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THE PRUSSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

AS SEEN BY A VIRGINIA TRAVELER A CENTURY AGO

WITH
SUGGESTIONS AS TO ITS APPLICATION
TO THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

A report submitted to the Governor of Virginia on January 15, 1839,
by the Rev. Benjamin Mosby Smith of Danville, Virginia,
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FOREWORD BY CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY

REPORT

ON THE

PRUSSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

[Addressed to DAVID CAMPBELL, Esquire, Governor of Virginia.]

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
February 1st, 1839. }

SIR,

Inclosed is a communication to the house of delegates, which you will be pleased to lay before that body.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

DAVID CAMPBELL.

To the Speaker of the House of Delegates.

To the House of Delegates.

In compliance with the resolution of the house of delegates, requesting me to communicate any report or other communication which I may have received from any citizen of Virginia, in relation to the system of public instruction in Prussia and other countries, if in my judgment the rendering the same public will conduce to the promotion of the general good, I transmit "a report on the Prussian primary school system, and suggestions on the application of this system of primary schools to Virginia," prepared, at my request, by the Rev. Benjamin M. Smith, a talented Virginian, who has travelled through Prussia and other European countries, and examined their schools and systems of public instruction, which I think well worthy of being laid before the public.

DAVID CAMPBELL...

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
February 1st, 1839. }

VIRGINIA
ARCHIVE

Charles William Dabney whose foreword introduces this Report graduated at Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia; studied in Germany; and was President of the University of Tennessee and of the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Dabney is the author of *Universal Education in the South*, one volume of which has recently been published. On page 76, Vol. 1, he reviews the Report.—EDITOR.

Washington, D. C., October, 1936.

FOREWORD

BENJAMIN MOSBY SMITH, the author of this report, was born at Montrose, Powhatan County, Virginia, June 30, 1811. He graduated at Hampden-Sydney College in 1829, taught in the Academy at Milton, North Carolina, until 1832, entered Union Theological Seminary as a student, continued as an instructor until 1836, when he went to Europe. There he visited the universities of Germany and made a special study of the Prussian Primary School System. After his return he was a pastor at Danville, Virginia, 1838-40; at Tinkling Spring and Waynesboro churches, 1840-45; at Staunton 1845-54, where Dr. Joseph R. Wilson, father of Woodrow Wilson, succeeded him. In 1854 Dr. Smith became professor of Oriental Languages in the Union Theological Seminary at Hampden-Sydney, which position he held until 1889. He was professor emeritus until his death on March 14, 1893.

When a teacher in Milton, North Carolina, Dr. Smith was already an enthusiast for the cause of universal education. In a little sketch of his life written for his family he said: "... In the summer of 1831 I went to H. [Hillsboro] & thence to Chapel Hill at the commencement & got up the first Educational association ever formed in the South. I interested Mr. William Bingham of the Hillsboro Male Academy, Judge Nash of Hillsboro, Mr. John Hewett [name not quite legible] & the President, Dr. Caldwell, & Professors of the University, & the association I have no doubt did good. It was a bold presumption in a boy just 20 years old to go forward as leader in the enterprise but the gentlemen were pleased to overlook all that & heartily gave me their aid."

In the *Star and North Carolina State Gazette* of Raleigh, July 7, 1831, there appeared an account of this "Institute of Education," reporting that "at the time and place appointed there was a numerous and highly respectable meeting. . . . The objects of the meeting were explained by Mr. Benjamin M. Smith, of Milton, in an appropriate and highly interesting address."

Dr. Smith's interest in public education never lessened. With President John M. P. Atkinson of Hampden-Sydney College he organized the Educational Association of Virginia in 1863. At a meeting in Warrenton, July, 1870, he made his great report on "The Merits and Defects of the Prevailing Schemes of Common School Education in the United States." Earlier that year William H. Ruffner had been elected first Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia through the efforts of J. L. M. Curry, John B. Minor, and Benjamin Smith, with the assistance of General Lee.

In his first Annual Report as Superintendent, 1871, Dr. Ruffner offered this tribute: "A well-known Virginia divine contended thirty years ago—alas! without success—in company with John B. Minor, William H. McGuffey, Alexander Rives, James McDowell, and others of our choicest citizens, for the establishment of a general system of public free education. I allude to the Reverend Benjamin M. Smith, D. D. A report of his on the Prussian System of Education may be found among our State documents, and he was the first to take the field as a County Superintendent of Schools under our present system."

"In addition to the numberless duties Dr. Smith had on hand in connection with the Seminary," writes Dr. J. D. Eggleston, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Virginia from 1906 to 1913, "he gave a great

deal of time to the matter of public education. Indeed, he was one of the notable figures of his day in his determined fight for universal education. When I first became Superintendent of County Schools in Prince Edward in 1903, I looked for the reports of County Superintendents. Dr. Smith had been the first. There wasn't a single report of any Superintendent after Dr. Smith went out; but his reports were there in neat form and clearly made out."

In his *Free School Idea in Virginia* (p. 130) William A. Maddox calls Dr. Smith's report "perhaps the most significant document of the period" and asserts that it "deserves to rank with the early American reports on the European school systems. It should be regarded as something more than a mere reprint of the Stowe Report."

From the time he graduated from college in 1829 to the day of his death in 1893 Benjamin M. Smith used every opportunity to promote public free schools. For this service Virginia owes him recognition which has never been fully accorded.

1936 CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY

To his Excellency Governor CAMPBELL.
SIR,

Your favour of "September 4th, 1838," has been some time before me. You express your conviction, that the "facts" I have collected, and my "observations on the systems of education, pursued in some European countries, may be useful to the general assembly of our own state:" and you therefore, request me to communicate any information, I may possess, on the following topics:

- "1. The mode of establishing schools; in Prussia particularly.
2. How the schools are organized.
3. What branches of education are taught.
4. How many months in the year the schools are continued.

5. Expense of tuition to each scholar.
6. What portion is required to be paid by the parent.
7. How teachers are obtained."

You add "with any other information you may consider valuable."

I now undertake, after the least possible delay, to comply with your request.

You are by no means singular, in supposing, that "facts and observations," on the systems of education, pursued in other countries, may be useful to our own; and in your selection of Prussia as the principal country, whose system deserves a detailed and accurate examination and consideration, you have but added your tribute of respect for her efforts in this cause, to those of other enlightened and patriotic statesmen, in this, as well as the old world.

A few years since the French government deputed an eminent statesman of that kingdom, M. Victor Cousin, to visit Prussia, Wurtemberg, Saxony and the dukedom of Baden, in order to make a personal examination of their systems of education. His reports on the results of this examination, addressed to count Montalivet, minister of public instruction in France, were partially translated in England, and have been republished in this country. The attention of many intelligent and distinguished men in England and America, was now much excited, to investigate more fully, the statements of these reports. The very fact, that the head of a military despotism had set on foot a system of instruction, designed to benefit every subject in his dominions, had expended large sums (one twenty-fifth part of the annual income of the kingdom being thus appropriated) in the endowment of literary institutions of every grade; in a word, that for forty years he had been engaged in promoting the moral and intellectual improvement of all his people, and that these efforts had been crowned with unexampled success. Such a statement as this, I say, was well calculated to excite the at-

tention of a people who had been accustomed to regard an absolute monarch as a mere arbitrary despot, and to consider the security of his power as based in the ignorance of the people. The occasional reports of travellers through Germany, had already called attention to this new feature in the policy of despotism, but the information thus presented was not minute nor sufficiently extensive. To verify the statements of M. Cousin, several intelligent gentlemen from this country and England have repaired to Prussia, and given the subject a personal examination. Dr. Julius of Hamburg, known in the United States and England as the deputy of the Prussian government, to examine the penitentiary systems of this country, was invited to lay before a committee of the British parliament, such information as he possessed respecting the Prussian system of public instruction. In 1836, the legislature of Ohio deputed an eminent professor in a literary institution of that state, to make investigations on this topic, during a contemplated tour of Europe. The report which he presented on his return, was extensively circulated in Ohio, and an edition of 12,000 copies published and circulated in Pennsylvania, by order of the legislature.

The information thus laid before various legislative bodies, and the community at large, in many places, besides those referred to, has already served very important purposes; for although no one would suppose the institutions of one country can be exactly adapted to another, and much less those of a monarchy or military despotism, to a republic, yet many valuable hints can be derived, and much valuable aid obtained, from the experience of those who have been longer engaged in any special undertaking than we have. And it is pleasant to the philanthropist to observe, that while Prussia was condescending, she might suppose, to learn from our infant republic the best methods of governing and reclaiming the refractory and abandoned, while the auto-

crat of Russia was disseminating among his people the publications of an American tract society, we, on the other hand, were willing to gather instruction on the establishment of schools from the military despot of Berlin. May the time soon come, when every species of national intercourse shall serve but to promote mutual benefit and the good of all!

But while, as we shall have occasion to notice, a very great zeal has been awakened on the subject of education, by these and other causes, in the United States, it may not be out of place to present some general views of the state of public instruction in some portions of continental Europe.

The smaller German states have already adopted a system, similar in its leading features to that of Prussia. In its practical operation, the system has advanced to a greater degree of perfection, perhaps, in the kingdom of Wurtemberg, and the duchy of Baden, than in Prussia itself. Bavaria is by no means behind it, and the kingdom of Saxony is in some features of her system superior. In the strong-hold of legitimacy and despotism, Austria, we find an edict by the emperor, with characteristic arbitrariness, stating, that "no person shall henceforth be permitted to marry, who cannot read, write and cypher." He is, however, benevolently providing means, by which all his subjects may comply with these requisitions.

Switzerland has, for some years, presented a most interesting field of observation to the friend of education. One man, the celebrated Fellenberg, has devoted his time, talents and wealth to this cause for thirty or forty years. His establishment at Hofwyl, near Berne, was commenced in the early part of this century, and has gradually increased, till it embraces institutions for every grade of academic study, from the high school down. His most useful labours have been those for improving the condition of schools by means of a teacher's seminary. With the high schools for the

sons of the wealthy, he combined a gymnastic establishment and a manual labour department, for teaching the most useful mechanic arts and agriculture. This latter department is common to all the pupils, and many among the poor have materially aided themselves by their own labour. I cannot here give the details of his system. He has been extensively patronized by gentlemen in this country and England, and at one time numbered among his pupils several sons of the nobility in France and proteges of the emperor of Russia. The canton of Berne, and other parts of Switzerland, have reaped the most beneficial fruits of his exertions, in the improvement of the primary school teachers.

The new school law of France, the result of the combined talents and exertions of those celebrated men, Cousin, Montalivet and Guizot, has already produced decided changes in the policy of that kingdom. Up to 1828, the French government granted annually, the pitiful sum of \$12,000 for primary schools, with a population of 30 millions.

In 1828, this sum was quintupled, and the government of "July 1830" has raised it, first to \$140,000 and finally to \$200,000 annually. This is but a beginning, and is only mentioned as an index of the interest already awakened. The vigorous and enlightened efforts of the present monarch, and those of his successor, should he be soon called to the throne, will doubtless effect more in the next ten years, than has been accomplished in the last, or any previous period; and we may hope to see this land of "political miracles," the subject of more beneficial and thorough revolutions, in the true basis of political prosperity, than she has ever yet undergone. It is with no common interest that we contemplate the efforts of the Russian emperor to expedite the adoption of a scheme of education, similar to the Prussian, in all parts of his vast dominions.

The empire over which he rules, mighty

in resources, and commanding by position an influence on the three great branches of the white race, is, like our nation, one of yesterday, when compared with England and France. It is wearisome to imagination to predict its destiny and the future influence it will exert on the world. The present emperor, a son-in-law of the king of Prussia, has adopted his policy, and determined to reign in the hearts of his people. With despotism in any form, we republicans can have no sympathy, but if there can be a palliation, for such an institution, it must be afforded by such examples of the exercise of its power, as these afford. We may justly admire the benevolent effort, and its beneficial results, while we condemn the motive. The Russian system of education need not be delineated, since its most substantial parts, are but copies of the Prussian. A few facts, to evince the zealous co-operation of all classes, with the emperor and minister, may be here stated, and thus also illustrating the interest in this subject, which pervades the northern and middle Europe.

