

*Speaking Plainly:*  
*James P. Wickersham*  
*on Education and Reconstruction*

By Paul K. Adams, Ph.D.

**J**ames P. Wickersham, former teacher, Lancaster County Superintendent of Schools, and Principal of Millersville Normal School became Pennsylvania's Superintendent of Common Schools in 1866. He held this position until 1881. His final position of service was a brief assignment as U.S. Minister to Denmark in 1881-82. Throughout his career Wickersham was active in professional organizations. He was one of the educators responsible for the founding of the Lancaster County Education Association in 1851 and in the following year helped organize the Pennsylvania State Teachers Association. He was also involved in the creation of the National Teachers Association in 1857.<sup>1</sup> He made his first major address entitled *Education as an Element Reconstruction* before that assemblage in 1865.<sup>2</sup>

The war had ended in 1865 and had left a heritage of distress in the American South. Northern educators along with the so-called Radical Republicans were apprehensive concerning the possibility of a resurrection of the southern aristocracy and the eruption of another civil war.<sup>3</sup> The educators at the National Teachers Association meeting at Harrisburg in 1865 were for the most part antagonistic toward the south, and Wickersham was particularly vitriolic in his speech.<sup>4</sup> The southerners who had journeyed

to Pennsylvania to attend the conclave were not pleased and the Texas Teachers Association, at their meeting at Houston in the following year, voiced their opposition to the addresses that had been delivered at Harrisburg.<sup>5</sup>

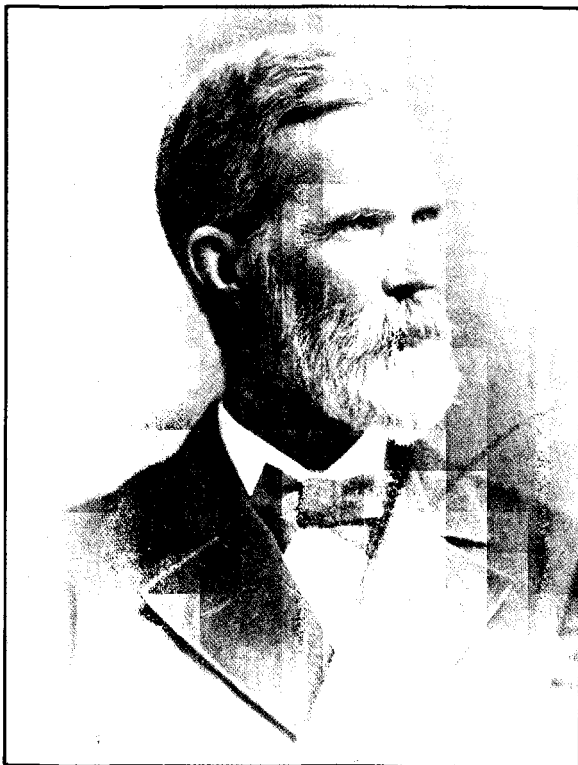
Wickersham's undiplomatic speech did not contribute to the healing of the national wounds suffered in the war. He began by noting that the south had been devastated by the war and needed assistance, but he continued by saying: "The Southern leaders are conquered, but we deceive ourselves if we think they are now ready to become good and loyal citizens. The poor whites are in general more debased, and less disposed to labor, than before the war."<sup>6</sup>

Having disposed of both the "haves" and the "have nots" among the Caucasian populace of the south, Wickersham pressed on to deprecate the former slaves as well, noting that the blacks, although they had been freed, did not know how to conduct themselves in this new circumstance. "Many of them," he said, "seem to think they are to be fed and cared for without any exertion of their own."<sup>7</sup> Wickersham then stated that there were two principles which it would be necessary to institute if the United States was to become a truly republican nation. The two principles, interestingly, were unequivocally basic premises for the future development of Negro civil rights. As stated by Wickersham, they were: "First, equal civil rights should be enjoyed by all, subject only to the regulation of just general laws. Second; the aim of the general laws regulating these civil rights should be to encourage preparation for citizenship."<sup>8</sup> Adherence to these principles, he felt, could accomplish a democratic reconstruction of the American nation. The former, he said, should be accomplished by statesmen, but the latter would be the work of educators.<sup>9</sup>

