

Early School Systems in Lancaster City.

It is a well-established, historic fact that, from the time of the first settlement on the banks of the Conestoga by the English and Quakers, as far back as the year 1729, when the city of Lancaster was not dignified by the name borough, the terms religion and education were synonymous, or, more strictly speaking, co-existent. If the former was the main pillar upon which the spiritual was to rest, the latter was just as indispensable to the worship of Almighty God; for to fully understand the Scriptures required at least the knowledge of the elements of an education. As time ran on, with the incoming of the sturdy Germans, each congregation was regarded as a sort of spiritual municipal corporation having a three-fold purpose: first, the erection of places of worship; second, to supply these with those who should minister to their wants in holy things; and third, to secure the services of a schoolmaster competent to instruct their offspring in the elements of a good German or English education—a Christian training that should eventually fit them more fully to appreciate their parental as well as religious duties to both Church and State. So well grounded was this broad principle of spiritual training, extending from generation to generation, that well may we wonder how a system of free schools, that was destined in time to eliminate all religious teaching, was ever permitted to gain a foothold among any of these all-powerful sects, whose inherent faith rested upon the broad proposition, that all instruction

of a secular nature was but secondary to that higher and holier purpose for the preservation of which they had abandoned the Fatherland for the shores of America, where they might worship God in accordance with the dictates of their own conscience. Indeed, so rapidly had these church-schools multiplied, and with such success were they conducted, under the united efforts of the pastors of the Lutheran, Moravian and German Reformed congregations, that from the year 1745 to that of 1784 they were almost the only schools of note within the limits of the old town.

An Academy Established.

It is safe to assume, then, from historical records handed down from early times that, from the year 1729 to that of 1818, when Lancaster became a city, no system of schools, other than the above-mentioned, existed within her limits. It is true, that about the year 1780 Jasper Yates, Esq., Casper Shaffner, Esq., Col. George Ross, Charles Hall, Esq., and other gentlemen of the place, finding that the existing schools, under the charge of the Lutheran, German Reformed and Moravian congregations, were inadequate to the growing wants of the people, and incapable of teaching the higher branches, engaged the services of a teacher of recommended abilities to conduct a select academy for the education of their male children. This academy continued in existence for several years as the High School, until through internal dissensions it was finally discontinued. Some seven years later, however, the General Assembly granted the prayers of the petitioners, and passed an act with the following title: "An act to incorporate and endow the German College and Charity School in the borough of Lancaster, in this State." Here then fol-

low the different sections of the act, the more important being: First, that the youth shall be taught in German, English, Latin, Greek and other learned languages, in theology, in the useful arts, sciences and literature. The corporate title of this school was "Franklin College," named after Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who contributed to its endowment and laid the cornerstone of the first building in the year 1787. Under various German professors, this school managed to struggle along until about the year 1821, when it fell into inglorious inactivity.

Then Came Franklin College.

A taste for classic literature having been created through seed sown in the establishment of the Grammar or High school of the Franklin College, the friends of higher education were not to lose hope in these signal failures. At the sessions of the Legislature of '26 and '27, the Lancaster County Academy was chartered, continuing with indifferent success until the summer of 1839, when the buildings belonging to the old academy were conveyed to the trustees of Franklin College, to begin a career of such distinguished character as to place it second to none in the broad domain of educational development. In 1836 the Reformed Church established Marshall College, at Mercersburg, Pa., named after Chief Justice Marshall, and in 1853 the two were consolidated under the title of Franklin and Marshall College, whose golden jubilee was appropriately celebrated in this city during Commencement week of 1903.

More Than the Three R's.

With this brief mention of Franklin College, one other incident needs only to be referred to in order to show the close relationship existing between the Lancaster School Board

during the early forties and this most worthy institution of learning. It refutes most forcibly the oft-repeated argument that the common schools were organized for the direct purpose of teaching the three R's. From the minutes of the Board during the year 1844 we learn that repeated efforts were made to effect a union between the Board and the Trustees of Franklin College. Under a resolution offered by Rev. Samuel Bowman, it was resolved that six hundred dollars be appropriated annually to defray the expenses of not less than forty boys of the Lancaster High School, who should be admitted to all the privileges of the higher branches of said academy. At the first meeting in 1844, the resolution was defeated by a vote of seven yeas to sixteen noes. It was not until the year 1845, after repeated failures, that this union was amicably effected. What may seem somewhat remarkable to the average mind at the present day is, that the Board of sixty years ago should contract to pay out of the common school fund the sum of \$600 annually to an institution of learning in no way directly connected with the free school system. And, stranger still, that Thomas H. Burrowes, the first Superintendent of Schools, later a member of the Lancaster School Board, should cast his vote in favor of a measure so radically at variance with the principle upon which the whole fabric of our system rests.

