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THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

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OF THE OFFICE OF CITY SUPERINTENDENT

with a discussion of the powers
and duties belonging
to the office.

by

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THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE OFFICE OF CITY SUPERINTENDENT
WITH A DISCUSSION OF THE POWERS AND DUTIES BELONGING TO THE OFFICE

So accustomed have we become to the terms supervision and superintendent in connection with schools and school systems that the younger generation of teachers find it difficult to believe that the office of City superintendent of schools is hardly more than half-a-Century old, and that even now much, if indeed, not everything pertaining to this office is still in a state of uncertainty and confusion. Methods or manner of election, tenure of office, powers and duties and other questions are live and vital ones and are being made the subject of discussion by the general press as well as by the educational press and in all our educational meetings and conferences. Some few things have come to have quite general acceptance still others, while held and believed in by the educational world, are not given general effect by school boards and the public at large. Possibly a few notions and ideas are in the minds of the public that are repugnant to those who hold high ideals with regard to this office.

Dr. Boone says "that there have been three stages in the development of school systems in the United States: I. The Conviction made general that every child should receive a fair share of education. II. The later but equally fundamental idea that the property of the state should be responsible for the education; III. That of school unity and system as secured by supervision."

None of these have been of slower acceptance and growth than that of supervision. As late as 1865 Bishop Fraser visiting this country said "The great desideratum of the common school system both in Massachusetts and the states generally, was adequate, thorough, in-

partial independent inspection of schools" and even twenty years later the New England Journal of Education said editorially that "The most important question of the hour in matters of education is that of supervision" All forms of school supervisions are, indeed, of comparative recent adoption and have been prompted undoubtedly by, and an out-growth of, the general notion to promote economy, systematize plans, magnify the work of the individual, prevent waste, and secure more satisfactory results.

The conditions in schools are much the same as prevail in the commercial and industrial world and that have produced the superintendent of departments and the general manager. In all these lines there has come a demand for expert services for one who could not only do the work, but direct the energies of many operators along right and efficient lines.

The strange thing is that the principle of division of labor which has produced experts and specialists in every other line and which has been so generally accepted and applied did not earlier find a place in the educational world. It is not strange that it has had some drawbacks in its application especially when children are treated as raw material and made to take on a uniformity in pattern by uniform process in no way compatible with the true nature of the child.

Notwithstanding the close analogy of a school system to this modern organization of industries the fact is conspicuous that many fail to concede it and refuse to yield the power and influence to a manager of a system of schools as that ~~exercised~~^{enjoyed} by the superintendent of a printing concern, a foundry, a carriage factory or a woolen mill.

Several causes tend to produce this condition of public mind to which some attention will be given later. The Massachusetts law of 1789 provided for supervision although it left allexecutive

functions unlodged. The earliest record we have of a school committee in the United States is also in Massachusetts in the year 1826. The results under supervision of these Committees were very meager indeed, serving without pay they rendered proportionate service.

One of Horace Mann's special reports recites the fact that in a town of forty districts the committee had not examined a teacher nor visited a school for eight successive years: and the people loved to have it so. Many interesting and amusing reports have drifted down to us of the awful visits of these committees sometimes numbering as high as twenty members. They gravely heard the classes read, examined the copy books, witnessed feats of ciphering made a profound address to the frightened children leaving on the records a testimony to the good work of the children and the master, and then left the school to its own devices for six months or longer.

The period from 1826 to 1839 is marked by a persistent but slow and tedious contest in New England against the district system which fight resulted in compulsory attendance, founding school funds, general taxation for public schools, establishment of normal schools and the partial abolition of the district system.

Massachusetts became the largest beneficiary of these new ideas quite largely if not entirely due to the magnificent self-sacrificing work of Horace Mann. Says Dr. W. J. Harris "Before 1837 Connecticut surpassed the other states in the education of its people. But the mighty engine of supervision wielded by a Horace Mann immediately turned the scale in favor of Massachusetts."

After these hasty glimpses at supervision in general, we may address ourselves to the question of city supervision.

The office of City superintendent of schools, like many similar positions, has been quite largely a matter of growth and evolution.