According to Wickersham, neither the wealthy southern aristocrats nor the poor southern whites were capable or worthy of American citizenship in 1865. "To reconstruct the Union," he commented, "upon a firm basis, all that is unfriendly to it, or that which stands in the way of its success must be removed; the hostile elements in the South must be reconciled . . . , of many one must be made. And the great question for us is, what can education accomplish as an agency in bringing about such a desirable result?"<sup>10</sup>

For the redemption of the former slaveholders Wickersham had little hope. Education, he opined, would be of little value in making good United States citizens from this group. He characterized them as a body of men opposed to freedom in government, thought, speech, and education. They should not be pardoned, he commented, with or without land. He hoped they would leave the country. Those who remained should be treated "as Western Farmers do the stumps in their clearings: work around them, and let them rot out."<sup>11</sup>

Although recent Civil War historians have seen the war between the



*James Pyle Wickersham*

states as having had high-mindedness on both sides and enough bravery and glory among both northerners and southerners to help the nation mend itself, reconstruction is another matter. Early reconstruction historians saw the period replete with misery, degradation, and stupidity. More recent historians find such views to be superficial and in revising the historiography of reconstruction find many of the "Radical Republicans" to have been men motivated by an obligation for public service.<sup>12</sup>

Wickersham may have been motivated by the idea of public service, but was singularly tough-minded in his concern that those ex-slaveholders who had survived the war "atone for their crimes upon the scaffold" and "as a class die out."<sup>13</sup>

If nothing but extermination, emigration or death were the answers for the former wealthy plantation owners, what could be done for the poor whites? This class of southerner, which Wickersham saw as ignorant, lazy and debased, could, he felt, be saved through education. The duty of educators was clear, he said, they must work to establish a system of free

schools in the South. These schools could then teach ignorant southerners to understand the duties of citizenship. This must be done, he said, to block the re-emergence of a southern aristocracy. Education for the poor white people of the South would not allow the southern patricians to prevail.<sup>14</sup>

He saw education for the freedmen as an absolute necessity. The southern blacks, he observed, "are now without property, and without that knowledge and those habits of self-direction and self-reliance, are necessary to secure them the comforts of life, much more an honorable place in society."<sup>15</sup>

Noting that American society showed no leniency for enfeebled spend-thrifts, he stated that the American Negro should receive aid in coming to terms with freedom. This assistance would be through education. The type of schooling provided, he remarked, should include studies beyond reading and writing. It should be an education that would "fit them for their new condition as freedmen and citizens."<sup>16</sup>

Wickersham had a depth of thought concerning the educational work being done by the Freedmen's Associations and several philanthropic organizations at work in the south which placed him in advance of many of his contemporaries.<sup>17</sup> He did not believe that Christian benevolence without state and national support would be successful in creating a viable educational structure for southern blacks.<sup>18</sup>

It is also of interest that Wickersham recommended the training of black teachers for the freedmen. Intelligent blacks should be singled out and sent to normal schools, he said, because they would be more successful than white teachers since "they would be willing to live among their pupils; they would understand their wants and enjoy their sympathy."<sup>19</sup>

Anticipating the Fifteenth Amendment, he also pointed out that "sooner or later, either by the National or by the State authorities, this people will be allowed the right of suffrage."<sup>20</sup> A pre-condition of the ballot, however, Wickersham observed, should be the education of blacks.<sup>21</sup> He does not appear to have had any idea of the political machinations that would result from literacy tests for voting by blacks or by immigrants.<sup>22</sup> His faith in education was too deep to allow him to forecast such a dismal use of it.

Education for southern whites, southern blacks, and all Americans was a necessity for a smoothly functioning republic, according to Wickersham. In order to see that educational opportunities would be provided for all, he suggested a national system of education be established. Interestingly, he felt that such a system could be devised under the national government, and still maintain the rights of the states over education. This national system which he said could be administered by either the states or the national government would make America whole again. In his words:

Without it there may be reconstruction, but there can be no true union.