The First Legislation.

Following the evolution that has marked the progress of the schools of Lancaster from early times, we shall not fail to note many strange and remarkable changes—changes not without historic interest to all who have an abiding faith in the wisdom of the early pioneers of our educational system.

The first act that may be considered the forerunner of the free school system of Pennsylvania was passed April 4, A. D. 1809, entitled an act for the education of the poor gratis. This legislative enactment, while in no way affecting the status of the parochial or denominational schools, was short-lived, failing as it did to meet the wants of the common people of the borough of Lancaster; it embraced one fatal defect, compelling parents to make public record of their poverty—to pauperize themselves, so to speak, by sending their children to school with this invidious mark upon them. In addition, the law required the teachers to make oath or affirmation of such children too poor to pay for their schooling, whereupon the County Commissioners were required to provide means to compensate the schoolmaster in charge. Indeed, comparing the conditions as we find them to-day with those which prevailed when this “pauper” act first went into effect, discriminating, as it was made to appear, in favor of the poor as against the well-to-do, may it not be accepted as the initial move among the masses for a broader and more comprehensive system, in which all classes, rich and poor alike, should enter school upon terms of perfect equality, in so far at least as the securing of an education at the public expense was concerned?

The Lancasterian System.

On April 17, 1822, closely following that of 1809, another act was passed by the Legislature, providing for the education of the children at the public expense within the city and corporate limits of the boroughs of the county of Lancaster. Under this provision, the Lancasterian system of education was organized—a system that was to revolutionize the then existing methods of teaching, not only in

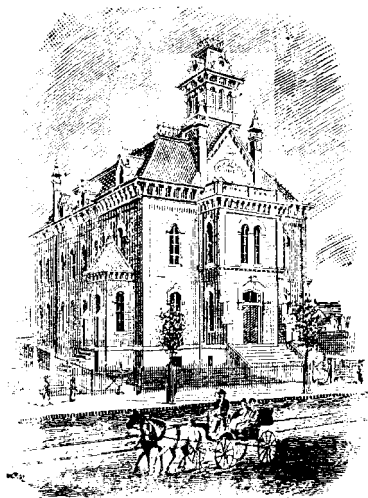
our own county, but throughout the various cities that had already taken advantage of its provisions.

In order that the term Lancasterian may in no way be confounded with the name of our own city or county, it needs only be said that the system derives its name from one Joseph Lancaster, born in London in 1778. There, at a later day, he opened a school for poor children in his brother's house; but these narrow quarters becoming too small, a more suitable building was erected by his admirers, in which as many as a thousand children were in attendance at various times. As most of these were too poor to pay for their schooling, and the humble educator himself too poor to employ assistants, he devised the novel plan of appointing some of his pupils as monitors to instruct others. Thus, it has been said that this great school taught itself, under the general supervision of a single master. It might be likened unto the blind leading the blind; but far from it, for, under his peculiar methods, there was after all in his system a principle that carried conviction to the thousands who stood ready to proclaim his name as among the greatest teachers of his day and generation. His plan, more clearly set forth by a committee to the Lancaster School Board during the year 1838, at its organization, had many advantages over the old alphabetic method, in which pupils were instructed individually in the A B C's.

It was at the opening of a "Free School" in the year 1809, in the city of New York, that the great and progressive De Witt Clinton was moved to exclaim: "I confess that I recognize in Joseph Lancaster the benefactor of the human race. I consider him as creating a new era in education—a blessing sent down from heaven to re-

deem the poor and distressed of this world from the power and domain of ignorance."

Under such flattering auspices, coming from such high authority, the Lancasterian system went into operation in the four-year-old city of Lancaster—the expenses provided for and the duties of the County Commissioners set forth. Under the provisions of this act, entitled the "Second School District of the State of Pennsylvania,"



**LANCASTER BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL,
1876.**

Philadelphia being the first, Lancaster was the only place in the county (with the possible exception of Columbia, over which hangs some doubt) in which the law was carried into effect, although the act was made applicable to all the boroughs of the county.

