

from taxation for new houses in other parts of the township where this had not been done. It might be well to consider whether it would not be better further to amend the law, so as to authorize two or three of the existing school sections (according to the size of the township), to unite and elect one member to the township board, to retain the existing boundaries (subject to alteration by the board) for taxation purposes, but to abolish them so far as they now restrict the right of each ratepayer to send his child to the school of the section in which he pays school rates."

THE TOWNSHIP SYSTEM VERSUS THE SCHOOL SECTION SYSTEM.

State Superintendent Johnson, in his last report, takes occasion to urge anew, upon the people of the State, the great advantages that would be derived from the abolition of the district system and the adoption of the municipal system, by which the schools of a town would be placed wholly under the control of the superintending school committee. Some extracts which he gives, from sources entitled to great respect, put the matter in a very clear light, and ought to induce many of our towns to make the change, which would greatly and speedily improve their schools, and render them comparatively less expensive than at present.

The following enumeration of some of the prominent obstacles which are in the way of the greater efficiency of our schools under the district system is worthy of attentive studying. They are real and not imaginary.

1. Total lack of our unsufficient supervision.
2. Constant change of supervision.
3. Poorly qualified teachers.
4. Constant change of teachers.
5. Lack of interest in schools on the part of patrons.
6. Employment of relatives and favourites without regard to qualifications.
7. Too small schools in many districts.
8. Too short schools in small districts.
9. Employment of immature and incompetent teachers in small districts.

10. Poor school-houses.
11. Irregular attendance.
12. General lack of facilities to aid the teachers.
13. No schools at all in many districts.
14. Lack of proper qualifications.
15. Pupils study what they choose, and not what they ought.

These twice seven and one plagues of our common-school system will be recognised by every one who has had any experience in connection with the public schools of the State.

After discussing at considerable length the reason for a change to the town system, the following are given as some of the desirable results that would be realized by abandoning the district system, and placing the schools under the care of the town:—

1. It would secure just as many schools as the necessities of the community demand, each being an integral part of one central organization, and adapted to the wants of each individual.
2. It would dispense with a large number of school officers.
3. It would establish a uniform rate of taxation.
4. It would furnish more uniform and equal advantages and privileges to every citizen.
5. It would allow the child to attend school where his own interests would be best conserved, with no restraint save what the general interests might require.
6. It would prevent strife about district lines.
7. It would diminish the aggregate expenditure for schools.
8. It would secure a more efficient system of school inspection and supervision.
9. It would secure permanency of supervision.
10. It would secure greater permanency of teachers.
11. It would secure a better class of teachers.
12. It would secure better compensation to competent teachers, and less employment for incompetent ones.
13. It will secure better school-houses.
14. It will secure greater facilities to teachers for reference and illustration.
15. It will enable towns to establish graded schools.
16. It will secure uniformity of text-books in the same town.
17. It will result in more uniform methods of teaching.
18. It will secure the establishment of a course of study, and will tend to keep pupils longer in school.
19. It will secure to the State department more reliable statistics.
20. It will insure schools in every district, and prevent a bare majority from depriving a respectable minority of school privileges.

21. It will tend to diminish neighbourhood quarrels.

22. It would ensure the employment of fewer nephews and nieces, sisters and sisters-in-law.

23. It would insure a larger aggregate of interest on the part of the community in each school.

24. It would render possible competitive examinations.

There is no gainsaying the force of the argument presented by the above points, all of which are susceptible of the clearest proof and demonstration. Nothing but apathy and prejudice can prevent a reasonable person from seeing that they are conclusive in favour of a change. Are those persons who doggedly cling to the district system, aware of the following fact? That of those towns in Massachusetts and other States, which have abandoned the district system, it is very rare that one, after a fair trial, has any inclination to return to that system. The advantages of the town system are too apparent and too important to be lost when they have once been attained and enjoyed. A word to the wise, &c., &c.—*Maine Journal of Education*

I. Papers on Education in Various Countries.

1. SCHOOLS OF EUROPE AND AMERICA.

Hon. B. G. Northrop, in a recent address, thus contrasted them. There are many features in which foreign schools may learn from us; but in others they are our superiors. One advantage in our favour is the general employment of women in teaching. In foreign schools it has been the school-master almost exclusively.

With respect to the points of superiority, the first that strikes one is the earlier and more thorough gradation. In our country, especially in the rural portions, the schools are often enfeebled by separation, when they might be strengthened by union. Then they have such admirable, thorough, universal supervision carried down to the lowest school and up to the highest. This is perhaps their best feature; and the result is that the schools are so good that the attendance increases even where the bishops deny the sacraments to parents who send their children to school. Where the schools are made excellent, they need not fear the ban of any church preventing attendance. In Rome the new system gains ground as the schools improve. At the anniversary of its adoption, a grand school celebration was held; an amphitheatre was erected, and five hundred children drilled for a chorus; the conscript fathers were present; and everything combined to make a gala day, closing at night with an illumination at the Coliseum. The whole produced a profound sensation, and the permanence of the common schools is settled. These results were produced in a great measure by their careful supervision, directed by one controlling mind. In Vienna, too, and indeed in the cities generally, the same feature is seen; and the results are manifest.

It is with some surprise that the American educator returns home, and finds this great city of Philadelphia without a superintendent. Your grammar and high schools deserve commendation, but I wonder at the inequality which is observed in the other departments—one ward having a good principal and thoroughly drilled assistants, and in the next the primary schools being quite unworthy of you. This could not be under an efficient superintendency, which would bring all up to a uniform excellence. No city in the country has abandoned the superintendency after trying it, and in many it has produced marked improvement.

Our schools too often fail by a most meagre development of language and power of expression; and here the Europeans excel us. The children are required to commit the gems of the language, and thus the memory is trained and a high standard of taste created. The schools of Germany and Switzerland especially excel in this respect. One and often two modern languages are taught in every school, and the children are often more proficient in all three languages than ours are even in their own.

Then they give more attention to history. This may be partly because on every hand they see memorials which link the present to the past. The sentiment of patriotism is developed; in Germany loyalty to the emperor; in Switzerland, love of country. The Swiss motto, "One for all, all for one," is thus graven deeply in the hearts of the people. The Prussians understand that "what you would have in a nation's life you must put it into its schools;" and you hear "fatherland" everywhere. Technical education is provided for; almost every trade has its school, and they contribute largely to the thrift of Germany and Switzerland. The universality of instruction in drawing is a marked feature; and I urge upon all superintendents and those in authority to have drawing introduced alongside of geography and arithmetic.

I found the compulsory attendance produced no discontent among the common people; they complained of conscription, but never