The Rural Public Schools of Pennsylvania in Their National Relation.

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In this work the rural public schools are examined almost wholly from the view of the relation of the individual to the State. The equally important standpoint of the development of the individual as a unit for which the State is subserent is mainly ignored. Pennsylvania is taken because the writer's experience has been chiefly in this State; and the fact that the States follow closely
the same model makes this State, except in a few race problems, typical of the whole country.

The present is indeed a time of vast import. The reassertion of political institutions has not been equalled for a century. In a few short weeks the world may be turned back several centuries or may advance as many towards its ultimate development.

One hundred twenty-two years ago, our ancestors for the first time put into practice the theory that government is for and by the people. France attempted...
ed to apply the same principle and usefully failed because of her excesses. She however made the thrones of Europe tremble. To oppose this principle the Holy Alliance was formed. It soon found occasion to meddle in American affairs. It was then the United States accepted its most responsible office as a nation. The old question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" was answered in the affirmative. America accepted the responsibility of being the dominant nation of the Western Hemisphere; accepted a guardianship over her weaker sister States.
Can we maintain our position? We have of necessity gone beyond the Monroe Doctrine. That was the first step in the humanitarian policy, but an advance is required. Can it be accomplished? The United States and Europe have been nearing the "inexplicable conflict". It was precipitated by the daftly explosion under the "Maine", and the, probably, misguided zeal of our National Representatives. We have now to make good our position. This is not a war with an effete country for an island.
inhabited by mulattoes, but a struggle with the world for supremacy in the Western Hemisphere.

It is a vital question whether or not we have the elements of strength for the conflict now opening. It is the writer's purpose to examine what he considers one of the main bulwarks in the governmental fabric. In order for a people to be successfully self-governning there are two absolutely essential personal requirements, that they be honest, and that they be intelligent. The teaching of honesty lies largely within the Sphere of
the Church. The Church for a long time tried to deal with the question of intelligence.
In the early years of our country, education was mostly to be obtained in denominational institutions. The result was costly, un-systematic schools, while those outside the pale of the Church mostly went without education.
Pennsylvania made some provision for this latter class by establishing free schools, which were in fact "panper schools." In the middle of the eighteenth century Mass.
achusetts had made the
common schools free to all. It was not till 1834 that Pennsylvania followed her example. In that year the Legislature, under the striking addresses of Lewen- or WLF, passed a law which is the basis of our present free school system. It was a long time before the advocates of free schools finally succeeded in bunting down all opposition. At the time the free school system was bitterly opposed by the religious denominations who had established many sectarian schools. These in time mostly gave up recognizing the superior
advantages of the public school. The notable exception being the Friends, who continued to maintain schools, many of them having existed in a precarious state to the present day.

If recent years there has been a revival of the old theory in the Catholic Church, resulting in the present system of Parochial schools. While primary instruction has been largely given up by religious denominations they have always maintained a strong hold upon secondary and higher instruction.
All true patriots are now looking for the means of political regeneration. It is probably the settled belief of the majority of the best-thinking people that it is bound to come. A vital question at present is, from what quarter it is to come. We look distinctly to the cities, the great centers of business, wealth, and power. Here we find the generals in the army of industry, the phalanths of world-wide reputation, host of learned debaters, powerful newspapers, and inspiring Miltonian authors. An closer examination we
James Bryce says the country government is regarded as a model by Europeans. It is apparent that to the country of anywhere we must look for political regeneration.

The country is dependent on the school for the growth of intelligence. For school administration the country is divided into townships and townships. (Details of school laws are omitted here and following places as they can be conveniently obtained by consulting a recent number of Pennsylvania School Laws and Decisions.) The ultra-rural is wholly concerned with the township. In this
well. When the millennium comes but now one must be taken seriously. I recollect the thrill of city government in the hands of the worst element, a disgrace at home and a reproach abroad. It is with some that one turns away from the city with the conviction that there is little hope from that quarter.

On the other hand we find the country comparatively free from corruption. At times perhaps it was because there was not enough money to make corruption worth while. Be that as it may
James Bryce says the country government is regarded as a model by Europeans. It is evident that the country has nowhere an establishment for political regeneration. The country is dependent on the school for the growth of intelligence. The school among whites the country is divided into townships and townships. (Details of school taxes are omitted here and following page as they can be conveniently obtained by consulting a second, number of Pennsylvania school laws and decisions). The unusual is wholly concerned with the township. In this
there are six school directors elected for three years each, two being elected every year. Vacancies are filled by the remaining members. The directors are usually elected from different sections of the township. They serve without pay and are usually the better class of men in the community. Sometimes women serve as women are eligible to this as well as other school offices. They establish schools sufficient to accommodate all the children in the township, appoint teachers, provide books and supplies, adopt a course
of study, levy and collect school tax, and assist the teachers in management of the schools.