Ground for School Building Purchased

Accordingly, the directors appointed by the Board of Quarter Sessions were instructed to purchase a lot of

ground at the southeast corner of Prince and Chestnut, erect thereon a commodious school house, to employ male and female teachers, and to admit scholars to be taught under the provisions of the Lancasterian system of education. But with all the flattering prospects attending the launching of this new educational ship of State, its one feature, "pauper" school, became so objectionable to the masses as to fail to enlist their hearty co-operation. Aside from this one fatal defect, the purchase of a lot and the erection of a building thereon, out of the funds of the County Treasury, was not looked upon by the taxpayer of the rural districts as an unmitigated blessing. They were little disposed to bear the burden of being taxed for the education of the children of the city of Lancaster without any of these advantages for their own offspring. Although seven thousand dollars may seem to the people of Lancaster like an insignificant sum compared with the outlay of over two hundred thousand dollars for the erection of a Girls' High School by our enterprising Board of Control, it should ever be remembered that these were the good old days when five million dollars annual appropriations were never dreamed of by the sturdy yeomanry of the county.

During this short, fifteen-year period, to that of 1838, when the Lancasterian system was merged into that of the Free School System, many things of interest occurred. One of the early customs was for all the school children to appear in church uniform or badge on Easter Sunday. In 1825, General Lafayette visited this school, in which he spoke in endearing terms of its high character and standing.

Some of the Early Teachers.

Among the list of teachers actively engaged under the Lancasterian system in teaching the young idea how to shoot may be found the following, who, without exception, were continued when the old course of procedure gave way to the new, under the Common School Act of '34 and its supplements, namely: Gad Day, Mr. Butler, Mr. Rhoads, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Clark, Mr. Thomas Yarrell, Mr. Price, Miss Christie Musser, Miss Gill, Miss Helfenstine, Miss Reed, Miss Diller, Miss Robinson, Miss Frazer, Miss White, Miss McGee. Of the above named Mr. Gad Day was principal of the male high school, with Mr. Rhoads and Mr. Dwyer assistants. Of the girls' high school Mr. Clark was principal, with Misses Musser, Gill and Helfenstine assistants. Of the two primary schools then in operation Mr. Price was principal of the one and Mr. Yarrell of the other. These, then, were the sixteen pioneer teachers laboring in their humble way for the cause of education at the time the Lancasterian system ended its somewhat remarkable career.

We are now to pass from the old to the new—to an epoch involving future possibilities, trials and difficulties, of which the promoters of the Lancasterian system never dreamed. Fortunately, the records, running almost uninterruptedly down through nearly three score years and ten, have been preserved, and from these the writer shall endeavor to present for future use a few historic facts relating to the organization of the Common School system in the city of Lancaster. To present these in chronological order in the space allotted for this occasion is not within the bounds of possibility.

The First Board of Directors.

On the second day of June, in the year 1838, as set forth in the first minute book by John K. Findlay, secretary, the Board of Directors of the First Section, Second School District, met in special session in the Lancasterian school building, with the Rev. Samuel Bowman in the chair. The roll being called, the following gentlemen answered to their names, namely: George Musser, Geo. H. Krug, John R. Montgomery, Esq., Wm. Cooper, Dr. Muhlenberg, Rev. Samuel Bowman, Rev. J. T. Marshall Davie, Rev. Bernard Keenan, Dr. Hume, Mr. Benedict, Doctor John L. Atlee and Mr. Zimmerman, President of Common Councils, and ex-officio member of the Board. The only member absent was Mr. Matthiot.

The object of the meeting, as stated by the chair, was to take into consideration the recent acts of the Legislature in relation to the schools of this district, and the exposition by the Superintendent of Common Schools, which were severally read.

The Board then proceeded to the election of twelve additional directors to serve until the first Tuesday in May, 1839, electing unanimously the following gentlemen, who were recommended to the Board by the citizens at the "town meeting" the evening previous, namely, Samuel Dale, Esq., John F. Steinman, Christopher Hager, Louis C. Jungerich, John Baer, John Keffer, John Eberman (cashier), Peter McConomy, David Cockley, John K. Findlay, John Rohrer and Peter C. Eberman.

The new Board as thus constituted was composed of twenty-five members, twelve of whom were formerly appointed by the Court under the Lancasterian system; the additional twelve, the direct representatives of

the people, elected to assist in launching upon the city a new system of schools that was to supersede the old.

A week later an adjourned meeting was held—the last under the former acts, the purpose of which was to consider the result of the previous Monday's election, showing that 574 votes had been cast in favor of the Common Schools, with but one opposed; no doubt, a most gratifying result to the minds of this distinguished body of directors.

The New System Inaugurated.

