78 in 3rd A. R. Supt. Free Sch., 1877-8, p. 67-70; [4] 1879-80 in 5th A. R. Supt. Sch., 1879-80, p. 27-31; [6] 1881-82 in 7th A. R. Supt. Free Sch., 1881-82, p. 38-43; 8. 1883-84 in 9th A. R. Supt. Free Sch., 1884, p. 111-117; 10. 1886 in 11th A. R. Supt. Free Sch., 1886, p. 57-62; 12. 1888, in 13th A. R. Supt. Free Sch., 1888, p. 69-73.

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The 2d, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th reports seem not to have been printed.

2. *Reports of State Board of Education:*

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