It has been an easy and natural step from other forms of school supervisions as township or county or state by single persons or boards to the unit of the city with a governing board and an elected or appointed educational executive to care for the immediate interests of the schools and carry out the orders and plans of this board with careful restrictions or with much latitude for the exercise of personal judgment and experience as the case may have been.

It would be well to note that the city superintendent has been evolved from the school board or committee and not from the teaching ranks as might be supposed. As a matter of fact he is frequently chosen from among the teachers, having been successful in that work and receiving the superintendency as a matter of promotion.

Of late it has been a very wide spread custom to call a successful high school principal to the management or not infrequently a principal of a grammar school. But the history of this office will most clearly demonstrate that the powers and duties now belonging to it were originally delegated to it by school boards and in not a few instances some or many of these are still retained and exercised by the board. Especially is this true in the smaller cities. Attempts have been made probably with much reason to limit and define the scope of the words superintendent and principal but with little success.

In a very general way the title of superintendent is given those whose work is entirely or practically so administrative and supervisory.

However, principals in some villages of but three or four teachers take upon themselves the title of superintendent and are known as such in their committees or perhaps as "Professor". In all these smaller cities and villages the board exercises all the rights and duties that were formerly vested in them, the superintendent in name

spending much of his time in teaching or at best serving as errand boy or messenger or clerk for the board. This condition probably prevails in more than three-fourths of the cities of this country.

Section 27 of the School Laws of Massachusetts declares: "Every town shall, at its annual meeting or at a meeting appointed and notified by the selectmen for the purpose and held in the same month in which the annual meeting occurs, choose by written ballots a school committee, which shall have the general charge and superintendence of all the public schools in the town." The substance of this statute is found in most of the other states.

The management and supervision afforded by these boards differs greatly both in quantity and quality in different places depending on the interest in schools and education of the individual members, their own business and occupations as affording little or much leisure and the conditions of public sentiment. Every stage in the general development of this office of superintendent during the past fifty or sixty years may be seen to-day by studying the conditions prevailing in towns of from a few hundred population up to the largest cities.

The history of the whole movement is the history of any small village developing into a large populous city as Denver, Chicago, or St. Paul has done. As the ungraded school of one teacher increases in enrollment another teacher becomes necessary and later a third and a fourth and so on. If the village spreads out a second smaller building will, undoubtedly, soon be necessary.

This permits a classification and gradation of work and develops a leading teacher or principal who instructs the advanced classes and subjects and exercises general oversight of the building and grounds and control of the actions and movements of pupils. We have here the rudimentary superintendent. The increasing interests of the schools

are met in two ways, first the organization of the board into committees as committee on teachers and text-books, buildings and grounds, printing and heating, finance and supplies and second by appointing some new duties to the principal. Any arrangement except that which confers new responsibility upon the principal is practically an admission on the part of the board of disinclination to spend the time or a feeling of incompetency to prepare courses of study, secure laboratory and library equipment or pass upon the merits of teaching. 1

School boards are generally made up of business men, professional men and retired heavy taxpayers with rare exceptions contain more than a small minority of persons competent to pass intelligent judgment upon technical school questions. Although there ^{are} but a very few boards that do not have at least one member who helpless as the others, yet imagines himself capable of performing any and at times all the functions of the principal. And thus the superintendent, the creature of the board, is entirely what they choose to make him. He has no legal status. He has no right nor privilege, nor duties nor responsibilities guaranteed nor provided by law.

Indeed there is no legal objection to the board dispensing entirely with the services of the superintendent or as is so frequently done hampering him by rules, regulations and restrictions or surrounding him with such, political, social or religious conditions as to render him a mere figure head or servant of the board.

It may be added in passing that school boards not unlike school districts yield up their power with very great reluctance and cling tenaciously to the tradition that they are held personally responsible for the work of the school in every department by the people. To exclude others as well as themselves now and then a member visits a teacher for an hour and later passes judgment upon her pronouncing her

capable or incapable as the matter may strike him. These things are more common, perhaps, in the smaller places and yet similar conditions crop out in larger places.