June 14th, following, must have been a red-letter day for the good people of this young inland city, after bearing the ills of the two previous systems, neither of which seemed to meet the requirements of a capricious public sentiment, when the Board of Directors of Common Schools met for the first time in the old Court House, elected and constituted in pursuance of the Act of the 13th day of April, 1836, and its supplements and the resolutions of the Legislature of the 14th day of April, A. D. 1836. At this meeting Adam Reigart was unanimously elected President, John K. Findlay, Secretary, and John Musser Treasurer, of the district. It now having become necessary to elect a tax collector, John Yost, receiving a majority of the votes, was declared elected. Of the many responsible positions at the disposal of the new Board, that of tax collector was possibly the most trying; for, upon his shoulders rested the responsibility of supplying the "sinews of war" wherewith to carry on the schools, as will appear a little later.

To inaugurate a new system that was to meet the wishes of every class of public opinion, and to overcome the prejudices of those who

were irrevocably opposed to the education of the masses, and more particularly to meet the wishes of those who, without children themselves, were opposed to being taxed to support others, were difficulties not so easily to be overcome. Yet, while opposition was but the natural result incidental to the installation of a system that up to this time had failed to satisfy the friends of education, even in localities where adopted a year or two previous, we question whether the common schools were ever started anywhere in the Commonwealth under more flattering auspices. If success crowned the efforts of the men reluctantly disposed to abandon the Lancasterian system, with which they had become so closely identified during nearly a score of years, it was due mainly to the high standing and superior intelligence of the twenty-four directors constituting the Board—a long list of names that should find a prominent place in every school in the city of Lancaster.

An Early Report.

The following extract from the report of a committee, of which John F. Steinman was chairman, may not be without interest, in the disposition shown not to offend those who for so many years had been the advocates and defenders of the now discarded Lancasterian system of teaching. The report reads:

“That they have had the subject under serious consideration, and have given it that attention which its importance demands. On the score of economy and where the main object is to educate a large number of children at the least possible expense, the committee do not doubt that the Lancasterian system has the advantage of every other. But where thorough and complete instruction is

sought for, they are constrained to think that other and more successful methods may be found. And, believing as they do, that the Board will consider the quality rather than the cheapness of the schools which they are about to establish, the committee do not hesitate to recommend the abandonment of a system which they are constrained to believe is incurably defective and superficial. In expressing this opinion the committee take occasion to disclaim any intention to censure the management of the Lancasterian system of schools. On the contrary, they believe that the system has seldom been more faithfully and successfully administered." The closing of the report recommends, among other important changes, "that the Lancasterian school house be used as a primary school, with one male principal and three assistants in each school—one male and two females in the boys', and a male and three females in the girls' department." The teachers who filled these respective positions during the first year were: Mr. Yarell, principal in male department, with Mr. Reed, Miss Diller and Miss Robinson, assistants. In the female department, Mr. Price was principal, with Miss Musser, Miss White and Miss McGee, assistants.

A Good Officer Takes Leave.

As a communication was received from Adam Reigart, Esq., early in June, tendering his resignation as a member of the Board, and its newly-elected presiding officer, it is here reproduced, showing his high esteem for those with whom he had labored for so many years:

"Lancaster, June 21, 1838.

"Gentlemen: I find myself unequal to the duties of the dignified office you have been pleased to confer on me,

and must beg leave respectfully to resign it. The President of the public schools now about to be remodeled and extended should bring to their supervision a constant and energetic attention that I fear at three-score years and ten I cannot give. The subject is too important and the consequences too interesting to permit me to assume the place with the apprehension of being unable adequately to fill it. Connected as I have been with the cause of education from the origin of our schools, be assured that approaching age brings with it few more poignant regrets than that occasioned by the separation which must take place. Deeply alive to the benefits which must result to the moral, social and literary character of our city from the success of the present efforts, I lament sincerely that I cannot labor with you and do for the rising generation what my own wishes prompt and the flattering confidence of my friends seem to require. But I retire from the post I have held so many years with the consoling reflection that the public mind is now thoroughly awakened to the importance of mental culture for the young, and that in the new organization of our schools, my place will be far better and more efficiently filled than it has been. In taking leave of the Board permit me to assure each of you of my high regard and to offer my best wishes for the prosperity of the great cause in which your are engaged.

“I am, with great respect,

“Your friend,

“ADAM REIGART.”

