

"hitherto no means have existed of gathering accurate statistics in reference to them. A recent enactment of the Legislature has made provision for collecting statistical information in regard to schools."

WISCONSIN.

By Act of April 16, 1852, all incorporated academies and literary institutions in the State having a library of 300 volumes, are entitled to one copy of the Revised Statutes, one copy of the Session Laws of each session of the Legislature, one copy of the Journals of the Senate and Assembly, one copy each of the Journals of two Constitutional Conventions, one copy each of all documents printed by order of the Legislature of the State, one copy each of the Revised Statutes, Laws, and Journals of the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Wisconsin, and the Reports of the decisions of the Supreme Court of the State. These documents are to be delivered by the State librarian within ninety days after publication.

In 1854 there were 75 school-houses built of brick, 79 of stone, 1052 frame, 933 logs. Total 2139, valued at \$347,542 55. The number of district libraries was 830, containing 14,027 volumes. The largest number of volumes was in Rock County, 1687, and the least in Iowa County. More than half the counties had no libraries.

Section 74 of the school law provides that "each town superintendent may, in his discretion, set apart a sum, not exceeding ten per cent. of the gross amount of the school money apportioned to any district, which shall be applied by such district to the purchase of school district libraries," &c.

"Too little importance is attached to this subject generally."—*Report of H. A. Wright, for 1854.*

During 1854, \$2040 89 were expended for school libraries. The highest sum was paid in Dodge County, \$232 96, and the lowest in Waukesha, \$15 12. In 29 counties nothing was expended, more than half the whole number in the State.

In 1855, \$4741 21 were expended in 27 counties. There were 1080 district libraries, containing 21,667 volumes. In 27 counties out of 50 there are libraries.

Number of volumes lent during 1855, 11,481; the greatest number in proportion to the number in libraries being in Marquette County.

Amount of library fines collected, \$12 16; expended \$8 04.

"I may state as the result of ten years' experience of our present district library system, that only about *one-fourth* of the districts have any libraries at all, and those generally so small as scarcely to deserve the name,—averaging less than nineteen volumes each,—and hence, utterly fail to fulfil the great mission of school libraries; that what few books are thus collected are procured at high prices of book peddlers, and but too generally relate to *banditti* and *robbers*, the *Pirate's Own Book*, and other trashy and injurious works, which could only incite in the minds of children a desire themselves to become desperadoes.

"According to the present district plan, we have small and almost worthless libraries; by the township system, we should have large, attractive, and invaluable collections."—*L. C. Draper, Sup't Public Instruction, Oct. 1858.*

The State of Wisconsin has recently (March, 1859) enacted a new School Library Law, which has four prominent provisions, namely:—

"1. It provides a permanent Town School Library Fund by setting apart for this purpose ten per cent. of the School Fund Income, subject to apportionment in 1860, and annually thereafter, together with the proceeds of a special State tax, to be levied each year, of one-tenth of one mill on the dollar valuation of taxable property.

"2. It provides that this Fund shall be set apart specifically, for establishing and replenishing *Town School Libraries*.

"3. *It provides that the books for these Libraries shall be purchased by public authority, and not by the local School Board, as heretofore.*

"4. It provides that an extra number of the State Laws, Journals, and Documents, sufficient to supply each Town and City School Library with a set, shall be printed by the State Printer, and delivered to the State Superintendent, and these shall be substantially bound, under the direction of the State Superintendent, with the approval of the Governor, at a cost not exceeding thirty cents per volume, to be paid out of the School Library Fund."

Mr. Draper states: "There never was a measure involving new and additional taxation, that ever passed the Legislature with such unanimity. It passed both Houses most triumphantly, by a vote of 19 to 3 in the Senate, and 51 to 10 in the Assembly; or in the aggregate, by a vote of 70 to 13. I have no doubt that the men who supported this noble and beneficent measure, will long be remembered with honour and gratitude by an intelligent and appreciating people.