The first city to appoint a superintendent was Providence, Rhode Island in 1839. Nathar Bishop was selected to blaze away along new path. After serving with honor twelve years in Providence, he was called to become the first superintendent of the Boston schools.

Springfield, Mass. appointed a superintendent the next year, Professor S. S. Greene. Columbus was the first city in Ohio to adopt the innovation and named Dr. A. D. Lord. Portsmouth and Akron also named superintendents the same year. Boston, as has been noted, provided a superintendent in 1851 and New York, also, fell in the same year.

Cleveland did the same in 1853. Baltimore elected Superintendent J. N. McJilton in 1849 and Cincinnati Natan Gilford in 1850 the last by popular vote. San Francisco and Jersey City reorganized in 1852. Newark ^{and} Brooklyn in 1853 and Chicago and StLouis in 1854.

Philadelphia with proverbial conservatism held aloof until 1838 and continued to occupy a unique field by its self. Soon after the Centennial there was organized by prominent citizens the "Public Educational Society" which undertook a most thorough and vigorous agitation with the result that in 1838 James McAllister was named as superintendent and with six assistants was permitted to thoroughly reorganize the city schools. At this time Philadelphia had a school census of 130000, with a school enrollment of 90000 and with 2500 teachers and more than 500 schools.

The increase in the number of schools superintendents has kept pace with the years. But not only in numbers the superintendents have increased in influence and power. Many states have organizations of these officers. They have perhaps the most vigorous and independent

department of the National Educational Association and beside have many county and local organizations. The increasing dignity and importance of the office has attracted some of the most brilliant men in the educational field.

In naming the leading educational workers to-day the list would surely include such superintendents and ex-superintendents as Dr. W. T. Harris, Dr. B. A. Hinsdale, E. Benjamin Andrews, Colonel Parker, Louis Soldam, L. H. Jones, W. H. Maxwell and scores of others who while in somewhat less conspicuous places, are doing quite important work in directing educational thought and molding public opinion.

In a word it is undoubtedly true that the City superintendents in the United States constitute the most active and powerful factor in the educational field to-day.

As has already been noted, the office of City superintendent of schools has no legal standing. Few if any states make any reference to the office in their laws and then more indirect than direct. Michigan makes no reference whatever.

It does not follow that the superintendent does not have clearly defined duties but they are in the rules and regulations made by the board that creates the office. "His status is determined by the manual and not by the statute book." It is true therefore that the powers and duties discharged by superintendents vary greatly in different sections and even in neighboring cities.

As at present constituted, the functions of the office may be classified under the heads of Executive and Educational or Business and Pedagogical and about evenly divided between the two. This fact naturally produces two classes of superintendents those whose tastes and temperaments especially adapt them to business affairs and managing men and those on the other hand who by instinct or training have no genius

for business but have especial aptitude for strictly professional matters. A few men may have these qualifications fairly well balanced but most men who have succeeded in this office at all have done so either in one field or the other.

If the present plan of organization is to continue, we may find here good and perhaps sufficient grounds for occasional changes in the office. One man is quite sure to build up and strengthen a school system along one line say the material. There will be good buildings well heated, lighted, and ventilated equipped with much necessary and useful apparatus and material. There will be adequate libraries and laboratories. But there will be poor teaching, a dearth of professional spirit weak course of study and a feeble school sentiment all of which may be remedied and balanced up if the right change be made in superintendents.

This is illustrated by the actual experience of some cities. In the very small cities where the work is comparatively light affairs work out fairly well, in cities of the middle class this office is exceedingly top-heavy and in the larger cities the proper solution is being found in the separation of these two functions and placing them under different control.

During the last decade or two it is probably true that the rapid growth of cities has so multiplied the details of the office as to weaken the educational power and influence of the superintendent. This is heightened also by the increasing tendency of boards to confide more of the purchasing power, supervision of new buildings and reconstruction selection of teachers and other duties to the superintendent.