The position of President of the Board having now become vacant, Samuel Dale, Esq., was duly elected as its presiding officer. Possibly one of the greatest difficulties with which the

new Board had to contend was that of providing "ways and means" for carrying on the schools. The treasury was empty, and the law for the levying and collecting of taxes vague and difficult to understand. Therefore, one of the first acts of the Board was to call a town meeting of the taxable inhabitants to decide by ballot whether a sum of three thousand dollars should be raised for school purposes during the year. As the only school building in the possession of the Board was the Lancasterian, at the corner of Prince and Chestnut, handed down as a sort of legacy from the old system to the new, rooms belonging to the Lutheran congregation, on South Duke street, were rented. But no sooner had the schools opened for the fall and winter term than the number of pupils began to increase so rapidly that four additional rooms had to be provided, namely: The school room of the German Reformed congregation, the Presbyterian session room, the Moravian Sunday-school and the Episcopal room. Later, the lower room of Union Bethel Church, Elliott's Meeting House and Mechanics' Hall school-room were rented in order to supply the largely increasing number of children applying for admission.

Attempts to Sell the Old School Building.

At the close of the first week, it was reported that seven hundred children had applied for admission. Think of it, my friends, and compare this small number with the more than six thousand in daily attendance at the present time! Where lie buried the statistics to give us the names of the multitudes that have entered the various schools during these more than three-score years? As some doubt exists as to the title to the Lancasterian school

building, it may be said that, during the forties, several moves were made by the Board to dispose of the building and lot of ground upon which it is located. At an adjourned meeting, held January 26, 1846, Mr. Burrowes read a petition and a draft of an act to the Legislature for the sale of the Lancasterian school building, which

“Resolved, That the Board now proceed to sign a petition to the Legislature, granting to the Commissioners of the county power to sell the Lancasterian school house and lot of ground, said petition not to be forwarded to the Legislature unless a claim be inserted in the proposed laws empowering the Board to fix the minimum price at which such property shall be disposed of.

“Resolved, That the Messenger be requested to procure the signatures of the absent members to the petition.”

At the regular meeting, held March 17, of the same year, on motion of Mr. Atlee, it was

“Resolved, That the Finance Committee confer with the County Commissioners in relation to the law recently passed by the Legislature authorizing the sale of the public school house in the West ward, that they ascertain the relative advantages resulting from said sale and the erection of a new building, and report either at the next stated meeting or sooner, if they see it expedient.”

Again, at the May meeting following, Mr. Zahm presented the report of the committee to fix the minimum price \$6,000, at which the West ward school house should be sold for, which was read and laid on the table.

At the July meeting the question of selling the West ward school house and lot was postponed to the November meeting. At this meeting a peti-

tion was presented by the American Fire Engine Company for the use of a piece of ground at the corner of Prince and Chestnut streets, on which to build an engine house, which petition, being read, was laid on the table. Finally, at the April meeting, in '47, after many fruitless attempts to dispose of the Lancasterian building, the whole matter was indefinitely postponed. This school property evidently extended from the corner of Prince eastward to Market street, for at a meeting held July 17, following, the President stated that he had entered into an agreement with Messrs. Lenher & Geiger for the lease of a part of the school lot at the corner of Prince and Chestnut. From whom the lot was originally purchased, to whom the deed was conveyed, whether to the Lancasterian school system in fee simple or in the name of the County of Lancaster, are questions not so easily to be determined.

Boys' High School Established.

At the July meeting, '49, it having been resolved that the union between Franklin College and the Board be dissolved, the latter proceeded at once to the establishment of a Boys' High School, which resulted in the purchase of the Presbyterian session building, at the corner of the alley in the rear of the Presbyterian burying ground, south of East Orange, for the sum of \$800. After formulating a series of rules and regulations governing this, the first distinctive High School for male pupils, the following corps of teachers was elected: Principal, S. E. Becker; Professor of Mathematics, J. O. Colburn; Professor of English Literature, Professor K. Coates.

As every system of schools has its professional workers—men and women who have devoted their lives to the

cause—so, indeed, has every system its enthusiastic supporters, who, while they may be little fitted to direct the young mind along the pathway of knowledge as teachers, are, nevertheless, the main pillars upon which our whole educational fabric must rest. Among these co-workers in the vineyard of intellectual development may be found the plain, unpretentious school official, whose silent influence is felt even beyond the confines of the school. Such men, indeed, were the pioneers of our early school system—men who stood nobly by their post of duty, even though compelled at times to pass through the furnace of prejudice when the floodgates were opened by friend and foe. Truly, heroism never displayed a brighter star nor won a crown of greater glory than when these benefactors took the struggling masses by the hand, encouraging them to lift themselves up to a higher plane of intelligence, as against the insurmountable obstacles with which at that early day they were compelled to contend.