Individuals in Siberia, and other portions of the empire, contribute from two to six thousand dollars, for the establishment of primary schools. One in Lialsk, has given as much as 10,000. In Novgorod the nobility contribute 12,000, and at Wologda, 9,000 annually to the gymnasias of those towns. In some places the citizens volunteer to support the schools, and one individual, besides procuring the erection of a school-house, has contributed 2,000 dollars towards the support of the teacher. In Petersburg is a model school for teachers, from which 75 are annually sent out. Meanwhile, efforts are making, by awarding premiums to authors, to secure the best school books for children, and those of this country and Prussia are often translated, and adapted to Russia. Students from the Russian dominions are to be found in the German universities, preparing for usefulness at home, and those from the remote provinces, who devote

themselves to teaching, are brought to Petersburg free of expense, to pursue their studies. There are already 6 universities, 67 gymnasia, 12,000 public, and 430 private primary schools in operation.

If any thing *can* compensate unhappy Poland for the oppressions of Russian despotism, the diffusion of the blessings of education may be expected to contribute greatly towards such a compensation; and she already enjoys a full share, in the exertions made in behalf of the whole empire.

But not only in Germany, France and Russia, do we discover developments of an unusual interest in this cause. Even the sultan of Turkey and pacha of Egypt, among other imitations of Christian civilization, are establishing schools and introducing the cultivation of the liberal sciences into their dominions. But recently, the latter, the most remarkable man of his age, perhaps, has instituted a female school of 100 pupils, in his seraglio, and procured an English lady to superintend it. In Paris and London, Turks and Egyptians, Greeks and Arabs, are to be found prosecuting studies preparatory for the business of instruction in their own countries.

Looking back to northern Europe, we discover Denmark, Sweden and Norway, with England and Scotland, either nationally or by individual efforts, evincing the most lively concern for the interests of popular education.

I may add to all this, respecting foreign countries, that an extraordinary interest on this subject has been exhibited in our own country. Already can several states proclaim that complete provision is made for the education of all their citizens. Ohio has introduced the Prussian school system so far as it respects seminaries for teachers. Similar institutions are recommended by governor Ritner, in his recent message to the legislature of Pennsylvania; and their connexion with the academies of the state, has been proposed in New York. Kentucky and Tennessee have already entered on the

adoption of systems contemplating provisions for the whole population of those states, and while penning these remarks, I learn that a bill has been reported to the Legislature of North Carolina, proposing a district free school system, for the whole state. In short, every portion of the civilized world, seems to be awake to the interests of general education.

Our national and sectional reviews, periodical pamphlets, and newspapers, have volunteered a very efficient aid in diffusing information on the subject of education, and every year we are flooded with addresses, speeches, reports of conventions and teachers' associations, all bearing on the same topic.

I rejoice too, that in Virginia, the flourishing state of some of our colleges and academies, not to mention the university, and the rapid increase of well conducted female schools, betoken a degree of interest in the general subject, far from lukewarm, while the determined effort, which you speak of making for primary schools, during the present winter, assures the public of your deep interest in this noble cause. I duly appreciate the honour you do me, in asking my aid, and while I feel unable to offer any "observations," or suggest any "plan," I readily undertake the humbler part of imparting such information as my opportunities have placed at my disposal. In the progress of my tour in Europe, I visited Saxony, Hanover, Baden and Wurtemberg, besides some other smaller states of Germany, Switzerland, France and England, remaining, however, but a short period, from four to ten weeks, in each: and resided nearly a year in Prussia. By conversations with intelligent travellers from every part of Europe, and numerous reports and similar publications, I was enabled to procure the elements of such general statements as those already made. In Prussia, however, I enjoyed opportunities to verify by personal observation, the information derived from others, and add to it,

the results of my own inquiries. I shall therefore be able to speak with more confidence of this country, and feel better prepared to answer your inquiries, which relate particularly to its institutions.

The present King of Prussia, doubtless deserves great credit for his exertions in the cause of education. But we are not to consider him solely responsible. The Germans have been generally distinguished for a literary spirit from the earliest periods of modern civilization. Their physical location, conspiring with the despotic nature of their governments, have driven them to seek distinction in literary pursuits. It was in Germany too, that the human mind was so violently agitated by the religious controversies of the 16th and 17th centuries. There the art of printing began to shed its lustre on the world. Many of its universities, now most celebrated, have been the offspring of modern zeal; but not a few of those still remain, whose foundations were laid in the remote darkness of the middle ages.

Frederick William, the elector, at the close of the 17th century, introduced many important improvements into his electorate for the benefit of his people, and among others, established and patronized many literary institutions of a minor grade than universities, very nearly resembling the present gymnasia of Germany. His immediate successor was too busy with the novel pomps of royalty, which his vanity had caused him to assume, and William Frederick I, too parsimonious to extend any liberal encouragement to education. Frederick the great, not only found time for personal attention to literary pursuits, but gave a rapid impulse to the study of the classics, and established and improved the high schools and universities. The short and inert course of Frederick William II, need not be noticed. The present king commenced his reign with a determined spirit of improving the condition of the lower classes. How much influence the French revolution exerted on his views of their import-

ance, I stay not to enquire. In the very acme of national distress, in 1809, he began his preparations for extending the blessings of education to his people by introducing important changes in their political condition. The peasantry, till 1810 denied ownership in the soil, were permitted to become freeholders on liberal terms. The power of the nobles was broken, and the rare spectacle was presented, of but one step, from the throne of a hereditary and absolute monarchy, to the cottage. For a thorough reform of the body politic was commenced, based on these, among other principles: "*That equality before the law be secured; irrespective of rank "to every subject; justice be rigidly and punctually administered; and that, by the education of THE PEOPLE, and the spread of true religion, the general interests, and a national spirit be promoted, as the only sure basis of the national welfare."*

Though furnished with a standing army of 50,000, with despotic irresponsible power, and obsequious servants, no effort was made to *enforce* any of the regulations for the promotion of education which followed these preliminary steps. Advancing from one position to another, introducing one plan after another, preparing the way for improvement before its annunciation, and interesting in his plans, some of the wisest and best men of his kingdom, he has in 30 years, brought into active operation, a system of public instruction, which neglects no child in his dominions, embracing a population of 12,000,000, with varieties of religion, national prejudice, language and habits.

The political divisions of the kingdom are, 1st, ten provinces, 2d, 26 regencies, 3d, three hundred and forty-five counties (or circles), 4, an indeterminate number of parishes* (or communities) into which these counties are subdivided, and which

*I use the words *county* and *parish*, as the most suitable terms to express the german *Kreise* and *Gerneinde*, literally, *circle* and *community*.

vary in size, according to the density of population.

Formerly, whatever related to the cause of education, in the administration of the government, was assigned to the minister of the interior. By the present king, a separate department has been formed; "the ministry for public instruction, ecclesiastical and medicinal affairs." The minister in this department has for his assistance, a council composed of eminent ecclesiastics, physicians and professors, together forming a consistory. This is divided into three sections or boards, one for each interest: that for ecclesiastical affairs, composed chiefly of ecclesiastics, with a director at their head: that for public instruction, composed chiefly of laymen, with a director, and that for medicine, composed chiefly of medical men, with a director.

The number of each board is undetermined. A member of one may be a member of one or both the others, but with no increase of salary. Our attention is engaged only by the board for public instruction.

This consists at present of twelve members, whose salaries are \$3500 to the director, and \$22,000 for the other eleven. This board meets twice a week. By correspondence, official reports from lower authorities, (to be mentioned below,) individual knowledge, or proposition, or the agency of the minister, business is brought before them, and their decisions are in all cases final, with ministerial and royal approbation. Besides a general oversight of public instruction throughout the kingdom, this board has an immediate control over the universities. By means of a royal commissary, appointed by the minister, a correspondence is kept up between this officer and every university. They elect their senates or local governments, under the superintendence of this commissary.

On the other hand, the gymnasias, or institutions of secondary instruction, occupying a rank equal to that of our colleges, excepting the power to confer degrees, are

placed under the immediate supervision of *Provincial Boards*.—These correspond in the local governments of the provinces to the board of public instruction in the central administration. Here, however, the president of the province is at once director of the provincial consistory and of this board, which constitutes a part of it. This officer is merely the executive of the board, that possessing all the authority. Through him, a correspondence on all matters connected with education is carried on by the board on the one hand, and the minister on the other.

Attached to this board is an examining committee composed of professors in the university of the province, or that nearest to it, should there be none, whose duties are 1. To examine all pupils of the gymnasias, who design entering the university, or engaging in any literary pursuit controlled by the state. 2. To examine applicants for the offices of instructors in the gymnasias, whether rectors, professors or teachers.

Under the supervision of this board are also placed the teachers' seminaries, and all institutions of a grade above primary schools, and under universities, as private latin schools, polytechnic schools, and institutions for those who design becoming surgeons of the lower grade, or apothecaries. They have also a general control over the primary schools.

The immediate management of these, however, belongs to the regency, county and parish authorities, and this must now be explained.

In every parish there must be an elementary school, of which the pastor and some of the most considerable men of the place are appointed (partly by the state and partly by the people,) directors. When, however, as in Urban parishes, there exist several schools, and some higher than elementary, termed middle or citizens, schools, the magistracy constitute a *school committee*, presiding at once over the directors and schools, and reducing the whole to a har-

monious management. These authorities, then, stand to primary schools in the same relation that the provincial boards do to the gymnasia.

But besides these, there are two other authorities to be noticed. There is for each county a school inspector, who overlooks the committees and directors, and to whom they must submit their whole system of management. He visits each school as often and unexpectedly as possible, besides making an annual formal inspection. He takes cognizance of all complaints, and forms the medium of intercourse between the several local authorities and the provincial boards. There is, however, another officer, a member of the regency council or government, who is placed above the inspectors, as well as schools of the various counties. This officer, styled school councillor, is in fact the true director of primary schools in the several regencies, and corresponds in his relation to them and their local authorities to the minister in his relation to the provincial boards and gymnasia. These two officers are paid.

Such may be termed the machinery of the system. It is seen that the subject of education thus occupies a station of importance equal to that of military or naval affairs, and its concerns are administered with all the promptness and energy which belong to any well conducted department of government. The details are left for local authorities, while general review and control are placed in the hands of the minister. Responsibility is devolved on all, and from the minister down, there are superiors to exact the fulfilment of every prescribed duty.

As your inquiries respect primary schools, particularly, I must omit any notice of the gymnasia and universities, although, in order to describe the governmental regulations for schools, it was necessary to advert to the authorities by whom they are controlled. From abundant data in my possession, it may be in my power at some other time to

present a view of their internal organization, similar to that of the primary schools, to which I now call your attention.

It may be proper to observe here, that the government was engaged for ten years in modifying schools already existing and reducing to system the management of all the literary institutions of the country. The present system has not been the work of any *one* plan or effort. No less than 226 different edicts on the subject have been issued in 40 years. The law of 1819, prescribing the principal regulations of primary schools, requires that wherever no school previously existed, it should be the duty of the inhabitants of towns and parishes to form school associations and appoint directors and committees under the authority of the officers of the province or county, who should take part in the name of the government in making these appointments. If any parish were unable to support a school, it might unite with one or more others, provided the children should never be obliged to walk more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ English miles. Provisions were also made for the union of different religious sects.

Every town of more than 1500 inhabitants was directed to establish a primary school of higher grade than the parish or elementary schools. If, however, unable to provide both, then the parish school should be merged into the lower classes of the town school. Also, wherever a gymnasium existed, its lower classes might be used as a substitute for the town school, if no separate institution of that grade could be found.

These schools, with others of similar character existing before the law was decreed, were placed under the immediate control of the directors and committees above mentioned. It was made their duty to levy the necessary contributions, with aid from the local magistracy; select and prepare plans of instruction, appoint the teachers, and secure the attendance of all children of a proper age to be at school. These local authorities are not paid. Their meet-

ings must be held once in three months, to which they may invite the teacher. A more extended view of their duties is unnecessary, as it is enough to remark that they are the local executives of the government for carrying into operation every law connected with primary schools, of which they receive official advice by means of the authorities above them. They are immediately responsible to these, and in cases of difficulty with either teachers or people, the appeal may go up to the minister through the intermediate inspector, councillor and provincial board.