. . . Indeed without a molding organizing, consolidating, union forming system of schools . . . a not distant future will see this nation standing like an old oak in the forest, with a number of its branches dead or dying, significant of the death that will speedily overtake the whole.<sup>23</sup>

The states alone, according to him, would be unable to structure a smoothly functioning national system. It would be necessary to turn to the government of the United States to develop the system.<sup>24</sup>

Wickersham became president of the National Teachers Association in 1866.<sup>25</sup> His inaugural address, entitled *An American Education for the American People*, was conservative, democratic, and nationalistic.<sup>26</sup> After noting that education was a force which could, if properly directed, sustain the nation and keep it safe, he stated: "We are the American people, and we must have a system of American education."<sup>27</sup>

The authors of the American constitution, he pointed out, had laid down basic principles which "have prompted the growth and prosperity of this nation."<sup>28</sup> The first of these principles, he continued, was that "the people are the primary source of all political power."<sup>29</sup> He thought that power in America must come from the people and each person who held a public office should be, as directly as possible, responsible to the voters.<sup>30</sup>

The second basic premise Wickersham had deduced from the constitution was: "All men are equal in rights."<sup>31</sup> There was no evidence that Wickersham could locate in the Constitution, in the social order or in, his final authority, the Bible that would deny this principle. That this objective had not been attained in the United States as yet in 1866 was due, he said, to previous circumstances. Notwithstanding its incomplete application, educators should "at least consider it a fixed principle that must condition their labors."<sup>32</sup>

The final fundamental principle upon which America is based, according to Wickersham, was: "Governments are established for the common good."<sup>33</sup> After chastising nations which were monarchies, oligarchies or aristocracies, his speech became more spirited when he asked:

Why should one enjoy a privilege that another is denied? Why should one class of men be honored and another oppressed? Where is the divine sanction for the power that confers crowns, scepters, livings, seats in legislative bodies, and titles of nobility with reference simply to the adventitious circumstances of birth?<sup>34</sup>

The nation had not upheld this principle in the past, he said, and for this "the nation has been most sorely punished."<sup>35</sup> However, he did see that the punishment, ostensibly by God through the medium of the Civil War, had done its work for "we seem almost ready to furnish knowledge and civil rights to all with entire impartiality."<sup>36</sup>

Thus Wickersham had prepared his audience for his thesis on how the schools could be related to the principles upon which the United States had been founded. The educational principles were four in number. The first of

these correlated statements was: "Educational systems in this country should be popular in their character."<sup>37</sup> Describing the control of Prussian education by the King, he spoke out against any such system for America. Such control from above, Wickersham felt, was unhealthy for education. Further it would be better, he said, to reverse our current structure for the appointment of school officials and "let the people of a township or district elect officers whose duty it shall be to locate and erect school houses, equip them, appoint teachers and fix their salaries, levy taxes, collect and disburse the school funds, select text-books, determine the length of time the schools shall remain open, and do all else that local officers directly responsible to the people who they serve can do better than others; let these officers elect the superintendents of counties and cities; and then let the superintendents of counties and cities elect a State Superintendent."<sup>38</sup> This plan, he said, would insure that the choice would come from the people rather than being forced on them from above.<sup>39</sup>

His second educational premise, related to the constitutional principles which he had enunciated, was that: "Educational systems in this country should provide means of instruction for all."<sup>40</sup> He argued that all men have an inalienable right to be educated. The right of a child to grow both mentally and physically, he said, is derived from God.<sup>41</sup> It is particularly necessary for a child to be educated in a republic because "if in a government like ours all men vote, all men must be educated."<sup>42</sup> This, he remarked, is the most important interest in a republic and democratic institutions can only be made secure if based on this foundation.<sup>43</sup>

All children in the United States of whatever race, color or national origin should have access to a school, he observed, and if this was done the benefits to the nation would be great. Wickersham noted that if universal education in America was accomplished, "it will diminish crime among us, it will add to our wealth, it will increase our power, it will give us influence abroad and promote peace at home, it will advance us as a nation to a higher plane of civilization than any to which the world has attained."<sup>44</sup>