As the months followed the weeks, and the years the months, the trials of the Board began to multiply; for the committee appointed to contract for the purchase of a lot, and to issue proposals for the erection of a building thereon, reported that they had found opposing the performance of that duty obstacles which they had conceived to be insurmountable, and, therefore, referred the matter back to the Board for further instruction. It soon became evident, however, that the rapidly-increasing wants of the city demanded better and more suitable school room accommodations other than the makeshifts—the rented rooms here and there throughout the town.

An Era of School House Building.

With the beginning of the year '41 began the era of school-house building, a lot of ground having been purchased from V. B. Palmer, at the corner of Duke and German, for \$1,050, on which were erected the same year three double houses at a cost of \$2,914. These were the first public school houses ever built in the City of Lancaster under the Free School system, and in two of them at different times the writer was a pupil. In referring to this purely personal matter, it may seem somewhat like a coincidence to state that in the corner house he was a teacher many years later. During the year '43 two additional buildings were built on the South Duke street plot at a cost of \$2,109. It appears, then, from the minutes of the Board, that from the year '41 to that of '55, inclusive, seventeen school houses were erected, at a total cost not exceeding \$25,000. Of these "old-timers," with their white columns, not even a photograph remains to tell the story of the trials and difficulties with which the Directors had to contend in their location and construction. If no one has regretted their disappearance from our public thoroughfares, to be replaced by others of more artistic style of architecture and internal equipment, they are not to be held up to scorn and ridicule; for well, indeed, did they serve their day and generation, sending forth from their bleak walls men and women who, profiting by the experience of the past, have been instrumental in erecting in their places the modernly-constructed buildings which now beautify the streets of our city.

As we glance back over the past three decades to the year 1872, when the High School was the only building worthy of preservation, well may we be startled by the wonderful change

that has taken place. Here and there, rising as if by magic, stand the formidable brick structures. Of these models of modern architecture, little need be said of their cost and furnishings—they speak for themselves in language more forcible than words convey.

The Age Limit Established.

And now, to revert for a moment to the days when the system was in its infancy. One of the first difficulties with which the Board had to contend was the large number of children attending school under five years of age, thus compelling the Board to petition the Legislature to fix a five-year-age limit as the minimum for admitting children to school. Later on, another petition was sent to the law-makers of the State for a six-year-age limit. Soon thereafter the Board was confronted with a problem not to be solved without serious deliberation—the same trite-worn question that more than one other Board has been compelled to meet in the years that have come and gone. One George James, on behalf of the colored population, presented a communication to the Board, stating that there were fifty-two colored children ready and willing to attend school as soon as suitable accommodations should be provided—a number that has scarcely been increased during the more than three-score years that have come and gone. For the special seating of these, their colored brethren, provision was not made until the year following the adoption of the system.

The Early Schoolmasters.

To speak of the early schools without reference to the schoolmaster would belike playing Hamlet with that important personage omitted. A mention of a few of their names will no

doubt be a sufficient introduction to the very few of our oldest citizens. Men, indeed, may lose sight of passing events as one follows the other in quick succession; but who can entirely forget the associations and impressions of their boyhood days—impressions made at times upon the mind and heart, but more frequently upon the “inexpressible”—impressions, nevertheless, we would not forget if we could!

At a meeting of the Board, held August 10, '38, the following teachers, recommended by the committee of which the Rev. Samuel Bowman was chairman, were elected for one year, namely: Gad Day, salary, \$800; Mr. Butler, \$300; Mr. Rhoads, \$300; Mr. Clark, \$500; Mr. Thomas Yarrell, \$500; Jacob Price, \$500; Miss Christie Musser, \$300; Mr. Reed, \$175; Miss Frazer, \$250; Miss Gill, \$175; Miss Diller, \$150; Miss White, \$175; Miss McGee, \$175; Miss Helfenstine, \$150; Miss Robinson, \$175; Miss Smith, \$150. These were the pioneers engaged in the noble work of educating the youthful mind when the new system was first launched forth on the broad educational sea, and at a salary, too, that should in no way raise the question of discontent among the great army of those who have since followed in their footsteps. From the sixteen teachers in '38, the number has increased to over one hundred at the present time. Who can tell what the number will be sixty years hence! Of this number, not one remains, Miss Christie Musser having passed to rest a decade or more ago—the last of that most worthy class of educators for whose memory and lasting deeds of good work no unkindly word has ever been uttered by the hundreds who, in the days of their youth, sat under the inspiration of her true, womanly nature.