It was also provided by the law of 1819, that wherever schools existed before, under the management of persons appointed by their founders, or by them and the parish or church authorities with which they were connected, such might remain under their previous constitution. For all dependent on the royal bounty, the control was reserved to the state.

Every effort to raise the necessary funds for each parish and town school was directed to be made, and "*their claims must not be postponed to any other whatever*;" but if these efforts should not succeed, aid was guaranteed by either the provincial or national governments. Many schools were thus established, which have since exercised an influence on the community so salutary, that they no longer ask or need governmental assistance. This is an excellent commentary on the benefits of the system.

Having thus noticed the mode in which schools are established, let us now advert to those regulations which provide the necessary means for their complete organization.

1. SCHOOL-HOUSES.

As a general rule, every school must have a building specially appropriated to it; when necessary to hire a house, it must if possible be isolated. It is essential to a school-house, that its location be healthy, rooms of sufficient size, airy and warm, and that it be kept neat, and in good repair. It must contain

accommodations for the head teacher and his family; attached to it must be a garden, cultivated for the benefit of the teacher, and sometimes used as a means for instructing the children in the first principles of botany, and the art of agriculture. Besides this, there is often a mechanic's shop and bathing place, to teach the primary elements of some trades, and promote health and cleanliness.

The school-houses are furnished with apparatus according to the liberality and ability of the parish. Besides certain indispensable furniture, as blackboards, both plain for arithmetic and drawings, and ruled for writing and music, benches for seats, with writing benches attached to the back of each, and serving for the seat behind it, and the teacher's platform, desk and chair, there are often provided, maps, globes, geographical and mathematical instruments, geometrical figures, both planes and solids, the latter of wood or shaded drawings on cards, collections for the study of natural history, and models for painting, drawing, writing and music; small libraries are furnished to many schools. In short, in the construction of school-houses, the greatest care is taken to render them comfortable and pleasant, to promote the health and secure the interest and love of the children. Attention is bestowed on the most minute arrangements with this view. Instead of placing a lively boy on a high knotty backless bench, with his legs dangling like a pendulum, his back bent to a curve, and his chin resting on the edge of a soiled dog-eared spelling book, till it comes his "*turn to read*," the child is comfortably seated in a room equably warmed, and the effort is made to add as few obstacles as possible to the natural repugnance of youth to confinement and books. It is no wonder, if children become lazy, petulant and restless in the predicament alluded to; and still less, that the rude box or severe whipping for the irrepressible efforts they make to relieve their unpleasant situation, should, by and by, dull the

sensibilities, and produce an invincible repugnance to books and schools, and a precocious adeptness in arts of sly cunning or roguery, and developments of hardened impudence and insubordination.

The expense of erecting these houses and furnishing them, is borne by the parishes where they are located, and hence, a great variety of character exists, proportioned to the means possessed. The extreme poverty of the people often occasions a radical defect in the construction of school rooms, that of making them too small. I cannot doubt that much evil to the health has resulted from this. The provincial governments are charged to procure and disseminate throughout the provinces the best plans for school-houses, and considerable improvement has already taken place in the size of the rooms.

2. OF TEACHERS.

From the law of 1819, which, with my personal observations, forms the principal source of my information on primary schools, I make the following extract: "A schoolmaster, to be worthy of his vocation, must be pious, discreet and deeply impressed with the dignity and sacredness of his calling. He should be thoroughly acquainted with the duties peculiar to the grade of primary instruction, in which he desires to be employed; he should possess the art of communicating knowledge, with that of moulding the minds of children; he should be unshaken in his loyalty to the state, conscientious in the duties of his office, friendly and judicious in his intercourse with the parents of his pupils, and with his fellow-citizens generally, and he should strive to inspire them with a lively interest in the school, and secure to it their favour and support."

To prepare teachers for answering such requisitions, is the object of the teachers' seminaries, of which you will find an account below.

Every applicant for a teacher's place is

subjected to examination and probation on the following plan: A committee of examination, consisting of two lay and two clerical members is triennially appointed, whose duty it is to examine all candidates for the office of teacher in the common schools, in a certain district. Since the establishment of teachers' seminaries such a committee is connected with each of them. The notice of the meetings of this committee, are published in the provincial official gazettes. The clerical members conduct the examination on moral and religious character, and religious attainments. As these committees are appointed by the provincial government, the highest ecclesiastical authority of the province, if protestant, and the bishop of the diocese, if catholic, nominating the clerical members, they are directly responsible to the minister of public instruction. Such young men as sustain an examination, receive certificates signed by the committee, and if a graduate of a teacher's seminary, by the teachers of that institution. These certificates are of three grades, *excellent*, *good* and *sufficient*; and, moreover, define positively the bearer's fitness, whether for a town or village school. The name of the candidate is then entered on a list, copies of which are semi-annually published, for the information of the school directors and committees. Should the young man not be sustained, he may yet be permitted to occupy a lower station in a school as an assistant, be put off, or finally rejected on the spot, according to the degree and nature of his deficiency.

Any one whose name appears on these lists may be appointed. The appointing power rests with the school directors or committees, when the parish or towns support the schools by their unaided resources, with the founders or their trustees, when the school may have been established by private endowment and with the provincial government, when supported wholly by the royal treasury. In every case the brevet or testimonial of appointment, stating the

duties of the station and its stipulated emolument, must be ratified by the provincial boards, and minute regulations are made, to secure regularity and an intelligent attention to the business. To dignify the station the teachers are publicly installed, by taking oath to perform their duties faithfully, and a presentation to the pupils, patrons and directors of the school, the municipal authorities, and often to more considerable bodies. They hold their places for life, unless promoted or disgraced and expelled. They are therefore placed under a most vigilant oversight, and subject to admonition, reproof or expulsion. Accusations may be brought against them, for derelictions in official duty, before the school authorities, who constitute a special court of justice in the case. Their decisions are subject to review and confirmation, or repeal, by the provincial authorities, lest local feuds or personal prejudices might procure injustice or oppression. Should the teacher be guilty of crimes for which he is amenable to the civil authority, his condemnation by that, is a virtual expulsion from office.

On the other hand, merit in the performance of his duties, however humble his station, rarely goes unrewarded. Complete lists of all appointments are annually transmitted to the minister, with statements of the income of each teacher, and the meritorious are designated, so that they may be promoted on the occurrence of vacancies, or, as is often the case, receive other marks of special notice and favour. Diligence and propriety of conduct are often rewarded by permission to travel at the expense of government, in order to derive improvement in their business, by inspecting the institutions of other countries. Others, whose opportunities have been slender, are sent to some teachers' seminary for one or two years, and others again are allowed additional salaries. Whatever might tend to lessen the dignity of the teacher in the eyes of the pupils or community, is strictly forbidden. He may not collect fees and gifts from door to door,

as was formerly the case, nor engage in any employment of a dirty character, as the more laborious and servile occupations of a farmer's life. Nor can he follow any pursuit calculated to impede or impair his usefulness as a teacher, such as holding any office about a church, or other place which makes too great demands on his time and attention. For similar reasons, the teachers are exempted from serving in the army in time of peace, to that extent which is required of other citizens. In short, no measure is left unused to invest the office and character of the teacher with that dignity and importance, which are often denied them, but which they intrinsically merit everywhere. One additional item may be here inserted, that the government everywhere encourages the formation of teachers' associations for mutual consultation and improvement.

From a table now before me, I take the maximum and minimum, and averages of *salaries* allowed teachers of primary schools in towns and villages.

Those in the former or middle (citizens') schools, receive from thirty-five to eight hundred and forty dollars annually: those in the latter, from seven to three hundred and fifty. The average of the former, in the several regencies, ranges from seventy-one to four hundred and thirty-five dollars annually; of the latter, from twenty-one to one hundred and six. The averages for the whole kingdom are, for schoolmasters in towns, a hundred and fifty dollars annually, and in the village schools, sixty. These averages are based on the returns for 1821. But decided improvements have been since made, and the average for the latter, is now nearly eighty dollars, and for the former, a hundred and seventy. Indeed, but few masters of schools may be considered as penuriously supported; and the minimum salaries here noticed pertain generally to assistants and those females who, perhaps, as daughters or wives of the head teachers, are not entirely dependent. It must also be

added, that in addition to these salaries, the head teachers are furnished with a house and two acres of land, and if bad, more for a garden and other purposes connected with a domestic establishment. They are moreover exempted from certain parochial taxes and charges, and from military service to a great extent in time of peace, and above all, at their death their widows and children are comfortably provided for; or should they outlive their ability to be useful, the feebleness and decrepitude of age are humanely remembered, and they are not permitted to want.

But after all, these salaries are not so small for Prussia, however they may appear to us. Provisions are absolutely cheaper than with us, and the advantages arising from a great advance in the arts and conveniences connected with domestic economy, reduce the price of living to a rate almost incredible. Wealth too, is a comparative term, and the poorest schoolmaster is often more independent than many of his patrons. The variations in the salaries of villages and towns need no explanation.

Tuition fees are included in these salaries, though in many cases they form a bare trifle, in others, are exceedingly moderate, and seldom exceed 25 cents monthly, even in towns. In particular cases they may be remitted entirely, though this is discouraged on the principle that "we value most, that for which we pay." Hence, in many cases, it is fixed at about 2½ cents a month.

Obligations of Parents and Guardians, and means used to enforce them. Provisions for Poor Children.

The energy and efficiency of the Prussian school system, are in nothing so conspicuous as in those laws which oblige parents and others to send their children to school. Acting here, rather the part of narrator, it is not necessary to offer an opinion on the propriety of the law, from which I take the following extract: "Parents or those on whom children are dependent, (and under this head are comprehended masters and

manufacturers who have children as servants or apprentices at an age when they should go to school,) shall be bound to give them a suitable education, from their seventh year to their fourteenth, inclusive. Parents or others who do not send their children, or those entrusted to their care, to a public school, must point out to the municipal authorities, or school committees, whenever required, what means they provide for the education of such children." This law proceeds to provide with great minuteness for securing the most exact fulfilment of its requisitions, specifying the means by which delinquents are to be forced to compliance, or in what cases a compliance with the spirit of the law will release from obligation to comply with the letter. The school hours are so arranged that children are permitted to engage during some portions of each day in such domestic or other work, as their parents or others to whom they are subject, may need or require. No excuse is suffered to arise from want of books or clothing. Every clergyman is directed to exhort the people to an attention to the duty. Teachers must keep accurate lists of the daily attendance of each pupil. At the opening of each session in the spring and fall, the school directors prepare a list exhibiting the name and occupation of the families to which all the children of the parish, from the ages of seven to fourteen belong, the names of the children, day, month and year, of each one's birth; the year and month when each was old enough to be at school, how long a time each must yet remain, and the time when any one may have left, with the reasons for such absence. The school directors require of the teacher a monthly report of absentees, how long and why they were absent. The comparison of these monthly lists with their own, furnish data, by which they can carry out the execution of the law. These lists are preserved and often form important documents in the investigation of character.

The measures directed to be used in order to enforce a compliance with the law quoted above, are extremely rigorous. The illness of the child testified by the clergyman and physician, the absence of the parent or master, occasioning that of the child, or want of clothing when it appears that its supply has been neglected, are the only valid excuses, for a child's non-attendance in school. When it is discovered, therefore, that inexcusable cases of absence exist, if punctuality be not secured by the admonition of the clergyman, and the remonstrances of the school directors, the child is taken to school by a police officer, and the parents are fined proportionably to their neglect; for the first week's absence 3 cents; for the second 35; for the third 50; for the fourth 75; and if still delinquent, a fine of 20 dollars or more is imposed. If the parent or master be poor, he is imprisoned as a last resort, compelled to work for the parish, and the child is placed under a special guardian. These regulations certainly savor of a military despotism. But justice requires the statement, that the system of which they form a part, was not imposed on the people until proper means had been used to prepare them for it. These means succeeded most admirably, and even in the Rhine provinces, where the people were accustomed to less arbitrariness, by conciliatory measures, the law was permitted to take full effect in 1825-'7 only, six or seven years after its passage. Indeed I have been often assured, and that by men otherwise opposed to the government, that few cases of compulsion ever occurred. And such are the statements of others, who enjoyed better facilities for knowing the state of things in the kingdom. The intelligence and good sense of the higher and middle classes of society, appreciated the benefits likely to result from such a law, and opposition from others was useless.