It is quite certain that at present the drift of the superintendent is toward the business manager rather than toward the pro-

professional supervisor. In some respects this is exceedingly unfortunate as many superintendents spend much of their time in mere clerical work worth ten dollars a week neglecting the higher and more important duties of their positions. Perhaps in some instances this is inevitable but it would be clearly in the interest of better school if not economy if superintendents who are fitted to direct a system of schools might be relieved of clerical and business duties.

Without attempting to draw a very straight or fast line we may consider some of the duties belonging to the two phases of the superintendents work. In every one of these we may note that special fitness and qualifications are necessary for proper performance of the work.

One of the weighty questions that does and ought to devolve upon a superintendent is to direct and advise in the construction of new school buildings and the repairs of old ones. For many years school buildings have been constructed almost entirely with a view to external effects. Inside it amounted to little more than a question of space to contain so many children as a barn is built to contain hay or grain.

As an educational expert he should be familiar with questions of lighting, heating, and ventilation and should always be able to make such suggestions as to arrangement and disposition of closets, lavatories, cloak rooms and other features as to secure the most healthful, comfortable and satisfactory conditions for carrying on the work of the school and the preserving of the health of the children.

The superintendent must be familiar to a large degree with appliances and school supplies. There has been a wonderful advancement made in school furniture and apparatus and when purchases are made the best interests of both the schools and the taxpayers should be conserved. Scientific apparatus and laboratory supplies technical maps and other material for particular departments should be investigated

and recommended by the teachers in charge but purchased only under the O. K. of the superintendent who will need to be on the alert to defeat the well laid plans of scheming agents on the one hand and the hasty and unwise tendencies of the teachers on the other hand.

Every school could lay out a beautiful cemetery filled with charts, cabinets, maps and all sorts of devices exploited by smooth-tongued solicitors as the panacea for many school ills but which have been little used and then laid aside to make way for another installment of similar stuff purchased by a new administration. No wonder some school boards are a little wary in making purchases. One reason why boards continue to make these purchases at all is because the frequent changes on the board the members are ignorant of the facts.

The first educational function of the superintendent upon his election either as the first or as a new superintendent is the question of organization. Dr. Boone says that "Viewed from the side of organization, the acme of wise supervision is the working adjustment of each part of the system to its antecedent and subsequent stages—a process termed grading." Grading was very early foreshadowed.

As early as 1668 the "A-B-C-darians" were excluded from the Roxby Latin School. Children according to the school rules were not to attend the Master's school until they could "Read tolerably well, by spelling words of four syllables." In an early day as at present in the rural schools, each school contained children of all ages. Mr. Mann in his second report advocated the separation of the older from the younger pupils.

About 1850 Cambridge made five grades, alphabet, primary, middle grammar and high. The system of twelve grades which is in use every where in the United States was first introduced in Boston in 1847.

All these historical stages are still to be found in passing

from the rural school through to larger villages and so on to the cities

We cannot depart further to discuss comparative methods of organization. Indeed just now we are passing through a controversial period on this question.

Some radical departures are being made from the twelve grade plan sometime in vogue with annual promotions. As usual in such discussions extreme positions are being taken and we hear all the views from defenders of the present system to those who would obliterate all hard, fast lines, abolish all grades and have no regular systematic promotions.

"It is the essence of supervision to so organize instruction that the efforts of both teachers and pupils may harmonize and secure to the learner the highest results in culture." And so it is clearly the duty of the superintendent to adjust and regulate the forces at his disposal to procure for every child—the dull one and the bright one—the greatest good.

It is probable that the term grouping is better than grading and undoubtedly there is a "lock-step" in our system. Within the limits of his circumstances and governed by local conditions he must provide sufficient elasticity to enable every one to progress as fast as possible and at the same time preserve rigidity enough to ensure thoroughness. Between a "machine" system and confusion and chaos the wise superintendent must find the plan of organization best suited to general as well as local needs.

It is hardly possible to separate the subject of grading from that of the course of study to which it is vitally related. This is a matter in which a man's individual judgment should be at most but one factor. He must be guided by his board, his teachers and by public sentiment reflecting the conditions and needs of the particular commu-

ity. The school must be kept in touch with the people. Many questions such as German throughout the grades, the extent to which the classics shall be taught, the introduction of commercial studies as book-keeping, typewriting and stenography must be settled by consulting the wishes of the "patrons" determined in various ways.

