

# Educational Weekly

Vol. III.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14TH, 1886.

Number 55.

## The Educational Weekly,

PUBLISHED BY

THE GRIP PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO.,

SAMUEL J. MOORE, *General Manager.*

C. FRASER, *Business Manager Educational Weekly Dept.*

JOHN E. BRYANT, M.A. *Editor.*

**TERMS:** Two Dollars per annum. Clubs of three, \$5.00. Clubs of five at \$1.60 each, or the five for \$8.00. Clubs of twelve at \$1.50 each, or the twenty for \$30.00.

New subscriptions may begin at any time during the year.

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ADDRESS— **EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY,**  
GRIP OFFICE, TORONTO.

TORONTO, JANUARY 14, 1886.

THE resignation of General Eaton from the post of United States Commissioner of Education, to which he was appointed by General Grant in March, 1870, is very greatly regretted by the friends of education throughout the world. General Eaton's labors in his position have been immense. The National Bureau of Education, which scarcely had an existence at the time of his appointment, owes its present popularity and influence to his tact, judgment and discernment. Its function is to collect and distribute information regarding education, not only in every part of the States, but in every part of the world. The reports and pamphlets prepared by General Eaton, as Chief of the Bureau, are universally sought for and valued. The topics discussed and illustrated by him in these writings are of great public interest, and have included—libraries, industrial education, public health as affected by the schoolroom, negro education, manual training-schools, the kindergarten, and so on. By his efforts the National

Government has been kept constantly informed of the condition of education in every State and Territory of the Union; and the evidence adduced in his reports of the alarming prevalence of illiteracy, especially in the South, has been a powerful influence in determining public opinion in favor of the Blair Bill, which is now the chief educational topic of the people of the United States. One great thing accomplished by General Eaton, is the establishment of a national educational library and museum, which now contains 16,000 volumes, and 40,000 pamphlets, and a vast number of educational appliances.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND assured General Eaton that he personally wished him to retain his office, so that the General's resignation is entirely voluntary. It is occasioned by an imperative necessity for rest and recuperation after so many years of arduous work at construction and organization. The retiring Commissioner is not without his laurels. He has been made an honorary member of the French Ministry of Public Instruction, he has been made a member of a Japanese society for promoting public education, he has been elected to the membership of many foreign scientific societies, he has been appointed by the Emperor to the membership of an Order in Brazil, he has been honored with the degree of Doctor by several universities, he was President of the International Congress of Education which met at New Orleans last year, and was Vice-President of the International Congress of Educators which lately assembled in Havre, France.

THE Blair Bill, which is soon to come up again in the United States Congress, is a very important measure; and its passing or rejection will very greatly affect the future of educational progress in the States, especially in the South. By this Bill, introduced by the Hon. H. W. Blair, of New Hampshire, it is proposed to give \$77,000,000 of national funds, in money, to the several States and Territories of the Union on the basis of illiteracy—that is, "to each State or Territory in that proportion which the whole number of persons in each, who, being of the age of ten years and over, cannot write, bears to the whole number of such persons in the United States, the computation being made according to the census of 1880." The payment of this sum is to be distributed over eight years. The

Bill passed the Senate on the 7th of April last by a vote of 33 to 11, or, including the "pairs," by 44 to 22. But it did not reach the House of Representatives in time for consideration.

THE statistics which have been adduced in support of the Blair Bill are astonishing. The illiterate voting population of the United States numbers 1,869,245; of whom 852,665 are illiterate white voters, and 1,016,580 are illiterate colored voters—over eighteen hundred thousand voters who cannot read the ballot papers which they are entitled by law to use. Of the children of school age in the United States, 9,499,542 did not receive one hour's instruction in the year 1883; 6,030,936 were returned as not having ever attended any school, public or private! Even in the State of New York, of the 1,600,000 children of school age, only 600,000 are in average attendance. One half of the school population of the United States are destitute of school houses, of school teachers, of any of the necessities of instruction even of the most inexpensive kind. For the education of this vast host of un-instructed children at least 120,000 additional teachers are required, the number now employed being 400,000.

IT will be interesting to know in what proportions the several States will be entitled to help from the proposed relief. For example, Alabama will receive \$5,370,848; Tennessee, \$5,089,262; Mississippi, \$4,624,339; Kentucky, \$4,316,930; Louisiana, \$3,945,057; Missouri, \$2,586,647; Arkansas, \$2,503,170; Illinois, \$1,801,616; Indiana, \$1,372,441; Iowa, \$577,532; and Colorado, \$129,873. In some of these States schools are now kept open but three or four months in the year. It is thought that with the help that will be given by the passing of the Blair Bill, all public schools will be kept open a uniform period of nine months in the year.

THE opposition to the Blair Bill is, we are happy to say, constitutional, and not factious. But the abiding danger to national character which a vast illiterate constituency imposes is a much more serious matter than a temporary assumption by the National Government of the responsibility which rests upon each State for the education of its own citizens. The argument is conclusive that if the National Government has turned the slaves into citizens, it must complete the work of emancipation, and by education make them worthy of citizenship.