The arbitrary requisitions of this law, are fully equalled by the benevolence of its provisions for the poor, to whom every en-

couragement is held out, which may induce their compliance. Books and even clothes are furnished the truly indigent, and the schools are closed, during those seasons, when villagers most need the aid of their children or apprentices. To such as are not indigent, yet in untoward circumstances, great indulgence is to be used as to the payment of tuition fees, and parts of them may be remitted: in such cases, however, the teacher's salary is not to be diminished.

§ 4. *Size of Schools: Object of Education: Discipline: Classes: Plan and Time of Instruction: Branches Taught: Method of Teaching.*

The children thus collected for the primary schools, commence their course with the seventh, and close it with the fourteenth year. Children of precocious minds, may be admitted at a younger age, on the permission of the school directors and teacher; and those desiring to leave before the expiration of the period fixed by law, can do so, on sustaining the required examination. The maximum number of scholars for an elementary school with one teacher, is a hundred. This number is by no means too great, when we remember, that there is not a difference of more than eight years in the ages of the oldest and youngest, and that by means of the larger scholars, all necessary monitorial aid is to be procured. When the number exceeds this, as it does in the more populous villages, an assistant must be employed. Taking the whole kingdom as a subject of calculation, there are 90 scholars for every 590 inhabitants, and one school for the same. The average number of pupils to a teacher, is 76.7. I here speak of the first grade of primary instruction. In towns, where the second grade exists, already referred to, under the name of middle or citizens' schools, the proportion of teachers to pupils is much greater, being one to thirty-five. The average number of pupils to each school, is one hundred and twenty-three. As a general remark respecting all grades of instruction, it may be stat-

ed, that more teachers are assigned to a given number of pupils, as the pupils advance in attainment.

Some regulations of a general character, may be properly noticed, before proceeding to detail the mode and subjects of the instruction of primary schools.

According to the law, already quoted, "The first vocation of every school, is to train up the young in such a manner, as to implant in their minds, a knowledge of the relation of man to God, and at the same time, excite and foster, both the will and strength to govern their lives after the spirit and precepts of Christianity."

The aim of primary instruction is declared to be, "the development of the faculties of the soul, the reason, the senses and the bodily strength. It shall comprehend religion and morals, the knowledge of size and numbers, of nature and man; corporeal exercises, in singing, and imitation of form by drawing and writing." Proper efforts are enjoined, to infuse into the pupils, a religious and national spirit, and inspire them with obedience to the laws, love of good order and sound morality; the teachers are to exercise a parental spirit and watch over their pupils, as well at their sports, as in the school room. In boarding schools the whole parental authority is delegated to the teacher.

Discipline is to be based on the principle, that "no kind of punishment calculated to weaken the sentiments of honour, is permitted; and corporeal punishment when absolutely needed, shall be devoid of cruelty, and neither injure the health or modesty of the pupil." Expulsion from school is a last resort, and attended by such solemnities, as to invest it with the greatest terror to evil doers. In truth, such is the strictness of family government, such the subordination of youth to age, and such the profound respect for teachers, early inculcated on children, that much of the work of discipline is happily superseded. Punctual attendance on school is rigidly enforced. During the

hour of instruction, the most complete order is required, and as a material help to secure this, at every hour there is a change of the subject or teacher, affording a few minutes agreeable relaxation.

It is expected of parents and guardians to render all possible aid to the teacher in his disciplinary efforts. They are never to interfere with his authority, but in all cases of dissatisfaction, appeal to the school authorities for redress.

According to the principle above quoted, corporeal punishment is seldom resorted to, and in some places, even when applied after other means have failed to produce industry or good order, it is of a very slight character, being restricted to *four* strokes of a whip. The moral feelings, sense of honour and shame, desire of approbation, and love for the teacher and parents, are often successfully appealed to, and the constant recurrence of lessons in the Bible, enables the teachers to bring religious influence to their aid. Rewards and premiums, tickets of merit, and the reports, which it is incumbent on the teachers to furnish the parents from time to time, together with the public examinations, form important aids. Every effort is made to do away with corporeal punishment entirely, but it has hitherto been found impossible to banish it altogether from the primary schools. It is necessary, as is expulsion, to be kept as a last resort. In Baden, the teacher is not allowed to strike a scholar without first obtaining permission from the school inspector.

The authority of the teacher extends over the pupil out of school, and where large schools exist and several teachers, one of them must be with the children at their sports. The strict regulations obliging parents to send their children to school punctually, enable the teacher to preserve great regularity and order.

The schools are generally open during the whole year, with exceptions of two vacations, about one month each, occurring at Easter and Michaelmas, and, in the coun-

try, or small towns in agricultural regions, a recess during the period of greatest need for labour in the fields. Nine months annually is perhaps a fair average. A few days vacation at Christmas is of course to be supposed.

This is the proper place to explain more fully the distinction between elementary and middle (or citizens') schools, which have been mentioned, as included in primary instruction. The latter may include the former. In towns there is more wealth, or rather independence, and the same is true of the cities. Hence the people can afford their children more extended advantages. The children are less interrupted by labour and can enjoy the privileges of the school for a longer period annually. The course of instruction is therefore somewhat extended. Latin, I believe, is the only additional item, though many others, common by name to both grades, are in the middle

tion, according to the ability of the teachers, time and progress of the pupils.

Boys and girls are separated in such elementary schools as can afford a sufficient number of teachers, but in the middle schools always. In the former they sometimes occupy the same room, seated apart, in the latter different rooms, and often different buildings.

The government organization, means of support, and internal arrangements, other than those above mentioned, are the same for both grades of schools.

The *instruction* given in primary schools now demands attention. There are four classes ordinarily, each of which is assigned a course of two years. Every pupil is obliged to pursue the whole course of study, unless special permission of exemption be given by the school authorities.

Gymnastic exercises and some useful manual labour, are connected with many

<i>Hours.</i>	<i>Monday.</i>	<i>Tuesday.</i>	<i>Wednesday.</i>	<i>Thursday.</i>	<i>Friday.</i>	<i>Saturday.</i>
8-9.	I. Singing. II. German Gram. III. Arithmetic. IV. Religion.	Geometry. Religion. } Singing.	German G. Religion. Reading. Singing.	Arithmetic. Geography. Writing. Religion.	Physics. Religion. } Arithmetic.	Physics. History. Religion. Reading.
2-3.	I. } Arithmetic. II. } III. Reading. IV. Writing.	Writing. Arithmetic. Writing. German G.		} Drawing.	Writing. Reading. Singing.	

schools, pursued farther—such are the German language, political economy, history, geography and natural science. The poverty of the villagers, on the other hand, and the interruptions to which their children are subject, renders a curtailment of the amount of instruction necessary. Except in the very poorest, the subjects of instruction are the same as in the middle schools, omitting Latin. The curtailment alluded to, only takes place in the more scientific branches, the indispensable portions, reading, writing, arithmetic, singing and religion, belonging to the very poorest and smallest, and the others modified as to the amount of instruc-

tion, for the boys—and instruction in the arts of household industry, peculiar to their sex, is given the girls. The number of school hours in the two higher classes, is generally six or seven daily, and in the two lower, four or five. Omitting afternoons of Saturday and Wednesday, this gives from twenty to thirty-two hours weekly for the various classes. The books are selected by the teacher and school authorities of the place.

In a conspicuous part of every school room is placed a large sheet, containing a schedule of the studies to be pursued weekly, assigning every hour of the week its

particular business. Thus every scholar knows at every hour what is before him. I here give a specimen of such a schedule, copied from one before me; selecting at random, I take that part for the morning between 8 and 9 o'clock, and that for the afternoon between 2 and 3:

The classes are denoted by the figures I, II, III, IV, the first denoting the most advanced. This is merely a *specimen* of the *mode* of arranging study, and is by no means to be considered a model of the proportionate attention bestowed on the respective branches.

It is considered best to make frequent changes in the subject of study, so as to interest and enliven the mind by variety. But such is the regularity and punctuality of the pupils, the zeal, industry and diligence of the teachers, the perfect method preserved, and the habits of accuracy, and completing each hour's work in its season, that no evil results from the plan. Some branches are continued in a greater or less degree throughout the course. Such are those of singing, writing and religion. The uniformity of age, which exists in the several classes promotes the adoption of systematic plans, and enables the teacher to adapt his instructions to every member of a class, without stretching one mind, in order to fill the compass of another. In those schools which have but one teacher, recitations, of course must be shorter, and seldom more than two classes on different subjects, recite in the same hour. The schedule above, is taken from that of a school in which there were teachers (including assistants) for each class. Modifications according to the size of schools, number of teachers, &c. can be easily imagined, and it is useless to trouble you with farther details on this topic. I give below an "outline of instruction," which, of course, is subject to variation by causes already alluded to.

I resided mostly in Halle, while in Prussia, a city celebrated for the location of the orphan house, established by Francke in

1694-8. This institution has gradually increased in size, and now besides the orphans who are entirely supported by charitable contributions, there are about 2000 children of both sexes and various ages, enjoying tuition in four different schools, which are only united, by being under the same local government, and conducted in the same buildings. These are, 1st. a latin school founded in connexion with the original institution. 2. A royal gymnasium. 3. A high school for young ladies. 4. A german school, comprising two departments, one on the usual plan of primary schools, containing 5 or 600 pupils, the other, with 900 or 1000 who are educated *gratis*, being the children of the indigent. In connexion with this, is a separate school for the instruction of children, in those things which pertain more specially to the business of life. By frequent visits to this establishment, I had an opportunity of witnessing the course of study prescribed for the various schools in actual operation. From notes made on the spot, and the observations of others, under similar circumstances, particularly Professor Stowe of Cincinnati,* I now present you an outline of the instruction of primary schools.

AN OUTLINE OF THE INSTRUCTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

I begin with the first class, comprising children under eight years of age. They remain two years in this class. Oral instruction, reading, writing and arithmetic, are the branches. 1. The teacher's object is to teach the children *to think*. He uses no book. They are assembled as privately as possible, and he begins by asking them the most simple questions on the objects around them, the chairs, tables, benches, black-board, their dress, persons, and the form of the room, the windows, stove, fuel, and such like. They are required to describe these various objects, or answer such questions as he may ask. He thus exercises

*Report to the legislature of Ohio, 1837.

their powers of perception. He may now tax memory, by questions on what they had seen, or on the knowledge he may have communicated. He next calls up absent objects and requires descriptions of the garden, house or street, with which any one is familiar. Of one, he requires a description of a horse, of another a wagon, of another a cow, and of a fourth, a garden. This latter opens a wide range of conversation. One tells what is found in a garden, another describes a tree, another a flower, another some useful vegetable; on one occasion the potato was mentioned, the great staff of life to the poor of Germany, as of Ireland, and the teacher improved the occasion, by pointing out the writer, as one who came from America, the land, where that plant was discovered, to impress the fact on their minds. In short, all that can be made interesting and awaken thought, quicken observation, strengthen memory, and affect the reasoning faculty, is called into requisition. Now he dwells on the usefulness of some animal, now the relations of the domestic circle, and now the beauty and more obvious relations of the natural world, the sun, moon and stars, warmth of summer and cold of winter. In this way they are exercised for several weeks or months, and then commences,

2. *Reading*.—Instead of a *memoriter* process of teaching the alphabet, and the slow and tedious spelling lesson, the teacher exercises the vocal organs on certain sounds of an elementary character, as vowels and consonants, with their combinations. With each sound, is associated the *form* of the letter or letters which represent it. All the elementary sounds are thus taught, before the *names* of the letters, and thus a distinction drawn between the *power* and the *name*. On a rack, prepared for the purpose, the letters are now placed in combination. This exercise is continued till the practice of associating *sound* and *form*, has made each familiar with their use. It in-

terests a class, for instance, to take this phrase, "the good boy," and form the several words, till the whole is made out. Their respective names, those of articles about them, and other familiar objects, are used to fix attention. In fact, it is but the process which many an intelligent mother or elder sister adopts in the nursery, in our own country. The books are then taken up and the same phrases and words are presented, which have appeared on the racks, by the letters printed on cards.