But there remain many vital points for the superintendent as an expert to settle and of which the public are to a large extent entirely uninformed. The school board will ordinarily not be able to render much intelligent assistance, ^{but will always be an invaluable medium} for the expression of the popular mind.

The superintendent and not the school board ought to be held responsible for the course of study and the methods of teaching.

Courses of study should reflect educational progress. There must be an opportunity for growth. We do not mean to advocate the grafting on to the courses every fad and foolish notion that comes to light on the contrary the superintendent must stand as a shield between crazy ideas and notions and his school. It happens too frequently that a superintendent wishes to be original, to distinguish himself and colors his course of study with his own individuality and peculiarity.

We believe in an uniform course of study formulated by our normal schools assisted perhaps by a committee of leading superintendents to be used throughout the state with only such additions and amendments as local circumstances should demand. Inexperienced principals and superintendents should not be under the necessity of writing a detailed course of study—a task so many who undertake it are quite thoroughly unfit to perform. Much is at stake in this matter and novices should not be allowed much latitude.

The "book-men" usually see the superintendent first and it is probably true, as it ought to be, to a large extent that the superintendent's dictum goes a long ways in settling the fate of a text book.

Dr. Hinsdale says that "Every argument that can be adduced showing that the superintendent---should make the course of study ,tends with equal force to show that--- he should also choose the text books; and with even greater force, because the text books are the course of study in a much more definite and practical sense than the course so called".

While we have tried to show that the superintendent has much if not all to do with the selection and arrangement of studies and the board has little or nothing to say, the same cannot be said with regard to text books, the first and great difference being that text books involve money. Ugly rumors are afloat sometimes and now and then unpleasant exposures are made, and in one way and another the whole matter is exceedingly delicate.

We believe that aside from mercenary motives school boards are not competent to select texts. We hold further what may seem heresy to some superintendents that even superintendents cannot select wisely the best books for his schools without calling to his assistance the teachers of particular subjects and grades. It does not stand to reason that one man can be an equally good judge of all texts from Primary readers to Greek grammars.

His experienced Primary teachers will be much better judges of what is good for the children and fitted for them and the high school subjects should be taught by persons quite competent to pass upon the merits of books in their ~~respective~~ departments. But the final power of recommendation to the board must be imposed in the superintendent who will of necessity always apply his experience and judgment to the suggestions of the teachers. It will usually prove a good plan to require opinions of teachers on texts in writing for safety and protection to the publishers as well as for himself.

The last and perhaps the most responsible and important duty that the superintendent has to perform is the selection of teachers. We are assuming that he has such power. In fact there is much diversity of practice. In small places the superintendent has very little to say about the appointment of teachers. In some his judgement may be taken as to teachers in service but not as to new ones to be engaged.

The power to appoint and to dismiss teachers resides primarily in the board of education with a few exceptions where some large cities have secured recently new legislation placing this power in the superintendent. The public hold the superintendent largely responsible for the work done in the schools and it is simply just that he should have adequate power in the selection of his assistants.

It is evident that this is at once a delicate as well as a dangerous power and while it must be confided to the superintendent he should be surrounded by such safe-guards as to prevent its abuse and protect him as long as he does the work wisely and honestly.

In order to secure this protection it will be best to ~~put~~^{use} the nomination transfer and dismissal of teachers in the board of education acting through an appropriate committee. This will relieve the superintendent from improper influences, political pressure and selfish interests as well as the storm which may follow the dismissal of an incompetent teacher.

It may be an advantage to the superintendent to have the counsel of a committee. He is able to judge of the merits of candidates but may have several between whom he has little choice, members of the committee will be able to see especial fitness in person or place or conditions of one over another.

If teachers know that their positions depend upon the superintendent it gives him the needed power to enforce his rules, carry out

his plans and secure unified and concerted action. Such influence is sometimes the only thing that will keep in line persons that are for the moment piqued disgruntled or out of sympathy with the administration.