Messrs. Price and Day.

To Mr. Price belongs the credit of having opened the first night school at his own expense. Rough in exterior, he was nevertheless a scholar and mathematician of some repute, being oftentimes called upon by the Directors of the rural districts to examine those they sought to employ. Versed in the classics, he had many private students at his own home. Having been a faithful, conscientious teacher, he "kept school" until his death, in 1853.

Mr. Day's Scheme of Teaching.

While all the teachers above referred to were more or less prominent in their day, none stood higher in the estimation of the Board than Professor Gad Day. He was the lineal descendant of an old-time New England Yankee schoolmaster, and was endowed with more than the average natural ability, if the judgment of the Board could be relied on. In fact, he prided himself on being the oldest of four brothers, Ira, Dan, Asa and Gad, the combined letters of whose Christian names did not exceed the twelve characters of the alphabet, the teaching of which gave him a reputation and standing without an equal in the broad domain of education. Being a disciple of the illustrious Joseph Lancaster, seldom were any new departures made in this line of teaching in any of the grades without consulting with this, at that early-time, modern-day educator. As an apt illustration: At the November meeting of the Board, the committee, of which Doctor John L. Atlee was chairman, appointed to confer with Mr. Day on some plan of facilitating the business of teaching in the public schools made the following report: "That having witnessed the practical operation of his scheme, we believe it

important to introduce it into those departments concerned in the instruction of the youngest and least advanced scholars. Cards are suspended, upon which the alphabet or syllables of two or more letters, and words of two or more syllables are printed in large letters, so as to attract the attention of the whole class. There is a two-fold advantage in this method, the principal being so much relieved that one of the teachers who has never taught before is able with great ease to instruct in the alphabet and spelling more than fifty young pupils divided into four or five classes. These are severally called up, and the teacher pointing with a rod to the card, the scholars pronounce all the letters or spell these syllables or word. The alphabet is commenced at the beginning, and the rod passes from letter to letter to the last; the course is reversed, after which the teacher points to the letters promiscuously and the whole class pronounces them. Mr. Day declares that he can teach a dozen or twenty by this method, and sooner and better than by the ordinary plan, and that a number together sooner than a single pupil alone."

While there is nothing new in the committee's report to the present-day teacher, it must have produced a profound impression at that early time, differing so radically from the old alphabetic method in which pupils were instructed individually in their A B C's. It is substantially the very foundation stone upon which rested the Lancasterian system of teaching. Indeed, with very few changes and modifications, it has been the recognized method of instruction from that day to the present.

At a subsequent meeting Mr. Day was elected General Superintendent of all the schools. His position as

Superintendent, however, didn't last long; he was again elected principal of the High School the year following and the office of Superintendent abolished.

But even at that early day of the Superintendency things did not at all times work smoothly. Mr. Thomas Yarrell, who was a genuine, all-around pedagogue, wasn't so easily convinced to Gad Day's modern-day, Yankee methods; he rebelled, and, refusing to conform to the Superintendent's scheme in teaching the alphabet, was forthwith summoned before the Board to plead to the charge of insubordination. This summary order proving an insult to the professional dignity of the irrepressible Thomas Yarrell, he handed in his resignation, departing for parts unknown, where he might pursue the even tenor of his way without being subjected to the annoyances of one higher in authority.

At the July meeting, in '41, Mr. Day resigned the principalship of the High School, and a certain Mr. Mackey was elected in his place. Two years later, after repeated absences from his post of duty through ill health, Mr. Mackey also resigned, and his position was filled by Mr. Kirkwood.

What eventually became of Gad Day the records fail to disclose. Tradition says "that, being of a roving disposition, as his name might imply, he was doomed to ramble idly without any fixed purpose, bobbing up here and there when least expected. He was the champion at all country spelling matches, where he was at all times sure to carry off the coveted prize. Armed with the Bible in one pocket and the speller in the other, with a cotton umbrella under his arm, he was the conquering hero, who bade defiance to every old schoolmaster whom he chanced to meet in battle array."

Union With the Female Seminary.