3. *Writing*.—The black-board again comes in requisition. The proper position of the person having been shewn, their attention is called to a single mark. As the teacher makes this on the board, he says "*one!*" Every scholar imitates on a slate. He then adds another mark, saying, "*one, two,*" by which they regulate their own movements. These marks are varied, from the straight and angular forms to a curve. If in the form of a hook, it requires three directions, and "*one, two, three,*" from the teacher, indicates when the simultaneous movement of the pencil by the scholars, must be made. It is easy to see that this plan can be pursued to an indefinite extent, and paper, pen and ink, succeed to the slate and pencil. I never saw a German who did not write well, after enjoying the benefit of this drilling.

4. *Arithmetic*.—The simple elements of this science, are taught by means of the same objects, which are used under the first subject. After the pupils have been taught to count, the simplest processes of addition and subtraction are made perfectly familiar by the illustrations which their own persons or the furniture of the room afford. Multiplication and division succeed on the same plan. Instead of advancing to other arithmetical principles, these are carried out, by increasing the numbers in the various combinations, till they not only learn the multiplication table, but can, with facility, add up any amount which may occur in

the ordinary concerns of life, subtract, multiply and divide it, or combine any two, or all these principles, in the modifications of the same example. The improvements in teaching this valuable science already introduced into many of our schools, by the books of Emerson, Colburn, and particularly Smith, are illustrations of the course alluded to, so far as the elementary portions are concerned.

I have been thus minute on the branches of the first class, because such modes of teaching are somewhat novel in many parts of this country. It may not be necessary to be as circumstantial in what follows, though I shall proceed on a similar plan to describe the mode of teaching other branches.

I am well aware that some are prepared to regard such details beneath the notice of the grave politician. But "if we would teach children, we must become children in feeling;" and if we would understand and appreciate modes of teaching, we must tax our manliness in a similar manner. Examples, I apprehend, if not clearer than abstract propositions, in the illustration of principles at least serve a most important part in ensuring perspicuity. Besides reading, writing and arithmetic, the branches taught are geometry, ornamental writing, drawing, grammar, religion, singing, science of music, physics, or the elements of the sciences and arts of life, geography and history, elements of political economy, with the application of mathematics to the simpler processes of surveying and civil engineering.

1. Arithmetic is continued through the second and third classes, and by the solution of questions gradually increasing in difficulty, its various principles are evolved, then embodied in rules laid down in books, and the pupils are required to apply these in practice, till perfectly familiar with both the principles and applications. The science is used in the fourth class for instruction in the simpler portions of mathematical science which then demand attention.

2. Geometry is commenced in the second class. The first lessons are mere explanations of geometrical forms and terms, for which a full supply of cards, painted and lithographed figures of squares, parallelograms, triangles, &c. is required, together with wooden models of solids. In the third class, the science of magnitude and measures is taught by the aid of books presenting the most familiar views of these subjects, which have been given. The use of visible illustrations is still pursued. Thus, for instance, the pupil is taught to calculate the measure of superficies and solids, by means of sections. Twelve cards, each an inch square, may be used to illustrate what is meant by four square inches, or two inches square, or three inches square; and by increasing the number, he can be easily made to understand the principle on which all calculations of superficies are based, and diagrams on the black board are then introduced, and his information extended. By means of several solids representing cubes of an inch, a similar course of instruction can be pursued in that branch of the subject. The pupils are thus prepared for the application of arithmetic and geometry to the simpler processes of surveying and civil engineering in the fourth class.

3. *Singing*.—The cultivation of the science of music is a feature of national character too well known to need remark. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the science to do justice to the method used in imparting a knowledge of its elements. My impressions not being incorrect, the following is the usual plan: The first step is to teach the variations of the octave. *Time* is gradually introduced, the teacher elevating his hand as the voices of the pupils prolong the note, till his dropping it suddenly, denotes a pause. The power of the various characters thus explained, and the *form* and *power* familiarly associated and immediately recognized by figure and sound, the names are given, and the pupils gradually exercised on simple tunes, which are

completely mastered before they attempt the more complex. The custom of relieving the tedium of other exercises by singing some lively tune for four or five minutes, and of opening the school every morning by singing and prayer, and the practice of this art in the domestic and social circle, as well as two or three times for ten or fifteen minutes together on every occasion of public worship on the sabbath, together tend to render this one of the most easily acquired, and at the same time most pleasant branches of school instruction. Instrumental music is rarely taught in the village schools, but in some of the towns pupils may be found taking lessons on the piano, whose parents are obliged to restrict themselves and families to the use of meat only three times a week! The black board, ruled for the purpose, is used in all the schools.

4. The exercises in *reading*, having been brought to that stage in the first class, that the pupils can give some short account of the contents of a lesson, the teacher proceeds in the second to instruct them in pronunciation, punctuation, emphasis and tone; not that these subjects have been entirely omitted, for from the beginning, they are taught to pay attention to them in some degree. Their lessons hitherto, however, consisting mostly of short sentences, have afforded but little scope for scientific instruction. The class begin by pursuing a course already alluded to, spelling each word in the sentences as they occur in the lesson. Each word is then distinctly pronounced, without spelling. A third process is to pronounce each word with the punctuation points, as they occur. The lesson is then read, regarding each point without mentioning it. A fifth time they read over the sentences, with reference to emphasis and intonation, "one thing at a time, and each completed before the next is undertaken." As they progress in the art of reading, some of the elementary processes are omitted. It may be remarked, that the orthographical and orthoepical structure of

the German language require less attention to spelling than is necessary in learning the English. It is at the same time obvious that this department may be pursued to as full an extent as is desirable on this plan. Reading lessons are made the basis for much other instruction. Geography, biography, as connected with history, moral and religious truths, are thus often united with a lesson, and the numerous questions of the teacher on the sentiment of the piece read, tend at once to excite attention and interest, in what is too often a most irksome and vexatious process.

5. *Writing and Drawing*.—Proceeding, as already mentioned, the pupils soon acquire a neat hand, and in the third class their skill is exercised in making ornamental letters. This is preparatory to *drawing*. Their acquaintance with geometry is now in daily requisition, and by the use of models, they soon acquire a facility of sketching and drawing plans, which is truly astonishing. Those who manifest any remarkable talent in this department, are often selected, and if poor, aided to pursue a more extensive course in schools established for teaching the arts. Very few fail to acquire sufficient knowledge to draw doors, windows, columns, facades, horses, cows, flowers, trees and small landscapes.

6. *Physics*.—Under this general head is included whatever relates to the external world. It is not pretended that the pupils are made chemists, botanists, natural historians or philosophers. The rudiments of these sciences, especially as applicable to arts and manufactures, and the daily business and intercourse of life, are meant. The subjects are divested as much as possible of technicalities, and when they must occur, the *thing* is explained before the word is used. Instruction in these sciences is given on a plan somewhat as follows:

The teacher mentions some simple machinery, by which he illustrates the mechanical powers. He will perhaps present specimens of each. The pupils are then taught

the names by which these powers are designated. Or he will mention some of the more common phenomena of nature, and explain the principles on which they are solved. The influence of heat and cold, elective affinity, the conducting and inflammable powers of different bodies, with regard to heat, the process of combustion and decomposition, the fusibility of metals and similar facts, connected with natural science, are first presented by experiment, and the curiosity and interest in whatever is marvellous, natural to children, are strongly excited, and they are prepared to receive instruction with more attention, and retain truth with more permanence. The first principles of botany, the names, properties and cultivation of the most useful plants; the outlines of agricultural science, are taught by directing the attention of the children to the world around them. It is thus they are prepared for short and comprehensive text books provided for their use. These studies are pursued chiefly in the third and fourth classes, to which also belong the next branch.

7. *Geography and History* form a branch of physics.—We here observe the same predilection for beginning with simple illustrations. Perhaps the teacher teaches the points of the compass, by the position of different parts of the room. Or selecting the play-ground and school house, with any buildings, stream and hill in the vicinity, the miniature province thus laid out, is made the theme for the first study in geography. The pupil now hears the word explained. He describes this place, familiar by daily observation, and is then told such a description is its *geography*. A plot of the whole is now laid before him, and he learns this is a *map*. Real lines are traced across the room or play ground, and as he measures distances and locates objects by these, he learns what are latitude and longitude, meridian lines, the equator, tropics, large and small circles, &c. An apple or naked globe of wood is traced by such lines,

and the globular form of the earth explained. From such lessons the transition to the book is easy. The map of Prussia or some portion of it, with descriptions of the productions, manufactures, remarkable places and so on, now engages his attention.

By somewhat similar methods, history is taught. The transactions of a week are recounted—then those of a year, and as the teacher extends the time, he enlarges the sphere of these transactions, beginning with those of one day in school, and ending by a synoptical history of the country for the past year. With historical accounts, anecdotes, biographies, &c. are interspersed, to interest and amuse, as well as instruct. The history of Prussia, and the geography of that and the neighbouring German states, form the limits of thorough instruction in these departments. The common people are generally profoundly ignorant of other nations, and the United States in particular.

8. *Language*.—Under this head, I include all relating to the correct speaking and writing of German. The parts of speech are taught, somewhat as in this example: The teacher writes or pronounces the word "*read*." He asks the children, "what can you say with this word?" A variety of answers are given—"I read," "the boy reads," "I read to day," and so on. He then gives out another word, "*love*," and similar answers are returned. Proceeding for some time in this way, he then directs their attention to the fact, that these words express some *action*. In like manner, he selects passive verbs. He now tells them, when a word means to *do* or *suffer*, it is a *verb*. A strictly neuter verb is then explained. The modifications of verbs, by mood, tense, number and person, are gone through. Nouns, adjectives and adverbs, and other parts of speech, are taught on a similar plan. Whenever the teacher discovers that his pupils understand the subjects, he furnishes them with the technical terms. They thus learn to use "*predicate*,"

and "*subject*" and "*object*" with logical precision.

Connected with this branch, is composition. An interesting relation is made, or read, and the pupils required to give it in their own words, when they meet again. As they advance in information, they are furnished the outlines and required to fill up by imagination, and then subjects are given out. Receipts, bonds, indentures, letters of friendship or business, petitions and similar compositions are prepared, in all which, the strictest attention to grammatical accuracy is required. This branch belongs to the second, third, and fourth classes.

9. *Political Economy*.—I designate by this term, a series of elementary instructions on society, law, government, arts, and manufactures, which, with *Physics*, are generally comprehended by the Germans under one term, for which we have no word. They call it "real instruction;" i. e. what relates to the realities or materials of things. Polytechnic schools in France are "real schools" in Germany. The teacher begins with man in his natural condition, states his wants, food, clothing, shelter and protection, and how supplies are obtained. Then he speaks of man in the family; the pupil tells what is needed for a family, and how obtained. This leads to discussions of various trades, of their importance, their history, present state and advantages; then agriculture and manufactures are introduced, by speaking of food and clothing. Now the social condition of man, the organization of society, the necessity for various professions, the division of labour, the utility of some trades and professions, and the uselessness of others, are brought into the conversation. A wider range is taken in speaking of the government, protection of laws, establishment and necessity of schools, importance of religion, the rights of property. Family, social, civil, religious and patriotic duties and privileges, all enter into the subject matter of the instruc-

tion under this head. There are appropriate books for these studies, though a great deal depends on the teacher. They fall under the studies of the third and fourth classes.

10. *Religion*.—I never asked an urchin what he learned at school, that he did not first reply "religion." The great leading features of bible truth, are taught orally in the first class. Instruction is continued by means of the plain bible, hymn book and Luther's catechism through the whole course.