"This School Library Fund will amount to at least \$35,000 annually, and will gradually increase in proportion to the increase of the School Fund Income, and the increase of the taxable property

of the State. There will be something like \$18,000 a year from the School Fund Income; and one-tenth of a mill tax on the dollar valuation, on \$175,000,000 of taxable property in the State, as equalized last year, would realize \$17,500; if the taxable property should be equalized, as it may be, at two hundred millions, then the income from this special Library tax would amount to \$20,000 annually. I should conclude, that the Library Fund will reach not less than \$40,000 a year within the next three years. But estimating it at \$35,000 it would give on an average, to each of the 650 towns and cities of the State \$53 per year in books at wholesale rates; and deducting the probable *pro rata* for the cities and villages, there would be about \$40, upon an average, to each of the rural towns. Estimating the present population of the State at 850,000, and dividing it by the number of towns and cities, we should have an average of 1333 persons for each town and city; and \$40 or \$50 per year in books, for this number, would appear but a very moderate investment. This amount, though small, will nevertheless afford a respectable beginning for a Town School Library, when we take into consideration that a similar amount will be added annually thereafter.

"I congratulate you and the State," writes Henry Barnard, "that your Legislature has enabled you to inaugurate a true Library policy—together in advance, in its practical bearings and completeness, in time, of anything yet attempted." It is, indeed, an advance upon the efforts of our sister States, all things considered; for taking the three States which have adopted the Township system, Wisconsin will raise more money, by nearly one-quarter, than Michigan, besides having the advantage of the State purchasing the books, instead of the Township Boards as is done in Michigan; it is in advance of Ohio, whose Library Fund is provided by imposing the tenth of a mill tax, while ours is raised by the tenth of a mill tax, and one-tenth of the School Fund Income; and it is in advance of Indiana, not in the amount of tax raised, but in the permanency of the system, for in Indiana the Library Law is enacted to be in force only two years, and then has to pass the ordeal of securing a two years' renewal, and thus is subjected to the danger of overthrow by the caprice of the people, or through the mismanagement of those having it in charge. Our Wisconsin Library Law is in advance of all others in providing a copy of all State Laws, Journals, and Documents, substantially bound, for each School Library.

"It is a noble and beneficent law; and will yet be regarded, when fully known, and its benefits begin to be realized, as the most important educational measure ever inaugurated in Wisconsin."

LOWER CANADA.

We have collected the following information from the able reports of Hon. Pierre J. O. Chauveau, Superintendent of Education.

The Parish Libraries commenced in 1853, were ninety in number in 1855, and contained 47,703 volumes; ninety-two in 1856, with 57,493 volumes; ninety-six in 1857, with 60,510 volumes; not including the public libraries in Quebec and Montreal. Those intended for the use of the poorer classes of Montreal, and under the care of the Roman Catholic clergy, are composed of more than 12,000 volumes.

The united libraries of the Superior Schools and Colleges, give a total of 78,300 volumes; in 1856, 96,823 volumes; in 1857, 113,142 volumes. The cost of the museums and of the apparatus for the classes of natural philosophy, amounts to £12,750.

The Seminaries of Quebec and Montreal, the two most ancient of the establishments, receive no assistance from the State. Their libraries, their cabinets, and their museums, do them great honour.

UPPER CANADA.

In connection with the schools there is established a system of Free Public Libraries, which may be under the control of the local school, or municipal, authorities, and which is also supported by local tax, and an equal amount granted from the Public Library Fund. The manner of establishing these libraries is as follows: The Department issues a catalogue containing, at the present time, say 6,000 volumes, which have been sanctioned by the Council of Public Instruction. A local school, or municipal corporation, makes an appropriation, and transmits the money, and a list of such books as it selects, to the Department. One hundred per cent. is then added to the amount, and books to the value of the two sums are forwarded from the Library Depository of the Department. A similar system is adopted in supplying the Grammar and Common Schools with maps, prints, globes, and other school and philosophical apparatus.*

The whole number of volumes distributed by the Superintendent of Public Education for Upper Canada, Dr. E. Ryerson, up to Dec. 31, 1859, has been upwards of 200,000, according to the following table:—

* A Special Report on the School Law of Upper Canada, by Dr. Ryerson Toronto, 1858, 76 pp. 8vo., gives full information on the whole subject of the Libraries, and comparisons with the system of some of the States.