The third point which Wickersham pressed in his speech was: "Educational systems in this country should make instruction free."<sup>45</sup> Wealthy people generally, he observed, will not be willing to pay for the education of the common people. People in lesser circumstances often cannot afford to pay for their children's education. Universal education can not be attained, he contended, unless education is obtainable free of charge. This to be accomplished, would have to be done through public funds and public schools for, as he commented, "private means have never yet made education universal among a people."<sup>46</sup>

Still, Wickersham was not naive enough to believe that simply establishing free schools would make the people of the nation both intelligent and virtuous. Notwithstanding this lack of a guarantee for a uto-

pian American future if free schools were made universal, he nevertheless argued that education, free, public, and universal, was the best answer to American post-war problems. Private benevolence would, no doubt, provide education for the poor, but it would force men to accept charity and thus create "social distinctions that ought not to exist in a republic."<sup>47</sup> The results of not founding free systems of public education in all states would be that "large classes of persons will remain ignorant, and become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water — or what is worse, the tools of those unprincipled enough to use them, or they will receive their education as a gratuity, which they will always be expected to remember by acts of dependence."<sup>48</sup>

This picture of a society without a free, public universal system of education was abhorrent to Wickersham. His Jeffersonian ideal was meritocratic. He proposed that it should come to pass that "a child of the humblest parentage may find in this country institutions of learning open to him where money confers no distinction, and where there is no rank save that accorded to merit."<sup>49</sup>

The final educational recommendation which Wickersham related to his list of fundamental governmental principles was: "Educational systems in this country should make instruction as comprehensive as possible."<sup>50</sup> He admitted that a knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic were essential in making a living, but added: "The great purpose of education will not be fully subserved by educating the people up to a certain point, and then ceasing to make any provision for their further progress."<sup>51</sup> He wished his audience to accept the idea that states had the obligation to provide free public graded schools, free public high schools and state-supported, inexpensive, and possibly free colleges.<sup>52</sup> Interestingly, Wickersham felt that, although the state had a clear responsibility to provide a top rung on the free educational ladder at the college or university level, the private colleges and universities in existence should be under state supervision and be supported by state funds. He said:

It may be well to rely mainly upon private means for the establishment and support of higher institutions of learning . . . , but the state cannot free itself from its responsibility concerning them . . . *The State shall regulate their number, determine their rank, watch their working, and I think aid them with money.* In view of the aid granted them by the State, *instruction should be wholly free or if that be impractical a certain number of free scholarships should be given to the most deserving pupils* desiring to enter them from the common schools, and *thus secure for the interests of society the development of that talent which God sent into the world to bless it.*<sup>53</sup>

The preferred method of accomplishing a good educational structure from the common schools through colleges and universities, he said, would be through the establishing in each state, comprehensive systems of education. In saying this, he moderated the position he had taken in *Education As An Element in Reconstruction* where he had pointed out that his proposed

system of education could be administered either by the states or the national government.<sup>54</sup> In 1866 he observed: "In establishing systems of schools, the agency of the general government is not contemplated. This duty belongs to the several state governments and can be best discharged by them."<sup>55</sup>

Nonetheless, he felt there was still a role the national government could play in assisting the development of universal American education. The action he desired the government to take was for it to "pass a law providing for a National Bureau of Education."<sup>56</sup>

Wickersham then listed his priorities as to what should be taught in this American educational system. Although his proposal for universal free public education from common school through the university was anything but conservative, he here reveals himself as conservative, nationalistic, patriotic and as a supporter of organized religion.<sup>57</sup> His initial point was that the "schools in this country should teach proper respect for authority."<sup>58</sup> It was his opinion that man's duty to himself is "modified by his duties to other men."<sup>59</sup> The danger he saw in his contemporary world was the "growing tendency to break loose from all authority, a tendency to an intense individualism that threatens the overthrow of all good government if not the disintegration of society itself."<sup>60</sup> Men must be made capable, he said, of governing themselves; they must be individualistic, but understand that they have responsibilities to others. The problem as he saw it was that "outward authority must necessarily lose its hold upon men before they can be taught to submit to that higher authority which comes from within."<sup>61</sup>