A selected portion of the bible is read by the teacher or one of the scholars. Then follows a conversation on it. The portion is generally narrative, or biographical. The pupils are encouraged to ask questions freely; and the teacher makes explanations. Taking the history of the Saviour's early life, he explains the nature of his intercourse, and enforces obedience to parents, and diligence in acquiring wisdom, by his example. Or the teacher states some principles of good conduct, as fidelity and conscientiousness, and illustrates them by the history of Joseph: that God rewards the good and punishes the evil, and illustrates this by the history of Daniel. The history contained in the bible, is now attended to. With relations in their own words, of some of the most important events recorded, the pupils are required to unite biographical notices of such men as Noah, Abraham, Pharoah, Moses, David, and so on. Many of the most striking passages are committed to memory. The teacher furnishes a connecting history of the period, between the termination of the old and the commencement of the new testament, and then the latter is made the subject of study, as was the former. The life of Christ is most particularly presented. Connected with this, is a synoptical church history, in which the most important eras are noted, and dates accurately fixed. On the history of the reformation, and the biographies of its distinguished actors, as much minuteness is

required, as we connect with our revolutionary war. For on this subject, there is awakened a national feeling. A still higher grade of religious instruction is that respecting the various books of the bible. I heard a class once examined on one of the epistles, in the new testament. Its author, date, subject, and analysis, both of the whole, and each chapter, the history of the people to whom it was addressed, and repetitions of select portions, formed the recitation. The repetition of Paul's eloquent and touching description of charity, by the whole class, was beautiful and affecting.

Although there are several sects of christians in Prussia, they all cordially approve the plan of religious instruction, which is the best evidence that the means used to avoid sectarian influences in its operation, are successful. Nothing could be more guarded than this subject. Every parent has the religious education of his children under his control. The jew has the same privilege. But as the instruction is historical, geographical, chronological and preceptive, rather than doctrinal, it often happens that children of different denominations receive instruction from the same teacher. Otherwise, parents are permitted to provide their own, or when the funds of the school admit it, the school authorities provide teachers for the several sects.

As already intimated, this outline applies generally. It presents less than is taught in towns, and more than the *poor* villages can afford.

But I have already exceeded my proposed limits in giving this outline, and close it with one or two general remarks, more appropriately following, than preceding it.

1. The *practical* character of the instruction given, is obvious to a superficial observer. If it be true, as some one has said, that, "education must be a preparation for life," we have in this system, one of the most complete kind. There is no superfluity, no mere theory in this. Technicalities are not thrown by, as some rash reformers

desire. They are useful in their place: they are the circulating medium of thought, the exponents of known quantities. It is wise to impress first their value, to give their meaning, then their use is intelligible and convenient.

2. Education is more than instruction. It is the drawing out of the mind, and that in the due proportion of its several faculties. Neither is cultivated exclusively. Memory, judgment, imagination, conception, abstraction, as well as simple perception, are called forth into vigorous exercise. While useful matter is placed before the mind, that mind is taught to appropriate it and use it.

3. The religious features of the system are not the least valuable. A strong religious influence is ever at work. It is not sectarian bigotry nor licentious liberality, but the happy medium of toleration, a medium purchased by oceans of blood, and revolutions, whose volcanic eruptions shook christendom to the centre. The apostles' creed being the lesson in a school one morning, I observed, that the teacher omitted the phrase, "he descended into hell," and his explanation on inquiry, was, "that is a controverted point." This illustrates the remark already made, that sectarian views are avoided. These are left for the clergyman of the parents' choice. But the government insists on a religious influence in schools. A happy instance of the mode in which it is sometimes used, is furnished by the inscriptions of texts of scripture over the doors of school rooms, and in other conspicuous places. I remember seeing the words, "Go to the ant thou sluggard," on the wall of a small room, used to confine the idle and lazy.

4. I am not prepared fully to approve some things in this mode of instruction. Such is the custom of requiring the scholars to read together aloud. This may do for small children or for occasional use.

The use of oral instruction is perhaps carried too far: and the teacher often la-

bours to make that plain, which is obvious already, and sometimes confuses the mind with too much illustration. This, however, is rather the fault of individuals, than of the mode.

On the system which has now been exposed, I would offer some remarks, but I feel that they are unnecessary. It is by no means supposed that such a system of establishing schools can be transplanted to every place. But some of its leading features might. It is by no means faultless, nor are its provisions always effectual. But its success has been unexampled, and now it is difficult to find the youth of 20, or under that age, and over 14, who cannot read and write. And in 10 or 15 years more, the full benefit of the law of 1819, will be conspicuous.

There is one defect unconnected with the system, yet incident to the national character, which acts unfavourably on the results of the system. I allude to the great want of books and periodicals adapted to the popular mind. The Germans possess an unusually literary taste. Their scholars are erudite; vast learning, original investigation and thought distinguish them. But there is little done for *the people*. Even romances and tales, are not adapted to popular comprehension. If we may consider as an exception from this remark, those which deal in the marvellous and foster superstition, we do not consider the exception honourable to national character. Newspapers are literally retailers of news; news of the exits and entrances of titled dignitaries, items from foreign nations, and synopses of the most general domestic intelligence. Prussia needs some More, and Edgeworth, and Sherwood, some Parley or Goldsmith, and in a word, a *popular literature*.

There are yet some points of inquiry suggested by you, to which I now proceed to attend. They relate to the statistics of primary schools, and the seminaries for teachers.

STATISTICS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

This interesting topic deserves a more extended notice, than the synoptical plan I have proposed to myself in this report, allows.

Figures, based on facts, speak more directly to our understanding than general assertions. The information now presented, on the actual results of the Prussian school system, is as much entitled to credibility as the returns of a decennial census, the post-office department, or any other official documents of like character. For these returns are not averages or deductions. Every school committee reports to the county inspector the number of children at school, the number who ought to go, and the number whose education is otherwise provided for. The tabular views based on these returns by the inspector, pass through the councillors of the regencies and provincial boards to the minister, by whom they are digested and compared with the documentary evidence.

From the last reports to which I have had access, I compile these general results:

According to the census of Prussia, there were in 1831, 4,767,072 children under 14 years of age. The reports give an attendance on the schools of 2,021,421. A general rule of statistics, based on the relative mortality of the several ages, gives three sevenths of those under 14, between 7 and 14, that is about 43 in 100. Of the whole number then, 2,043,030 ought to be at school. The deficiency is then 21,609. But it must be observed—1. There are returns from *public* schools, and the *private*, though not numerous, contain a considerable number of pupils. 2. Many more, especially females, (and males also among the higher classes,) are educated at home, and not included in these returns. 3. Many boys under 14 are so far advanced, as to belong to the gymnasia. Of these alone, there were in 1832, 17,000. Making the proper allowance for these, it might appear

that nearly, if not the whole juvenile population of the proper age, is at school. It may be also remarked, that in some districts 55 out of 100 are at school. But even leaving the deficiency at its maximum, it appears that one ninety-fourth of the whole is the amount of that deficiency; while in Virginia, according to the second auditor's report, 19,000 poor children are without the means of instruction—which is about one tenth of the whole number in the state, who, according to your last message, ought to attend school. In these returns, moreover, we discover that the proportion of boys to girls, is as $43\frac{1}{2}$ to 41. The difference, in the two sexes in favour of the boys, is chiefly ascribable to the fact, that more girls than boys are educated at home, and that the latter sometimes begin school under seven years of age. We may add here, that in the middle schools, there are 103,487 children of both sexes. The proportion of boys to girls is 56 to 46, (fractions not reckoned). My own impressions, corresponding with those of others, lead me to say that female education is more neglected, than that of males. In a city of 25,000 inhabitants, there was but one female school, of higher rank than a primary school, while the same city contained ten flourishing gymnasia for boys. True, females share with males the full advantage of that instruction, which is absolutely necessary.

Let us now turn to the number of schools and teachers. To show the improvement under the present system, I present the numbers for three periods, the first, that of the year 1819, in which it went into operation:

In 1819, there were 20,085 primary schools, and 21,895 teachers.

In 1825, there were 21,623 primary schools, and 22,965 teachers.

In 1831, there were 22,612 primary schools, and 27,749 teachers.

I include the middle schools, of which in 1831, there were 823. The excess of teach-

ers above the number of schools, is owing to two facts—1. A double set of head teachers at least, is required for the middle schools, by their division of the sexes. 2. In many large schools, there are one or more assistants.

As the liberal or finished education of females is neglected, so we discover comparatively few females are employed as teachers. There are 981 who occupy the place of head teachers. Supposing that two thirds or three fourths, (either, an ample allowance,) of all the assistant teachers are females, there are then in all only 4329 (at most) employed. Of those who are head teachers, only eleven occupy that station alone, the rest being colleagues, mostly of husbands or brothers. Indeed it is not considered proper for females to occupy a station so conspicuous, and even in girls' schools, "the sight of a woman, chief and manager, and a man her subordinate," says M. Cousin, "*is a bad sort of lesson.*" Whether there be more propriety than gallantry in this remark, it is not for me to say.

Another important inquiry on this topic, relates to the cost of the whole system, to the people.

It is, as already observed, the duty of every parish to support its own schools, and if the levies for this purpose are insufficient, aid is afforded by the government. Estimates, based on official returns for 1819-21, shew that,

1. In 1825, the whole sum expended for primary schools in Prussia was \$1,687,000, (in round numbers,) of which the government paid \$108,000.

2. In 1831, the grant from the general budget for this purpose was \$170,000, shewing an increase by more than one half. Now, if the people increased their contributions in the same proportion, the whole amount expended for 1831 by the people, was about \$2,400,000, giving a total of \$2,570,000.

3. The population at the time, here referred to, was estimated at 7,770,000, ex-

cluding children under 14 years of age. Deducting from this 25,000, students in the gymnasia, and 10,000 students of the universities and teachers' seminaries, we have 7,735,000 inhabitants to bear this expense. This gives an average tax of 31 cents and a fraction, on each person over 14 years of age, not a student. Basing our calculations on the number of families, and allowing eight members to a family, which for Prussia is a fair average, we have 1,500,000 heads of households paying about \$1.60 each for primary schools. It will be remembered, that this covers the town levy and tuition. This is the *average*. Those who have children of an age to be at school, and those who have not, bear parts of the levy proportioned to their property. Those who furnish children pay a tuition fee additional, which varying from 6¼ to 25 cents monthly per scholar, is no great burden. I have not included the state appropriation, which does not come directly from the people. But were it included, it would vary but little the average to each householder. If, now, we base our calculations on the number of children educated, we obtain still more interesting results. The average price of tuition for each pupil is \$1.28 cents, (omitting fractions.) This includes levies, fees and contingent expenses. But when we base our calculations on the number of pupils, we include those of both grades. Having no means of knowing the proportions of the whole amount paid for town schools, I am unable to present this more accurately. Yet knowing that tuition fees and levies must be both higher for them than for country schools, we may well make considerable deduction from the above average for the latter. Allowing even \$150 per annum to each town schoolmaster, including assistants, which was the average in 1821, 3000 such will require \$450,000. This makes no allowance for the contingent expenses of these schools. We have then left \$2,120,000 for elementary schools, containing 1,917,934 children, giving the aver-

age for these \$1.14 cents *per scholar, which includes every expense* for the whole year. This gives a fairer view of the subject. The town schools being supported on a different plan, that is, requiring double sets of teachers, at least of head teachers, located in more expensive places, and also affording more extensive opportunities of study, necessarily cost more. The expense to each scholar, of the 103,000 frequenting them, is something less than \$4.50 cents per annum. This is the average, and includes all items.

SEMINARIES FOR TEACHERS.

The last topic of enquiry presented in your letter will now be considered. You ask, "How are teachers obtained?"

Formerly, schoolmasters were appointed by the parish authorities, without any previous examination on their literary qualifications, excepting their knowledge of the catechism, and ability to read, write, sing and cypher. Numbers employed in keeping sheep in the summer, were transferred to the business of *keeping school* in the winter. The nobility who held some appointments, often conferred them on their valets and grooms, as rewards for services. Unsuccessful mechanics and merchants often supplied the place of teachers in the lowest schools, and disappointed candidates for the learned professions assumed the office of instructors in those of more elevated character. In short, the whole business was conducted very loosely, and often he who was good for nothing else, "would do" for an office of the most delicate and difficult nature.

In 1748, an institution for the instruction of teachers, was founded by a benevolent gentleman of Berlin, which in a few years received royal notice and patronage. The pupils were mostly young mechanics, who were scattered in various parts of the city, and much impeded in their studies by other avocations. Yet the institution did well in its time.