The directors of the county have stated periods of meeting; their most important function is to elect a county superintendent, who keeps in touch with the schools by frequent visits, gives advice and assistance, grants certificates and holds a county institute. He is the general head of the school system and a good plan has great moral influence. The system of delegated
elections has worked very well in practice, usually removing the office from the spoils system. Chester County has had for several years recently an envenomed Prohibitionist in office. The governor of the State appoints a State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who is the head of educational affairs in the State. The present incumbent, Dr. Schoeffer, is an excellent scholar, he has held his office under both Democratic and Republican executives. State Superintendents have repeatedly been taken
from the Normal School
Supervisorty.

It has been said, "The
teacher is to the school
what the soul is to the
body." The importance of
the teacher in the school
is indeed great. We must
organize the school and
keep it working. A teacher
in a country school must
be a person of much greater
resources, in order to
teach successfully, than
his brother teacher occu-
pying a definite place in
the machinery of a city's
schools, or even one in
a special institution of
learning. I will attempt
to give a few hints in reference to some of the most important fields in which this process of organization is called forth.

One of the first problems that confronts a teacher is to arouse enthusiasm for work. In every school are some who go to school because they have to go. Their aim is to do the minimum amount of work consistent with freedom from punishment.

Another difficult subject to deal with is the course of study best suited to all. In this the teacher
is usually limited to some extent by a more or less rigid course adopted by the directors, but he usually has to consider the subject in adapting or changing the course, and at any rate in the application of the course as it exists. Some of his pupils will go from this school to the farm, some will attend a Normal School, some will go into business, some are preparing for college. In a small school it is impossible to allow electives. Still another serious problem for the teacher...
is how to provide for these, generally larger boys, who help with the farm work in the open season, or else "hire out," and come to school in the winter months. Usually this lasts from the middle of November to the middle of March. Excepting those who are exceptionally bright or very hard workers, they cannot keep up with those of their class who come all the year. If they are put back, they are naturally dissatisfied in being classed with smaller children, and do very little good, besides; they usually
get the same part of the subjects year after year. Their welfare should not be ignored because frequently they are victims of circumstances and could attend regularly if they could. Often also they are the best students and amount to most in after life.

The main trouble with teachers is that teaching is not sufficiently regarded as a profession. The great majority of teachers are young women who usually retire from the profession at the investigation of some young
man. Of the men engaged many use teaching as a stepping stone to business or profession.
Within the last twenty years the grade of teachers has been greatly improved owing largely to the excellent work of the State Normal Schools. Now very few persons begin teaching without some technical education.

The school is a great democratizing institution. In it rich and poor, Americans, Irish, Germans, Italians, and sometimes even negroes, Chinese, and Indians are mingled.
Their association outside of school hours makes it necessary for them to work out, on a small scale it is true, but nevertheless important, a real political Commonwealth. In the rural school the conditions are especially favorable for this; they have play-grounds with trees for play, and no forbidding signs "Keep off the Grass." The present law of Pennsylvania requires the attendance of children, not physically prevented, for seventy percentum of the term, but this is not perfectly enforced as yet.
Up to within recent years the instruction outside of towns was carried on in the ungraded school in which all between the ages of six and twenty-one who wished to attend were taught by one teacher. This method is manifestly insufficient for the present educational requirements. Of late years a definite advance has been made along the line of township high schools. These schools are not usually high schools in fact but are schools beyond the ungraded school course, usually drawing pupils
from a radius of two or three miles. It is generally agreed even among the more well-to-do class, it is better to send pupils here than to risk the temptations surrounding pupils in a school far removed from home influences.

In some cases it has been found profitable to transport children at public expense to make larger schools and allow consequent grading.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania, not always renowned for public morality or other directions, has usually
regarded the public school as sacred. It now appropriates five and one-half million dollars annually to the support of the common schools. Besides large amounts to Normal training schools.

In the unpretentious country school we see a great field for the development of citizens. May the advantages be properly appreciated, and may the forces put into operation here redound to the freeing our great country of corruption in high places. Our Country made strong within will surely fulfil its destiny.