A further danger, he noted, was that of ignorance and its deadly influence upon democratic institutions. To allow men to be uneducated in a democracy would mean that these unschooled persons might confuse liberty with license. Education for all Americans would lead to the development in the American people of the ability to weigh, to judge, to exercise discretion in their lives. The schools ". . . must sober the reckless, must curb licentiousness of opinion, must teach that conservatism which while it does not refuse to recognize the glad promise of the future, still holds firmly to what is good in the past."<sup>62</sup> Second on Wickersham's list of responsibilities for schools and teachers was the statement that "schools in this country should teach the young to be patriotic."<sup>63</sup>

Americans are not lacking, he said, in boastfulness about their country, especially when talking to foreigners. Wickersham saw this as a form of patriotism without meaning. The truth, he noted, was that the people of the United States were more attached to their local or sectional areas than to the nation. Broad national patriotism was lacking in the United States, he remarked, and to remedy this problem:

Our schools must teach our children to love their country, by acquainting



them with its geography and history, the blessings derived from its form of government, the great men it has produced and the great deeds it has done, its achievements in the arts and sciences, its progress in all that can confer greatness upon a people, and the leading place it has attained in the family of nations.<sup>64</sup>

The final point of Wickersham's recitation of the proper attitudes that should be taught in the schools was that "schools in this country should train the young to be religious."<sup>65</sup> He believed that the very equality among men, which was fundamental in the American republic, contributed to the languishing of religion as a force in society. "The habits of self-dependence engendered by our institutions," he pointed out, "tend to weaken religious faith and lessen the desire for devotion."<sup>66</sup> The schools should counteract this not by attempting to teach sectarian religion, but should rather develop in pupils the attitudes of "a spirit of devotion and faith in the most important truths of our holy religion."<sup>67</sup> The religion referred to was Christianity.

If all of these recommendations were to be followed, Wickersham saw the United States as having a great destiny. The nation, he said, "is ready to start out upon that career of prosperity which is destined to make it not only the home of the free, but the land of promise to the nations."<sup>68</sup>

In 1871 the National Teachers Association met in St. Louis, Missouri and Wickersham again was one of the principal speakers. The title of his address was *A National System of Compulsory Education*.<sup>69</sup> It concerned a bill that had been introduced into the United States Congress in 1870 by George F. Hoar, a Republican representative from Massachusetts.<sup>70</sup>

The bill had met almost universal public opposition, but had support among the Radical Republicans within the party. Among the bitterest opponents of the Hoar Bill were Catholics who feared it would diminish and ultimately end Catholic education in the United States. Although the Catholics combatted the bill, they admitted that they would be willing to accept it if the legislation were to contain support for national denominational schools.<sup>71</sup>

Strong opposition to the Hoar Bill also came from the National Education Association. Wickersham's address at the St. Louis meeting in 1871 is a good example of the professional educator's resistance to the proposed legislation.<sup>72</sup> It contained the words compulsory education in its title because Wickersham saw the bill, as Hoar himself did, as an effort to compel the states to set up systems of education under national control.<sup>73</sup>

Wickersham introduced his speech by listing the major provisions of the Hoar Bill. The bill included stipulations that: the president would appoint a Superintendent of National Schools for each state; the Secretary of the Interior would appoint National School Inspectors for each state as well as local school district superintendents; schooling be offered in each state to all children between the ages of 6 and 18; local school superintendents would have control over the purchasing or renting of schoolhouses; textbooks would be chosen by the State Superintendents under the aegis of the

National Commissioner of Education; statistical reports on attendance, conduct and the ages of pupils be submitted to the National Commissioner of Education; a tax of \$50,000,000 would be levied on the several states to support the National System.<sup>74</sup>

The bill also contained a section aimed at forcing the southern states to provide education for all children. It read:

Any state may at its option, in lieu of the tax provided for by this act, provide for all the children within its borders, between the ages of six and eighteen years, suitable instruction in reading, writing, orthography, arithmetic, geography, and the history of the United States. If any State shall before the last named day, by a resolve of its Legislature, approved by the Governor, engage to make such provision, and shall notify the President of the United States thereof, all future proceedings for appointing the officers provided for herein, or for the assessment or collection of the aforesaid tax within such state, shall be suspended for twelve months from said date. *If at the expiration of said twelve months, it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the President of the United States that there is established in said state a system of common schools which provides reasonably for all children therein . . . no further steps will be taken for the appointment of officers or the assessment of the tax therein; otherwise he shall proceed to cause the tax to be assessed and the said schools to be established within such State forthwith thereafter.*<sup>75</sup>

Hoar himself apparently felt that the penalties for those states which did not establish common school systems would force them to take such action and would, in fact, mean that his bill, if passed, would never have to be enforced.<sup>76</sup>

The provisions of the bill were abhorrent to Wickersham. In his 1866 speech he had recommended that school officials be chosen through a democratic process involving the people.<sup>77</sup> Now Hoar had asked the government to appoint officials to take state education in hand.

Wickersham's belief in equal rights, constitutionality, and the rights of the people were offended. He opposed the Hoar bill in no uncertain terms. This legislative proposal, he commented, takes "out of the hands of the people all the powers they have heretofore exercised in relation to the education of their children and centralizes them at Washington."<sup>78</sup> Wickersham feared "big government" and he was especially worried that the people of America would lose their republic. "All history," he said, "proves that powers granted to rulers will be used by them . . . Let this national system of compulsory education be adopted, and that moment all State authority in the matter of education . . . will be subordinated to the central powers at Washington."<sup>79</sup>

His first specific objection to the bill was that: "The establishment of such a system is in opposition to the uniform practice of our national Government."<sup>80</sup> The National Government had never, except for the distribution of certain lands and funds, been involved in education in the states. The Freedmen's Bureau had taken educational matters in the South into its hands, but this, he said, was an unusual federal activity caused by the unsettled conditions that occurred as a result of the late war. He could find no justification for governmental interference in state matters of

education now that the southern states "had been restored to their proper relation to the government."<sup>81</sup>

He objected to the Hoar Bill also on the grounds that: "The establishment of such a system is in opposition to the views of the founders of the Republic and the leading statesmen of the Nation."<sup>82</sup> Calling upon the "founding fathers" and more recent men well-known in political circles, he noted that nowhere "in the writings of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison, or in those of Franklin, Hamilton, Jay, Jackson, Webster, Clay, VanBuren (or) Benton," could he find a statement that gave an indication that they had uttered anything more than occasional favorable comments on education.<sup>83</sup> None of them, he assured his audience, "ever contemplated taking the power to educate their own children out of hands of the people . . ."<sup>84</sup>

Wickersham then turned to the legal aspects of the bill. His third objection was that: "The establishment of such a system is of doubtful constitutionality."<sup>85</sup> The Constitution of the United States "does not," he noted, "contain a word that was meant to authorize the establishment of a national system of education."<sup>86</sup>

The preamble to the Constitution, he said, does state that the government has broad powers and that none of the ends, justice, tranquillity, defense nor welfare, "can be accomplished without a system of popular education," but a national system of education was not a part of the author's design.<sup>87</sup> Wickersham revealed his view of the Constitution when he went on to point out: "Besides, if the objects of the Constitution as expressed in the Preamble are not limited to those for which provision is made in the body of it, they have no limitation whatever, and the door is open for Congressional Legislation upon all subjects; and few, I take it are prepared to advocate the complete overthrow of our State and local governments."<sup>88</sup>

He also objected to the bill's stipulations because: "The establishment of such a system is in opposition to a sound republican political philosophy."<sup>89</sup> Stressing that republican governments were the best governments available to man, he used teachers and schools as examples of how successful governments should relate to the people of their nations.