Frederick II. appropriated \$2000 annually, (in 1771,) for the improvement of country schools, declaring that "primary education had been too much neglected: it is imperative to remove bad masters and replace them by competent men." As he had removed native custom house officers to make way for those imported from France, he ordered, with similar arbitrariness, that teachers should be brought from Saxony. But good teachers were not always to be had in Saxony. Frederic could theorize as a philosopher, and fight as a soldier, but he lacked patience and perseverance to contend with prejudice, and things went on very much as before till 1810, except in the province of Brandenburg, where partial success had attended the efforts of individuals and the local authorities, in establishing several of these institutions. At this period great improvements were made in the original school in Berlin; and after being adopted by the government, it was removed to Potsdam and reorganized under the uniform system which I shall now explain.

The government assumes the organization and support of these institutions. In some cases, private liberality had already endowed such schools to a partial extent, as seen above; in others, they have arisen on foundations designed for other purposes; and in others, they receive contributions from the regency governments in which they are established, or from benevolent individuals.

Their government is in the hands of the provincial school boards, under the inspection of the minister and central board. Every institution reports annually, the number, health, order, discipline, and morality of the pupils, together with the number and changes of instructors, the results of examinations, and any interesting occurrences connected with the school; also its wants, and suggestions as to its improvement. The frequent publication of these reports awakens and preserves a lively interest in their behalf, communicates a spirit of laud-

able emulation to the several schools, and diffuses through the community useful information on the science of instruction and the art of education.

Before proceeding to describe these schools, I will remark that clergymen or teachers of skilful character may train up masters for primary schools by permission of the provincial boards. This regulation is necessary, as there is yet a deficiency of these institutions. Every encouragement possible is held out to young men desirous of teaching to frequent some teachers' seminary; and one powerful inducement has recently been proposed, by making the graduates of such more eligible to places than others. Besides the great teachers' seminaries, as they are styled, of which I shall now speak, there are numerous establishments of similar character, though of lower grade and smaller size, designed to prepare teachers for the very poorest villages. These are greatly aided by government, as well as private liberality. In describing the larger, I shall of course describe these, so far as they rise in character to the standard of the former.

Every seminary for teachers must be furnished with *buildings* sufficient to accommodate the director and his family, the steward and his, and the teachers, whether married or single, if possible, together with all the pupils, so that the latter may constantly be under the eyes of their preceptors. Connected with these buildings must be a garden, bath houses, mechanic shops and grounds for gymnastic exercises. They must, of course, be provided with the necessary apparatus for scientific instruction.

INSTRUCTORS.

A *director* and as many *assistants* as necessary constitute the faculty of each seminary. The number of the latter is of course varied—generally five or six—though sometimes not more than two, and sometimes as many as thirteen are needed. Five may be considered a fair average. The

selection of directors has been made from the ranks of gymnasial teachers, or from those of the learned professions, where individuals may have distinguished themselves by their knowledge of the science of instruction, or otherwise manifested a peculiar aptitude for conducting such institutions. Hereafter these seminaries will supply their own teachers, while supplying those for the primary schools. The qualifications necessary for the regular instructors are of course those necessary for the highest grade of instruction in those institutions for which those seminaries design to prepare teachers. That is, they must be acquainted with the various branches of instruction in those schools; but they must, in order to give proper aid to those preparing to teach, possess a more thorough and accurate knowledge of each branch than if only required to teach children. A knowledge of the Latin and some modern languages is also required of the principal assistants.

PUPILS AND COURSE OF STUDY.

The *age* at which *pupils* may be received is seventeen or eighteen; though older persons may be admitted. None can enter younger. In order to admission, they must have received a good primary school education, must be sound of body, of good moral character, must possess musical talents and have improved them, so far as the acquisition of the art of singing, and the ability of performing on the piano forte and violin. The request for admission, must be presented the director, some time previous to that of entrance, and be accompanied by certificates to the possession of the above named qualifications, and also a promise of the father or guardian, or some responsible person, to guarantee the payment of the sum required for admission, in cases where any such requisition is made. Besides these provisions to prevent the admission of improper candidates, every applicant must sustain an examination on his knowledge of

grammar, reading, religion, composition and arithmetic, together with his musical attainments and talents, both instrumental and vocal. Even with all the qualifications required, if a pupil is found to manifest no aptitude to teach, by his experiments in the schools for practice, attached to these seminaries, he may be dismissed. Every pupil receiving aid from the state, must obligate himself to teach for at least three years, after completing his course, or refund the money expended for his education.

The course of study prescribed, and the mode of instruction, must necessarily bear a strong resemblance to that already delineated for primary schools. On every branch, a greater degree of proficiency, is of course expected, and it is therefore taught more thoroughly and extensively. The scientific course of study, in our best colleges, may correctly represent it. The pupils are engaged during the first half of their course, whether of two or three years, (most generally, the course is completed in two years,) in the acquisition of knowledge from books. During the latter part of this first half of the course, the study of *paedagogics* is introduced by that of mental philosophy and psychology. The pupils are also instructed in the science of method, by which they are guided to the best possible means for acquiring or teaching any science or art. They are thus prepared for the duties of the latter half of the course which consist in experiments in teaching in the schools for practice already noticed, one or more of which are located conveniently to the seminary. These experiments are made in presence of the director, who corrects errors and gives hints, while they are thus engaged, and makes their exercises subjects of more special remark at a proper time.

DISCIPLINE.

The discipline of these seminaries is strict, yet kind. As in the primary schools, the most diligent attention is given to secure regularity and system in every pursuit.

This could not be otherwise, in institutions which prepare men for a business, requiring more than most others, the utmost order, punctuality and promptness. The punishments are, admonition, deprivation of privilege, suspension or expulsion.

STATISTICS.

There are now thirty-three seminaries of this character in Prussia, besides the very small schools for similar purposes, already noticed. The government expends annually about \$85,000 for their support. They contain about 1600 pupils, and thus afford nearly 800 teachers annually, which is only 50 less, than the annual need.

There could scarcely be devised a more efficient means of promoting the cause of common school education, with the same amount of money. These institutions are acquiring a great reputation. Most of what I have stated above, is the result of personal observation in a seminary, at Weisenfels, about 20 miles west of Leipsic, and of conversation with the highly accomplished and intelligent director of the institution. While there I met a gentleman from Scotland, the sole object of whose residence of three weeks, in the place, was the examination of the structure and operation of the school, in order to establish one similar to it, in his native country. I mention this fact, for the tribute is worth more, coming as it does, from a country, which has long been proverbial for the excellence of its primary schools. Similar visits have been made by gentlemen from Sweden, Denmark and England, and M. Cousin, in his reports, assigns these institutions, the most important place in the work of promoting the cause of primary instruction in Prussia.

Institutions of a similar character for the education of female teachers exist in Westphalia, according to Dr. Julius. As already intimated, however, there is great backwardness on this subject in Prussia, considering the general advancement made. It

is probable that a better state of things will gradually succeed to proper efforts for the education of female teachers, and their abilities to instruct, may be more highly appreciated.

Private and Boarding Schools: Military and Charitable Institutions, &c.

I notice here some minor topics, which have found no appropriate place in the body of this report.

By private schools, are meant those undertaken by individuals at their own cost, without aid from the state, which, permitting them to manage the minutiae, still reserves to itself, a general supervision.

Thus every person desirous of opening such a school must inform the school authorities, and when this application has been sent by them to the provincial board, the petitioner is directed to submit to an examination, by the county inspector or some proper person. Should the moral character of the petitioner be exceptionable, however, the petition may be at once refused. When license to open a school is granted, the establishment may be advertised. The supervision of it, is assigned to a member of the school committee or one of the school directors. It has relation only to the discipline, and progress of instruction. Should any evil practice be introduced, bad books or masters be employed, it is in the power of the school authorities, to remonstrate, and if the evil be not removed, to complain to the provincial boards, who may withdraw the license and close the school. No person obtaining a license for one kind of school can open another, without a new license, preceded by an examination. No unmarried man can open a school for girls. Widows and unmarried ladies of competent abilities, are encouraged in this service. All changes affecting the school, intermissions, examinations, and final or temporary dissolution, prices of tuition, and the like, must be made known to the school authorities.

Persons desirous of receiving boarders, either for public or private schools, shall submit themselves to an examination, by the local school authorities, on their moral fitness. Their houses shall also be subjects of attention, as the bodily health, as well as moral and intellectual improvement of children is a matter of importance.

Masters who give lessons by the hour, and persons opening schools for instruction in any particular branch or branches of moral, mental or physical education, are in like manner under the supervision of the school authorities. These remarks, however, do not affect the relations of private or family teachers, who are employed in the capacity of literary friends for children, by those who can afford the expense.

Infant or Dames' schools for children under 7 years of age, may be established by the permission of the local authorities and county inspectors. It is necessary that the persons who establish them be free from reproach, of competent capacity to exercise a beneficial influence over the manners and reason of the children, that their dwellings be located in healthy places, and sufficiently large. It is the duty of the school authorities to see, that the children are not kept beyond the proper age to frequent, either the public school, or some one of equal grade.

There are various establishments of a peculiar character in Prussia, in which the general mode of instruction, and discipline pursued in primary schools prevails. Of the institutions for military science I need say nothing, as this subject is connected, rather with the federal, than state policy. It is gratifying to state, that the orphans of soldiers are specially provided for, by orphan schools, in which they are well trained till fourteen, and after that period otherwise kept under governmental patronage, till able to provide for themselves.

There are in the large cities, many charity schools, for those children of misfortune and crime, whom the benevolent provisions of the general system, cannot so

well reach. In Berlin alone, there are 4500 such. The attendance of these children is secured by a special regulation. At a certain period, each charity school furnishes the pupils with a printed certificate of attendance: the school commissioners at the same time, inspect the census of the city, and that of the schools under their control. These elements enable them to ascertain the number of absentees, and provides against all obstacles, resulting from the irregular life of those who are shifting from place to place. Before the adoption of this plan, there were 8000 children in Berlin, who did not attend school, now there are not as many hundred. It has exercised a happy influence on the regular public schools. Every charity scholar is required to pay at least 12½ cents, and not more than 30, per annum, and this sum materially aids the income, and by the principle already alluded to, enhances the value of the schools in the estimation of the parents and children. The instruction of these schools is that of the primary schools generally, omitting the highest branches, and limiting some of the others to less extent, as the term is 6 instead of 8 years tuition. The state pays \$12,000 annually to support 14 such schools in Berlin, each containing 300 pupils.

Connected with charity schools may be noticed two institutions of a more special character. One of these is a school for vagabond youth and juvenile offenders against the laws. This is supported by private bounty, and with a manual labour department, consisting of various mechanics' shops, and a garden, the pupils earn about one half of their expenses. When I visited the school, though on the sabbath evening, the pupils presented an appearance every way betokening their origin and previous character. They attended well, however, to a short address I made them, and from the reports of many connected with the school, it appears to be the means of reformation to many of the most vagabond and vicious. Religious instruction is most prominent.

The other institution alluded to, is a prison school. Whenever a parent is imprisoned for crime, and his children likely to be left destitute, they are removed with him to the prison, subject of course to school confinement only, and maintained and educated, by the government, for useful employment.

There are 27 such schools, as the first above named, in the kingdom, and where there are not enough children of that character to form a school, they are scattered among the different families, and specially attended to on the sabbath, besides sharing with others in the instruction of the parish school during the week. When speaking of the methods and subjects of instruction, I adverted to the "Real-schools," of a character answering to the Polytechnic schools of France, and corresponding to some of the features, which distinguish the national academy at West Point, in this country. I have no means for giving very accurate information as to the number and condition of such schools in Prussia. I visited one in Berlin, and was politely furnished with its reports, and shewn its arrangement and apparatus, by the director. From these sources, I present a brief account of the institution. It is one of the highest character, and more strictly a school of trades, arts and manufactures. Its design is to convert "*knowledge to practice.*" The studies are arithmetic, algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, astronomy, and mathematical geography, natural history, chemistry, geography, history, the French, English and German languages, architecture, drawing, projections, painting, &c. The arts of dyeing, mixing and making paint, engraving and sculpture, and others connected with the sciences taught, are also subjects of attention for such as desire it. This school is comparatively expensive, but it is certainly of a highly useful character. It is well calculated to draw out extraordinary talent for the acquisition of any fine art, or the more difficult and nicer efforts of human ingenuity, as well as to prepare the me-

chanic and civil engineer for attaining greater skill and perfection in their respective departments. An interesting feature of the plan is the study of agricultural chemistry, and of botany and geology, in connexion with it, to prepare the student for a scientific and skilful culture of the earth. The building is well arranged with good lecture rooms, and apparatus for all the sciences, including collections in botany, mineralogy, geology, zoology, mathematical instruments, models for painting, sculpture, drawing, engraving, writing and statuary.

