

(57) *School Trustees contract under Seal signed by a majority of the Corporation binding.*

A contract was entered into by two of the Trustees of a Section under their corporate seal for building a school house, after the house was built the Trustees refused to pay on the plea that the contract was not legal, a jury having given a verdict in favor of the Trustees, a new trial was ordered, and the verdict set aside.—*Forbes v. Trustees, No. 8, Plympton, 8 C. P. R. 73.* (See 4, page 49; and 56, page 54.)

(58) *A Township Superintendent can only sue Collector for Penalties.*

A Township Superintendent has no legal authority to sue the collector of the Township for monies received by him, *not in the nature of penalties.*—*Shirley v. Hope, 4 Q. B. R. 240.*

(59) *Separate Schools for Coloured Inhabitants.*

(1) Where no Separate School is established for the children of the coloured inhabitants, such children have the same right to attend the Common School as the other children of the Section.—*Washington v. Trustees, No. 14, Charlotteville, 11 Q. B. R. 569.*

(2) Residents of a School Section in which a Separate School has been established for the class to which it belongs—as in this case for coloured people—are not entitled to send their children to the general Common School of such Section.—*In re Dennis Hill v. Trustees, Camden and Zone, 11 Q.B.R. 573.*

## II. Papers on Practical Education.

### 1. A COMPARISON OF THE SIMULTANEOUS, MONITORIAL, AND INDIVIDUAL METHODS OF TEACHING.

Collective teaching is a primary necessary of the schoolmaster, and the difficulty of arriving at the most effective means of accomplishing it has originated various plans. To teach even a small group of youths satisfactorily—to distribute an equal share of attention to each and as nearly as is compatible with their varying degrees of natural capacity, to confer on each an equal measure of benefit—must of itself prove a severe test of a teacher's ability; but when the numbers to be handled are large, the very highest degree of tact is required, while one scholar of the group is reading "in his turn," to sustain the attention of the remainder, and in questioning, to arouse at once an individual and a general effort to reply. The natural tendency on the part of the unoccupied pupil is to lapse into a state of listless indifference, and the equally natural error of the unskilful or indolent teacher is to accept the readiest answer, however clumsy and inaccurate; or, if no approximate answer can be had from the class, to supply it at once himself, and pass rapidly on to something else, without any attempt to arouse the attention and excite the reasoning powers of his pupils by gradually leading them up to what ought to have been the reply. Thus, the faulty or the accurate performance of one is not made available for the improvement of the others; the minds of by far the larger proportion of the class are but languidly interested or are wholly inactive, and loose discipline, with its unhappy consequences, becomes inevitable.

It was long before any well-defined attempt was made to cope with the difficulties and remedy the abuses here indicated. At length however, arose the *monitorial system*, which had a direct reference to the exigencies of the case. For it was evident that if, without increasing the actual number of masters, the school could be stimulated into activity at a greater number of points at one and the same time, an all-important end would be gained. On the monitorial principal, then, which became rapidly popular, the school was divided, so to speak, into a vast number of living parts, the learner becoming teacher in his turn to a section of pupils less advanced than himself, and alternating the receptive with the communicative state according to rules prescribed.

seal; and it is held that though the particular members may express their private consent by words, or signing their names, yet this does not bind the corporation; it is the fixing of the seal, and that only, which unites the several assents of the individuals composing it; and makes one joint assent of the whole.—*Smith's Mercantile Law, B, I. C. 4.*

Experience subsequently proved that the technical superiority of the monitors was inadequate to the end in view, and that, in addition to this qualification, permanency of office was desirable. And here the apprenticeship scheme of your Lordships was introduced, with its appropriate remedy, adapting itself partially to the machinery already in operation, and not necessarily supplanting, but materially aiding the monitorial method.

Meanwhile, however, there had been adopted in Glasgow, as a distinguishing feature of what is termed the "training system," a mode of dealing with masses of pupils which, considered from the point of view of the monitorial scheme, wears a somewhat reactionary aspect. On the monitorial plan, simply as such you do not despair of maintaining the activity of an entire class, or of an entire school, although you deal, *immediately* only with individuals; you merely, by a process of subdivision, increase the number of points at which you act upon the school. But the "simultaneous," system does in principle, despair of this; and even after the management of a school has been rendered easier by the employment of monitors, proceeds upon the assumption that you cannot secure general attention and interest in your groups of pupils, unless these groups, in their entire numerical strength, are unceasingly made to furnish such lively and unmistakable demonstrations of activity, as on the non-simultaneous plan, are required only of the individual immediately addressed. The simultaneous system consists in treating a class as a unit; it ignores, in a great measure, the individual scholar; it teaches reading simultaneously, and demands that the answers to questions shall be given in one simultaneous shout. It proves, therefore, to be a mechanical artifice for securing universal activity, by insisting on a universal demonstration of activity.

The *Simultaneous system*, as is well known, rapidly propagated itself throughout the country, and is now extensively practised, forming in some schools the leading characteristic; while in others it is adopted as an auxiliary to the individual method. Now, it is plain that the acceptance with which it was met must have a reason; it would be vain to deny that it possesses features calculated to recommend it to teachers and managers of schools. Some of these features are so patent and striking that it is no wonder they have made considerable impression on the minds of educationists, and have secured for the simultaneous system a large amount of patronage. I have already indicated one of them,—the demonstration of universal activity; and another no less obvious recommendatory trait is, the saving of time. I admit the appearance of activity, and I admit the saving of time; but the sacrifices which it involves are generally greater than the advantages which it secures.

We may examine the working of the simultaneous system under two heads; first, its results upon the pupil, and second, its results upon the teacher. My remarks are directed not so much against the simultaneous method as against the abuse of that method.

First, then, with regard to the system as affecting the pupil. The machinery of the simultaneous method being set in operation, the paramount difficulty of the schoolmaster seems conveniently overcome,—universal activity appears to prevail. It is true that, in the perfected form of the method, mechanical activity may be secured, i.e., words may be enunciated with satisfactory accuracy; but close observation will determine that it is only a very small proportion of the class who are in any way conscious of a connexion between the sound and the sense of the words they utter. And this is a perfectly natural consequence, seeing that in simultaneous reading, for example, every individual effort is concentrated on the anxiety to keep the measured time. While therefore, the bare art of collective utterance may be conveniently cultivated under this system, the entire aim of learning to read, to wit, the habit of accompanying comprehension, is on the whole, foiled.

On pointing out the faulty character of the reading of individual pupils, I have been triumphantly referred to the *simultaneous* performances. It is true I have heard a class read simultaneously with striking effect, producing at first a most favourable impression; which impression, however, was completely and very unpleasantly dispelled when the pupils were tested singly. About one-fifth of the whole may have read as well as the class collectively appeared to do, while the rest fell various degrees short of the proficiency which they ought to have attained, and which an unwary observer would have imagined they had attained.

In those schools, again, where the simultaneous method is adopted as an auxiliary, it is employed in questioning for the specific purpose of confirming, on the composite mind of the class, what may have been separately said by a pupil or teacher. But unless the method is practised with a skill so rare that I have hardly ever met with it, the pupil singled out, if able to repeat the answer intelligibly, will be found incapable of stating the question to which, with the assistance of the rest of the class, he mechanically responded.

It will be admitted that any mode of training which does not foster independent development and self-reliance, fails in one of the most essential requisites of all education. But does the simultan-