He observed that: "A school is an epitome of a nation. All kinds of government are exemplified therein on a small scale."<sup>90</sup> He then pursued the point by stating that in schools it had been found best to allow pupils to do their own work and that teachers should not do school work for their students. Teachers had found that students should learn to govern themselves and that a dictatorial teacher contributed little to learning. "Indeed," he noted, "the highest aim of school discipline is to enable the pupil to become master of himself."<sup>91</sup> The same principles should apply he continued, to national government. "Our rulers would do well to look upon the nation at large as a great school . . . It is better for the people to make their

own laws than to have laws made for them . . . The high art of statesmanship consists in making a self-working, self-governing, people.”<sup>92</sup> To take educational control from the people, he stated, would be “un-American and impractical.”<sup>93</sup>

Wickersham easily saw that Hoar did not wish to force the policies contained in his bill upon the northern states. He recognized that Hoar’s bill was a punitive measure aimed at the former confederate states. However, he was uncomfortable at this attempt to further exert national power against these states, now that they were restored to the union. He admitted that several southern states had inadequate educational systems and that something should be done to aid them. However, he said a colossal blunder had been made by not having required the secessionist states to set up acceptable systems of education as a precondition for their readmission to the union.<sup>94</sup>

He then moderated his stand on the constitutional powers of the national government by saying that since this precondition had not been established at the conclusion of hostilities, the southern states, now equal partners in the union, deserved to be granted federal aid. These states, he said, had made a beginning in founding common schools and, although they were not racially integrated, he asked his listeners to consider the problems faced by the south. He pointed out that:

The population in the country districts is general thin and scattered, the people are mostly poor, the wealthy, as a class, are opposed to common schools; and, in most places, the white race is averse to having their children educated in the same schools with the black, and, in many, it is almost impracticable to establish separate schools for the children of the two races. Considering these difficulties and considering the social disruptions and general demoralization caused by the war, reasonably good success has attended the work of education in the South during the last five years.<sup>95</sup>

He then suggested that five million dollars be given, for education each year to southern states who would match that amount. Such matching aid, he said, had worked successfully under the Peabody Fund and this aid would “be in accordance with our political institutions self-made and self-governed.”<sup>96</sup> This, he said, would be a much better plan than the national system proposed by Hoar and would leave the power of education in the hands of the states and the people.<sup>97</sup>

Hoar’s Bill did not come to a vote in the House of Representatives or the Senate. Federal aid was proposed in the following years in the Perce Bill of 1872, the Burnside Bill of 1879, and the Blair Bill throughout the 1880s. These measures were defeated as well. No punitive, compulsory Bills were to be passed that gave the aid he had recommended to the Southern states for the development of systems of common schools.<sup>98</sup>

These speeches and the writings of Wickersham in the *Pennsylvania School Journal* and his *Annual Reports* to show that James P. Wickersham held firm opinions and spoke plainly on the state, the U.S. Constitution, the nation and the efficacy of education in promoting all of them. He was an influential figure on the national and international educational scene. His speeches show clearly his ability to translate ideas into rhetoric and his grasp

of the post war period.

## Notes

1. Dictionary of American Biography, 1936 ed., s.v. "Wickersham, James Pyle," by Robert Francis Seyboldt.

2. National Teachers Association, *Proceedings and Lectures of the Fifth Annual Meeting at Harrisburg, 1865* (Hartford: The American Journal of Education, 1865) pp. 283-97.

3. Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), p. 209.

4. Edgar B. Wesley, *NEA: The First Hundred Years* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957), pp. 38-39.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 283.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 288.

9. *Ibid.* The "statemen" did their work well. Although the motives of the "Radical Republicans" may still be suspect politically, it is important to understand that the fourteenth and fifteenth Amendments were passed during the era of reconstruction as a result of their efforts. These amendments, which laid the basis for Negro citizenship, gave black men equal protection under the law and the ballot. These advances, according to Kenneth Stampp, were the products of Radical Republican idealism. See Kenneth M. Stampp and David Litwack, eds., *Reconstruction: An Anthology of Revisionist Writings* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), pp. 11-12. A comprehensive discussion of revisionist writings on reconstruction which indicate the development since the late 1920s of a more positive attitude toward the work and motives of the Radical Republicans may be found in Gerald N. Grob and George A. Billias, eds., *Interpretations of American History* vol. 2 (New York: The Free Press, 1978), pp. 23-65; David Donald, *The Politics of Reconstruction, 1865-1867* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), ix-xiv and Staughton Lynd, "Rethinking Slavery and Reconstruction," *The Journal of Negro History* 50 (July 1965): 198-209.

10. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 190.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Kenneth M. Stampp, "The Tragic Legend of Reconstruction," in Kenneth M. Stampp and David Litwack, eds. *Reconstruction: An Anthology or Revisionist Writings* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), pp. 3-17.

13. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 290.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 291-92.

15. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 292. The property issue as a reason for the failure of reconstruction was raised as early as 1901 by W.E.B. Dubois and more recently by Staughton Lynd. See Staughton Lynd, "Rethinking Slavery and Reconstruction." *The Journal of Negro History* 50 (July 1965): 207-8.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 294.

17. The philanthropy of the Peabody Fund, and Rockefeller's General Education Board and the educational work of J.L.M. Curry on behalf of federal aid to education in the South was yet to come. See Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), pp. 262-87.

18. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 294.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 295.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*

22. For an account of this method of political chicanery, see Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Political and Social Growth of the United States 1852-1933* (New York: Macmillan, 1935), pp. 231-32, 354.

23. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 297.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 296-97.

25. National Education Association, *Fiftieth Anniversary Volume, 1857-1906* (Winona, Minn.: National Education Association, 1907), p. 6.
26. National Teachers Association, *Proceedings and Lectures of the Annual Meeting at Indianapolis, 1866* (Albany: The New York Teacher, 1867), pp. 23-43.
27. Ibid., p. 24
28. Ibid., p. 25
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., p. 26.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 27.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 29
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. *NTA Proceedings, 1866*, p. 29. There is no indication that Wickersham fully understood that there have been oligarchic and aristocratic republics in the world as well as democratic republics.
43. Ibid., p. 30.
44. Ibid., p. 31.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., p. 32.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 33.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., p. 34 (Italics mine.)
54. *NTA Proceedings, 1865*, p. 297.
55. *NTA Proceedings, 1866*, p. 34.
56. Ibid.
57. The conservatism here displayed appears to correspond to that element of conservatism called by Ronald Lora, cultural conservatism. A brand of thought which actually wants alterations in the social and political structure, but would hold to "order, discipline, deference to elders and superiors, reverence for authority and a 'natural order' of things." See Ronald Lora, *Conservative Minds in America* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1971), p. 6.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., p. 37.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., p. 40.
65. Ibid., p. 41.
66. Ibid., p. 42.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., p. 43.
69. National Education Association, *Addresses and Proceedings of the Sessions at St. Louis, Missouri, 1871* (New York: James H. Holmes, Publisher, 1872) pp. 16-25.
70. Freeman R. Butts and Lawrence Cremin, *A History of Education* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1953) p. 371.
71. Ibid., p. 372.

72. Butts and Cremin, *A History of Education*, p. 371. The National Teachers Association had been transformed into the National Education Association in 1870. See *NEA: The First Hundred Years*, pp. 43-44.
73. *NEA Proceedings*, 1871, p. 16.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 17. (Italics mine.)
76. Butts and Cremin, *A History of Education*, p. 371.
77. *NTA Proceedings*, 1866, p. 29.
78. *NEA Proceedings*, 1871, p. 17.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*
82. *Ibid.*
83. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*
87. *Ibid.*
88. *Ibid.*
89. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*
92. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
97. *Ibid.*
98. Butts and Cremin, *A History of Education*, pp. 372-75.

### *About the Author*

Paul K. Adams hold a Ph.D. in History of Education and American Social and Intellectual History from Kent State University. He has taught in public schools and was Assistant Professor of History at Bloomsburg State from 1960-64 and at Gannon University from 1965-76. Currently Professor of Education and Adjunct Professor of History, as well as Director of Social Science and the Social Studies Teacher Program at Gannon University. He has published on colonial, military, and educational history in the journals *Pennsylvania History*, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, and *The Pennsylvania Social Studies Journal*.