This institution is under the supervision of the provincial and state school authorities, and belongs to the rank of secondary instruction.

Such, sir, is the result of my effort to comply with your request. It would have given me great pleasure to have introduced a notice of gymnasial and university instruction, but I fear I have already proved more prolix than you desired.

I do earnestly desire that this report may aid you in your patriotic efforts. I fear, sir, that I have not succeeded in imparting just that kind of information you desired, in the best manner, yet whatever be the imperfections of the report itself, I flatter myself it presents the outlines of the Prussian system in such a manner as to render them intelligible. Should these afford you any useful hints, my object will have been accomplished, and I shall ever feel a most sincere pleasure, in reflecting on any effort of my feeble instrumentality, in such a cause.

Accept sir, my assurances, &c., &c.,

BENJ. M. SMITH.

Danville, Va., January 1st, 1839.

SUGGESTIONS

ON THE APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS TO VIRGINIA.

On perusing the foregoing report, the question may naturally arise, "can this sys-

tem be applied to our own state?" And as the answer is given, the importance of its consideration may be decided. But I take the liberty of remarking, that while no one can for a moment suppose the institutions suitable to a monarchy, *can* apply to a republic, still we may derive from them many important principles of action, and obtain valuable hints, and discover plans worthy of imitation. In this view, I am disposed to consider the information contained in this report may be valuable.

It is with great diffidence I now propose to your consideration a few suggestions which have occurred to my mind on those plans and principles presented in this system, which appear to me worthy of entering into the composition of a system of primary schools for our own state.

1. The principle of state and parental obligation to educate all the children of the country, expressed by the phrase "school duty" among the Germans, must be recognized to some extent. Says a writer in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. 24th: "If children provided their own education, and could be made sensible of its importance, it would be a *want*, and might be left to the natural demand and supply; but it is provided by the parents, and paid for by those who do not profit by its results, and is therefore a *duty* liable to be neglected." Numerous decisions of the English courts take a similar view of this subject; and I think some of our own laws are based on the correctness of this principle: thus, it is made the duty of every master to furnish his apprentice with a certain amount of instruction, and our state publicly proclaims its sense of obligation to the destitute by appropriating a large amount of money for their instruction. If, as Burke said, "education is the defence of nations," I see but little difference in the character of that obligation, which every state imposes on its citizens to perform military duty, and that which a state imposes, which obliges itself and parents to educate all the children. If,

as we often hear, the prosperity and happiness, nay, even the existence of our republic, is based on the combined virtue and intelligence of the people, it becomes a question of practical importance and great moment, whether the state is not bound to see that this virtue and intelligence be promoted as far as education can promote them: and if the protection of life, liberty and property be that which every citizen may claim at the hands of the state, then may every one claim that every child be educated, and thus the safeguards of prevention of evil be added to those salutary restraints of law by which we are protected. To what extent this principle should be recognized in any plan of common schools, I am not able to say. I do not believe, in a popular government, any such principle, if recognized by law, could be enforced to its full extent, without much caution and previous efforts to explain it fully and commend it to the approbation of the people.

2. The mode of supporting schools pursued in Prussia, recommends itself to our attention. The connexion of privilege with the performance of duty, or the suspension of sharing the benefits of schools, on sharing in their support, seems as necessary as the formation of a system.

We well know that the greatest obstacle to the operation of our present system has arisen from the very terms on which aid has been offered. You must confess the misfortune of poverty, ere you can receive the alms of charity, but poverty and pride are generally found together. I mean false pride, and no school commissioner need be told the numerous trials to which this feature of the system has exposed his patience.

Now, make the support of schools as the support of government, a matter of general taxation, based on some similar grounds as other systems of taxation; and though you may tax the childless to educate the offspring of parents, yet I believe the general benefits flowing to a community, from the universal diffusion of education, would

more than repay such individuals, even in dollars and cents, for the apparently unjust expense to which they might be subjected. Is it no interest of the wealthy but childless man to have the value of property enhanced, the expenses of prisons and criminal prosecutions and poorhouses lessened? Does not education contribute directly to national wealth, by increasing the capacity of each individual in the community, and enabling him to turn his powers to the best account? by quickening ingenuity and promoting inventions and discoveries? by enabling men to push their researches farther into the powers and productions of the natural world? Let a comparison of Anglo-America with Spanish America, of England with Italy, of France with Spain, of Scotland with Ireland, and of Europe with China, or any part of civilized christendom with any part of Africa or Asia, answer such queries. "The muscular force of England and France are about equal," says Baron Dupin, "Yet the English by machinery have increased their force to a power equal to that of 25 millions, while France only rises to eleven." A single invention for supplying water to London saves to that city about 40 millions of dollars annually. But the position that education is wealth, is too obvious to need farther illustration.

I am well aware that many obstacles exist to the application of this principle. Our sparse population would render it impossible to furnish schools on this plan to some neighbourhoods, without great expense. But we are not to be deterred from the adoption of a principle, because its practical operation is liable to obstacles, in some cases. In neighbourhoods where a few wealthy persons reside, this principle would operate less injuriously on pecuniary interests, than the present system of private schools.

3. You have doubtless observed that the efficiency and success of the Prussian system, depend most materially on the qualification of teachers. How can the impreg-

nable walls, in which ignorance is entrenched, be demolished, except by trained soldiers? This subject, as already observed, has attracted the serious attention of several legislatures. By the latest returns of the Massachusetts school board, the subject seems to awaken great interest in that state. Indeed, when we have devised the best theory of common schools, we are met at the threshold of all our calculations on its practicability by the question, "how can teachers be obtained?" For, in vain, may we speculate and plan systems, and declaim about popular ignorance, so long as we are unable to find men competent to teach. You may build school-houses in every district, 6 miles square, tax the people to the last point of endurance, pour our appropriations with princely munificence, and force children to school at the point of a sword, yet if you permit a man with "iron hands and wooden brains" to preside over your school, all will be vain and worse than in vain. Why should we educate a lawyer, or physician, or clergyman, why expect an apprenticeship of the mechanic, who shoes our horses, or paints our houses, and yet suppose that the most difficult and trying of all tasks can be performed by one who has had no experience and no instruction?

I am aware of obstacles here also. We are told that the business of teaching affords so little remuneration that we cannot secure the men. For our lowest schools, this is a serious obstacle. It does not apply to the academies and high schools. I am only permitted in this place, to throw out a few hints.

1. Educate teachers and you enhance their value. A good teacher can do more for a child in six months, than a bad one in two years. But farther, it is no difficult matter to perceive, that what is worth nothing, is dear at any price, and I apprehend one reason why good teachers are poorly paid, is because so many indifferent teachers have been too well paid.

2. Educate teachers and you elevate the

dignity of the profession. Much of the aversion of young men to an engagement in this business, arises from the low station it has been permitted to occupy.

But supposing the work undertaken. It must be done by the state. This will cost a large sum, if separate institutions are established. I would venture to suggest the connexion of a teachers' department with each of our colleges, and also one for teachers of Latin schools, with the university. This would render the charge on the state lighter. By an appropriation to such institutions of a sum, sufficient to defray the tuition of every young man, who might be received as a candidate for the office of teacher, and another for supporting an additional professor in each, who should have the special charge of their instruction in the duties of their future office, I apprehend we might secure much of the benefits of teachers' seminaries, and avoid much of the expense, incidental to separate establishments. Some suitable arrangement might be made, requiring youth thus educated, to devote themselves to the business of instruction for a definite term. Provision could be introduced for defraying all, or nearly all the expenses of poor young men, of proper natural abilities, and the power of deciding on such cases, vested in the officers of the college, or better in certain persons in various parts of the state. Such a plan would cost much, it may be, but what then? Is it necessary to advert to the fact, that we are consulting to save the expenses incidental to an ignorant, uneducated community? England, with a population of six times that of Scotland, furnishes nearly 11 times as many criminals. Ireland, with a population about three times that of Scotland, and one half that of England, furnishes ten times the criminals of the former, and nearly as many as the latter. England sentences to death 480, Ireland 197, and Scotland 6, in one year. Judges and sheriffs will tell you, sir, that ignorance and crime are companions: and your own observation will con-

firm the statement. But I cannot dwell on this subject.

4. The systematic arrangement of the external organization of the Prussian school system, must be obvious to every one. Can we not effect something of this kind? We have already something similar established. Our superintendent of the literary fund supplies the position of the minister. A board already exists. In every county men can be found to undertake the duties of school councillors and inspectors, and in every neighbourhood school directors may be had. We must, it is true, pay all, except the last, and these their expenses. Whenever the subject of cost comes up, I am irresistibly disposed to ask questions similar to those above. Let us here introduce another item on this point. How much does Virginia lose annually, in young enterprising citizens who emigrate to the west, for want of employment, above that of day labourers and mechanics? and how much money is annually carried to other portions of the country by birds of passage, who have stopped to teach long enough to pocket a few hundreds, aye, to sit in seats vacated by our own sons? I intend to foster no sectional spirit by these remarks. We should welcome teachers, if they come from China, so that they serve the state and *stay with us*. I am no politician, but have heard much of southern subjection to northern manufacturers. Will some politician inform us how much we pay to the northern manufacturers of school books and teachers? We complain that young men go northward for their academic education, and yet while they can acquire as good and cheaper educations, (in institutions better endowed than our own,) than can be had at home, they are not to blame.

5. The Prussian system provides for every grade of instruction, and holds out its assistance alike to the poor, the independent and the rich. We endow a university to which those can repair, who have 400 dollars a year to expend on their education;

and we offer a common school education to the poor for nothing, while the middle classes, who mainly support the whole burdens of government, are left to provide for themselves. Ought this state of things to continue?

6. I presume we may derive some useful hints from the Prussian system, on the mode and subjects of instruction.

I cannot enlarge on this topic, without entering too much into details. The introduction of history, the study of our constitutions, of the first principles of natural science, and of drawing, and above all the elements of agricultural science, appears to me an object of great desire. I feel a peculiar delicacy in adverting to another topic,—I mean religion, not of a sect, but of the bible. I believe we might safely go this far,—to say in the proposed plan of elementary instruction,—“the bible shall be a class book, where the majority of the school patrons desire it.” And lest I might be misunderstood, I will speak my sentiments in the language of a *French* philosopher, M. Cousin, “The less we desire our schools to be *ecclesiastical*, the more ought they to be *christian*. Religion is in my eyes the best, perhaps the only basis of popular education. I know something of Europe, and never have I seen good schools where the spirit of christian charity was wanting.

Primary instruction flourishes in Holland, Scotland and Germany, and in all it is profoundly religious. I am not ignorant that this advice will grate on the ears of many persons, and that I shall be thought extremely *devot* at Paris. Yet it is not from Rome, but from Berlin, that I address you. The man who holds this language is a philosopher, formerly disliked, and even persecuted by the priesthood; but this philosopher has a mind too little affected by the recollection of his own insults, and is too well acquainted with human nature and history not to regard genuine christianity as a means of civilization for the people.” Report on Public Instruction in Prussia, pp. 290-2. N. Y. edition, 1835.

And now, sir, I bring these suggestions to a close. Their worth is their only recommendation, and behind the sincerity of my desire to do good, I must shield myself from the imputation of presumption.

Let it not be supposed that a servile imitation of other countries is recommended. “The true greatness of a people does not consist in borrowing nothing from others, but in borrowing from all whatever is good, and in perfecting whatever it appropriates.”

I remain, with great respect, yours truly,

BENJ. M. SMITH.

Danville, Va., January 15th, 1839.

I GRATEFULLY acknowledge my obligation to the Editorial Staff of The Virginia Teacher, and especially to Dr. Conrad Logan of Teachers College, Harrisonburg, Virginia, for the helpful interest shown in the republication of this report; to the McClure Publishing Company of Staunton, Virginia, for holding the type for a year; and to Dr. Charles W. Dabney for calling attention to my Father's active advocacy of the "Free School Idea" in Virginia.

RUTH SMITH MCKELWAY.

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