With such a load of responsibility as the appointment and discharge of teachers the superintendent should be sustained by the board in his action if he acts honestly even though he may err in judgment.

He is more likely to err on the side of leniency. The Public Schools are not hospitals nor homes for the friendless neither is the school fund a poor fund. The schools are for the children and it is better that a few persons suffer loss and inconvenience than that many should suffer injury.

"If the superintendent weakly neglects to discharge the incompetent, the immoral, or the unfaithful, or if he acts hastily, and from impulse and prejudice rather than on sound principle then he himself will fail". Ought to fail. He may recommend those unfit, he may show favoritism or prejudice he may stand in the way of real merit and promote the unworthy. But for all these evils there is the remedy of the dismissal of the superintendent.

We shall next consider the means available for carrying forward the work of the superintendents office especially along the strictly professional educational side. Reference has already been made to a class of superintendents who either from²⁰ choice or from force of circumstances act as clerks of the board conducting correspondence, negotiating purchases, keeping records, compiling tables of averages and writing reports. Such a one is unfortunate if compelled to do such work or lazy or ignorant if he does it from choice.

The superintendent has higher duties than these and should address himself to them. But it may be remarked that all the above are

important and should be carefully and thoroughly cared for. The work should be done under the direction of the superintendent by competent persons and he should always have the records of his office so systematically arranged and be so thoroughly conversant with them that any fact or figure may be made immediately available.

Complete office arrangements, accurate records, extensive files of school reports, catalogues and price lists of books and apparatus constitute an invaluable aid to the work of the all-round successful superintendent.

While we emphasize these things we do not intend to condone the work of the statistical ^{find} or crank who is continually sending out blanks to be filled in and requiring reports on all conceivable matters from his teachers. This method of collecting data from which expts are to draw conclusions is well enough but is greatly overworked by some men to the detriment of the teacher and her work. Reports there must be but the wise superintendent makes them pointed, simple and as infrequent as the necessity of the work will permit.

We now come to what we conceive to be the paramount, the real function of supervision—the visitation and inspection of the actual work of the schools and the work of organizing and directing the teaching. We believe it to be fundamental that a superintendent who is to do this work must have had experience in teaching and preferably of a somewhat varied character. Further he should remain a teacher in spirit always and sometimes in fact. "The man who is best acquainted with the instant needs of the school room, who stands closest to its questionings and trials, often trivial, but not, therefore the less perplexing, who has trod the pathways many and divergent, through these very questionings and trials, has a good deal in his favor."

The visits of a superintendent of this kind will be looked forward to by a teacher with pleasure for she will receive help, suggestions, encouragement, and inspiration. / At this point the office-working superintendent will fail. Here he may make many fine plans and spin many beautiful theories only to have them fail and tangle when they meet the realities of the school.

The spirit with which he approaches this duty will have much to do with its value. He is not to be a captious critic, a severe inquisitor nor a dealer in meaningless flatteries. He should be there to suggest, to help, to advise. There is the unity of the work to be secured, loose discipline to be straightened, faulty or futile methods to be corrected.

The teacher must of necessity have a comparatively narrow horizon. It is the peculiar advantage of the superintendent to bring into view all departments. Not infrequently a teacher may from his standpoint shut in from intercourse with others and denied the opportunity of observing similar teaching be doing a high grade of work but compared with work in other points of the system the superintendent finds much to be desired.

But not alone to find fault however gentle the superintendent is also to be free with words of hope and encouragement. Commendation and frank notices of improvement are not to be withheld. His criticisms are to be destructive of the needless, the useless and the vicious but constructive and creative of the good, the pure and the valuable.

He has no right to complain or tear down unless he has something better to offer. "Intellectual effort is dwarfed by the shadow of disfavor and flourishes in the warm sunshine of genial approval."

There is no favor so sought or appreciated by the faithful teacher as the warm words of praise from the superintendent if loved and

respected, and there are no suggestions or corrections more faithfully noted. We have had thus far only the superintendent of small cities in mind. He is the only inspector and he is to know by his own personal observation what is going on every where in the system. He will relieve his teachers of cumbersome and burdensome systems of reports and examinations saving the time to ~~them~~ for rest and recreation or preparation.