Aside from this unique description of this old-time educator, a committee was appointed at this same meeting to confer with a committee of the Lancaster Female Seminary, to petition the Legislature for a law to unite the Lancaster Female High School with said Seminary. This was another substantial argument to sustain the proposition that the early Directors were at all times heartily in favor of higher education, to secure which, for the rising generation, they were not averse to the formation of a union between the common schools and the academy and seminary of the city. In this new departure they may have been justified, owing to the chaotic condition of the Free School system of that early day. In this connection, at a subsequent meeting the Superintending Committee was authorized to enter into an arrangement with Mr. Maxwell for the repair of his printing office for the use of the Lancaster Female Seminary. Where the Maxwell printing office was then located the minutes fail to disclose.

Some School Rules.

Among the rules and regulations adopted by the Board during the year '38, we find the following, namely: "It shall be the duty of teachers to maintain a good understanding among themselves, as the Board considers harmony of purpose and friendly feeling among the teachers as indispensable to the progress of moral culture."

And the following:

"It shall be the duty of scholars to cultivate kindness and sincerity toward each other; respect for the instructors and members of the Board; reverence for the institutions of our country; love for social order and obedience to the laws of the Commonwealth; regard

for the name of God; abhorrence of idleness and profaneness, of falsehoods, inhumanity and intemperance." Later, a resolution was passed, prohibiting all male pupils from smoking in the school rooms or school grounds, and chewing tobacco in the school rooms.

In order to give the taxpayers the worth of their money, the schools were kept open eleven months in the year, closing on the first Monday in July and opening on the second Monday in August. Holidays, indeed, were almost unknown, the schools being closed only during Christmas week, on Saturday afternoons, and on Friday preceding Easter Sunday.

The Text Books Used.

As no system of teaching would be complete without the text book, following is a partial list in use during the early years the schools were in operation: Primary department—Alphabet cards, Emerson's primer, Butler's gradations, Emerson's third-class reader, Emerson's spelling book, Emerson's arithmetic, Parley's geography and testament. In the Secondary department—Cobb's and Walker's spellers, Emerson's readers, Smith's grammar, Emerson's second arithmetic, Onley's geography, Frost's History of the United States and History of Pennsylvania, Colburn's algebra, Blair's rhetoric, Murray's grammar, Gummer's surveying, Titler's history. In addition to the above-named books, the children were instructed in the use of globes, drawing of maps, the elements of natural philosophy, book-keeping, declamation, mensuration, plain trigonometry, with its application to surveying with exegetical exercises. Among the above-named list of text books, the teacher of to-day may search in vain for works on mental

arithmetic, physiology and hygiene, language lessons, the art and theory of teaching, the blackboard, the school encyclopaedia, Webster's International Dictionary, the school library, and such other paraphernalia as have marked the progress of the system during the past quarter of a century. In the High School, which embraced many of the above-named branches, were also taught the languages and sciences. This school, during the years that have come and gone, has had a wide reputation for its scholastic training, from whose walls many of Lancaster's former citizens graduated with the highest of honors. Judging from the foregoing list of branches crowded into the schools of over three-score years ago, the conclusion may be reached that the "cramming method" to which so much objection has been made during recent times is not by any means a modern innovation.

. The Early School Directors.

Of the foregoing list of Lancaster's first early Directors, not a single one is at present living, the last of that noble band, Peter McConomy and Doctor John L. Atlee, having passed to rest more than a decade ago. And here, may it be said in conclusion, without singling out any one in particular, that while the former held the place continually for forty years, the latter, John L. Atlee, beginning his Directorship under the Lancasterian system in 1822, continued the same for a period of forty-four years, or until the year 1866, when he voluntarily resigned. As a lasting tribute to his untiring zeal and devotion to the cause, it was his boast, at the close of his long, eventful life, that he had never missed a meeting, nor, indeed, that he was ever absent when his name was called.

As a youth, attending the South Duke street school during the early forties, under the once-remembered Samuel Nourse, the writer can well recall the faces of the great majority of the Directors and teachers above recorded—names that should be held sacred by those who have since filled their places. Of the hundreds of teachers and Directors filling positions of responsibility and trust during the past three-score years and ten, time and space forbid mention in the present paper. Nor, indeed, is it for the writer to indulge himself in reminiscences, which should have no place in history. The hope is, however, that at some future time the work may be continued, in order that the history of the public schools of Lancaster city may not be allowed to fall into forgetfulness.

It may be said in this connection, before closing my paper, that the facts embraced in the foregoing are but a very few, gathered here and there from the first minute-book, ending with the year 1846. Accordingly, nearly fifty years of gleanings await the pen of the local historian. What a splendid volume would this not make, to be handed down to posterity, as a record of the services rendered the great cause of education by the people of Lancaster during the three-score years that have come and gone!

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