We now note that at present in the large cities expert supervision is conducted by special supervisors as supervisors of drawing, music, physical culture, primary work, manual training while that of the regular work is conducted through the principals. It is through these that he is to make his influence felt.

It is still left to him to organize and vitalize the work of instruction. Even with these forces at his command he will still spend much of his time in the schools and it seems to be a matter of sincere regret to the best superintendents in this class that these assistants are necessary and that he cannot do the work himself.

Next perhaps to the selection of teachers is the work done with them. With the ever shifting corps of teachers it will always be found that many are inexperienced. Some are fresh from school with wonderful theories to exploit. Some have had experience but in smaller schools or under very different conditions. The unity of purpose and method so essential can only be obtained through conference and consultation.

Several purposes are to be served in teachers' meetings and these are met in quite different ways in the small and large cities. In the smaller cities the superintendent will meet with his teachers directly in the larger he will do most of the work through the principals and

supervisors only meeting the full corps occasionally, perhaps but once a year. A monthly meeting is the quite generally accepted custom although more frequent meetings at the beginning of the year or at the beginning of a new administration or inauguration of new plans may be held. Conferences of the teachers of a building or of a department, as the high school or in large schools say the mathematical department are useful as often as once a week to harmonize results and compare notes.

It is probably true that the best results are obtained in "Grade Meetings" and "Subject Meetings." There is a definiteness in these meetings a narrow specific purpose to a considerable degree lost in the general meeting. There should be much freedom of discussion in these meetings and general exchange of ideas.

All diverse and conflicting opinions and practices may be brought into a harmonious whole. They will be almost entirely devoted to consideration of the course of study and matters pertaining to actual class room work. An incidental advantage is the acquaintance the teachers form with each other and with the superintendent.

The general meetings will of course always be under the direction of the superintendent. It is at this point we believe that the superintendent of the future will differ most from the one of the present.

There is a very marked demand for professional supervision and the weakness of the unprofessional man will be most glaring when he attempts to do professional work with his teachers.

The progress of educational science makes it imperative that he who is to instruct inspire and lead a corps of teachers must himself be an educational expert—a true leader in this field. He will not teach more directly but certainly will more indirectly.

The instruction in these meetings ought to include studies in psychology, history of education, laws of teaching and the best methods of teaching the different subjects of the school curriculum.

This is the work of the Normal schools or departments of pedagogics continued and extended. The work of the superintendent also has the advantage of mature students as well as students who are experiencing these questions daily, with the opportunity for immediate application. Tenure of office is the only practical limitation on such courses of instruction.

The superintendent will outline progressive courses of reading to supplement the work of the meetings. These will include works on professional lines also some books for general culture. Every teacher ought to be studying something outside of his routine duties.

Every superintendent will find innumerable opportunities to make individual suggestions and offer helpful devices but his visits are apt to be too brief and infrequent to accomplish much in this direction. The teachers' meeting will furnish him the opportunity to correct prevalent errors and to bring out the best that may be found in any teacher or school although there ought not to be any attempt made to restrict personal qualities or to deny latitude for individual action in method or discipline.

It not infrequently happens that teachers do not enjoy their meetings and this will usually be due if it is at all wide spread to the barrenness of the results and the slim and meager attractions offered. The character, attainments, energy and skill of the superintendent are the governing factors. "Any system of schools cannot rise much above the level of the superintendent."

Much might be inferred from what has already been said as to the relation the superintendent should sustain toward those with whom his

office brings him into contract. But we may discuss the matter somewhat more specifically.

The city superintendent ought to be the educational adviser of his board and further he ought to be held responsible by his board and by the public for his counsel and the action based upon it. His relation should be similar to that of a city attorney or physician to the city and his dismissal should follow proof of incompetency.

Just now there is much active discussion as to the division of authority between board and superintendent especially in the appointment of teachers. We believe that with characteristic American precipitation and tendency to go to extremes many are urging ^{imprudent} ~~unproductive~~ and unwise legislation looking toward investing the superintendent with unlimited power without sufficient safeguards for the superintendent himself and what is of more importance the schools. "One-Man-Power" is by no means a popular slogan and we do not look to see the people yield their right to dictate or control or at least have the inalienable right of voting.

The experiments in Cleveland, Toledo, Indianapolis and other cities are being watched with much interest. It is undoubtedly true that the superintendent should have the right to transfer, nominate and remove a teacher but always subject to the "advice and consent of the board" "With all its faults Democracy is best and safest."

The relations of the superintendent to his teachers are delicate and peculiar. There are persons who in many if not all respects are his equals. There are many of them masters in their particular lines. All these forces are to be managed and controlled so as to accomplish the best results. Jealousies and rivalries are to be suppressed. Merit is to receive its just reward. Incompetency or insubordination is to be discovered and summarily dealt with.

His view frequently requires the pushing of a plan against the judgment and wishes of his assistants. They must become convinced of his wisdom or their confidence which is essential to success will be lost. All these things and many more must be done.

The superintendent must also come into frequent and close touch with the public. He must be to some extent a Man-of-the-world.

He must have that talent for getting on with people so essential for men in positions like his own. He is the arbiter in differences between principal and teacher or teacher and pupil or parent and teacher.

He must be judicial and impartial. Back of all improvements and innovations there must be a healthy and enlightened public sentiment to encourage and sustain the superintendent and the board. This the superintendent will frequently have to create. He must be convincing and able to win to him men of influence and power. He will be an ardent lover of children and will be known to them as a friend. Nothing will win the parent so easily. It is well to have a friend at court.

Finally a word as to the qualifications of the man who will be found equal to the work of a City superintendent of schools not only in its present state of development but who will be able to carry forward the work into a new century with the spirit and light worthy of the office, its mission and the times.

It may be assumed that he will be a man of the highest moral character and of the strictest integrity. That his public and private life are irreproachable. That socially and personally he is clean.

Aside from these he should possess (1) Scholarship. He should be a graduate of a college or higher institution of learning. Should be a student and a wide reader. (2) Professional skill. He should be thoroughly familiar with the science of pedagogy and have a wide

knowledge of schools and school systems and have had experience in teaching. (3) Business Ability. He should have executive ability and be an accurate, careful man in business affairs.

The number of professionally trained superintendents in this country to day is probably very small, but with the increased emolument, the safeguards thrown about it, the latitude afforded for independent action, and the general importance of the office in the educational field, it may be safely said to have entered upon a new stage, perhaps the last in its evolution.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y.

While works on School Government and Management and History of Education are exceedingly numerous, the books on the particular phases of Supervision that we desired to consider are few. We do not deem it worth while to mention many slight references to books in the above classes to encyclopaedies and other works but will mention the following as useful and helpful and as having a positive bearing on our topic.

BOOKS.

Education in the United States-----Boone.
Evolution of the Mass. School System---Martin.
School Supervision-----Pickard.
School Supervision-----Payne.
Practical Hints for Teachers-----Howland.
Art of School Management-----Baldwin.

A R T I C L E S.

EDUCATIONAL REVIEWS.

Oct. 1891-- City School Supervision-----Gove.
Nov. 1891-- " " " -----Greenwood.
Dec. 1891-- " " " -----Balliett.
Jan. 1894-- The Am. School Supt. -----Hinsdale.
Sept. 1894-- City School Administration-----Marble.

EDUCATION.

May 1892-- School Supervision-----Block.
Apr. 1901-- School Organ. in Small Cities---Gay.

N. E. A. REPORTS.

1890-----School Superintendence in Cities-Dr. F. E. White.
1896-----True Function of Supervision-----Supt. Babcock.
1897-----Problems of School Supervision---Jones-Brooks-Carpenter.
1899-----Authority of the School Supt.----Dr. E. E. White.
1900-----The ~~Typ~~ of the City Supt.-----Supt. Gove.
1900-----The Supt. in Small Cities-----Gorton.
1900-----How Can the Supt. Improve the Efficiency of the
Teachers under His Charge?-----Pres. Cook.
1900-----The Supt. as an Organizer and Executive--Denfield.