THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION, 1867-1967

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

LEONARD GLENN SMITH

Norman, Oklahoma

1967

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE

OF EDUCATION, 1867-1967

APPROVED BY

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

For

Frank and Letha Smith

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have incurred many obligations for assistance in developing what is set forth in this volume. Professor Franklin Parker first called my attention to the need for this study in 1964. He also gave many kinds of help, including several critical readings of the manuscript. His wife, Betty June Parker, read most of the chapters, saving me from a number of stylistic weaknesses. Dean John S. Ezell suggested several improvements especially in the earlier chapters. Professors Lloyd P. Williams and William Horosz offered encouragement throughout my doctoral program, including this dissertation. My wife, Mona Jeanne Smith, typed the preliminary drafts, read all of the work several times, and eliminated a number of errors.

I am endebted to Mr. Boyd Gunning, of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Development Fund, and to Dean Carl D. Riggs, of the University of Oklahoma Graduate College, for grants which made the research possible. Some of the material contained herein appeared in the Educational Forum and is reproduced by permission.

Many librarians, archivists, and government officials showed me more kindness than their positions required. To most of these people I can do nothing more than tender an inadequate collective thanks. A few, however, must be singled out. Mr. Robert M. Kvasnicka, Mr. Joseph Howerton, and Mrs. Jo Ann Stockwell led me to the sources in the National Archives. Mr. John Dobson and his assistant, Miss Freya Ryan, at the University of Tennessee Library showed me many courtesies, and Mrs. Laura A. Rucker, Information and Interlibrary Loan Librarian, University of Oklahoma, procured dozens of books and articles which would have otherwise been inaccessible. Dr. Jack Whealen, historian of the U. S. Office of Education, secured budgetary and appropriations data which I could not have gotten without his aid.

Except for routine courtesies by employees, the Office of Education had no part in the study. I alone accept full responsibility for the contents, form, interpretations, and conclusions which follow.

Leonard Glenn Smith
Norman, Oklahoma
May 5, 1967

PREFACE

Only two nations of significant size and power in the contemporary world do not have national ministeries of education. Australia is one; the United States is the other. Instead of a Ministry of Education, the United States has a non-cabinet-level Office of Education, created on March 2, 1867. This Office has had an uncertain career. For the better part of a hundred years, it has been searching for its proper role. Sponsored by radical Republicans and a number of educational leaders who shared their view about the causes of the Civil War, it was originally intended to act as an information agency for Congress in reconstructing the South. It limped along as a small, obscure agency for many years. Except for supervising schools for the natives of Alaska from 1885 to 1931, it had few administrative duties. But two world wars, the Depression, and cold-war tensions brought numerous federal education programs into being and gradually expanded the size and influence of the Office. Since World War II, Congress has assigned to it the administration of large sums of money. By 1967 it had a budget of $3.9 billion and was a key agency in President Johnson's Great Society program.

This work describes the early sentiment in favor of an office of education, the congressional debates persuant to its creation, the difficulties and mistakes of the first Commissioner of Education, Henry Barnard, and the constructive efforts of the second Commissioner, John Eaton, in saving it from extinction. The background, training, attitudes, and programs of each of the succeeding fifteen commissioners are also treated in some detail. Barnard and Eaton were followed by N. H. R. Dawson, W. T. Harris, Elmer Ellsworth Brown, Philander P. Claxton, John J. Tigert, William John Cooper, George F. Zook, John W. Studebaker, Earl J. McGrath, Lee Thurston, Samuel M. Brownell, Lawrence G. Derthick, Sterling McMurrin, Francis Keppel, and Harold Howe II.

Attention is given to several key projects undertaken by the Office during its first one hundred years: John Eaton's monumental study of American libraries in 1876, the thirty-six volume history of American education under Dawson, the activities of the Office in Alaska, the suppressed Babcock report on graduate training in the United States, the elimination of fraudulent institutions of higher education (with special reference to "Oriental University"), the Federal Forum project under Studebaker, and attempts in the 1960's at national curriculum reform. Further, the study describes some of the more important Office conflicts, such as the Studebaker-Ewing dispute

and the efforts by the Office to speed racial integration in the schools from 1965 to 1967. The Office is also viewed in centennial perspective, and its current strengths and weaknesses are analyzed.

The sources on which this history is based are varied. Much of the material for the early chapters is drawn from the private papers of the commissioners, the Office of Education letter press in the National Archives, and government documents. Unfortunately, no papers for Elmer Ellsworth Brown, William John Cooper, or George F. Zook are extant. The papers of John J. Tigert were not available at the time this study was finished, though they may soon be. The difficulty of obtaining reliable information on the period from 1921 to 1945 has been compounded by the fact that the Office of Education records in the National Archives are by no means complete. Data on the period from 1945 to 1967 have been drawn from interviews; magazine, journal, and newspaper articles; and the incomplete records of the Office of Education in the Federal Records Center, Alexandria, Virginia.

Because of the limitations of time, several aspects of this study are much less complete than the author would have liked. Developments in the Office, for example, have not been related in detail to general social, economic, cultural, and educational changes of the country. The development of vocational education, in which the Office

played a significant role, has not been explored nearly so thoroughly as the material warrants. And several recent developments, such as the 1965 Chicago funds withholding incident, have received far briefer treatment than they deserve.

Despite these limitations, the author hopes that this study shows the chronological development of the Office of Education through the work of its commissioners, and that it indicates not only the early difficulties of the Office, but the role of the Office as a political organization. If educators come to understand the inevitable political dimensions of the Office, a chief purpose of this study will have been realized and educators can better appreciate its strengths and weaknesses.

Note on Citations

Full bibliographic use has been made in footnote citations of such abbreviations as ibid. and op. cit. Each chapter, however, is treated as a separate unit, and all citations are given in full the first time they appear in any given chapter with the following two exceptions: The Dictionary of American Biography is cited throughout as simply DAB, with appropriate entry, volume, and page; and material from Record Group 12 of the National Archives, Washington, D.C. is cited, with appropriate finding aids, as RG 12.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION, 1867-1967

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDING

I

The first stirrings for a national education agency in the United States date from the early national period. At the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, delegates tried to get their fellows to agree to the rudiments of a national system of education including "seminaries for the promotion of literature and the arts and sciences"; and to "public institutions, rewards and immunities for the promotion of agriculture, commerce, trades and manufactures." Though there was no specific mention of a national education office at the convention, a number of members wanted something like the British Royal Society (1662) or the later Smithsonian Institution (1846), in conjunction with a national university. These hopes, however, were far in advance of general sentiment.[1]

---

[1]Max Farrand (ed.), The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911), II, 321-22.

The Convention's failure to make provision for a national system of education discouraged, but did not kill, all hope for such a development. A decade later (1797) the American Philosophical Society offered $100 for an essay setting forth "the best system of liberal education and literary instruction, adapted to the genius of the government of the United States." Seven people responded. Samuel Harrison Smith and Samuel Knox shared the prize. Smith proposed a fourteen-member "board of literature and science" to oversee his system. Knox similarly wanted "an incorporated board of presidents of education" which he called a "literary board." In both cases the board was to have extensive regulatory powers. Its members were to be eminent men, well paid, and chosen for long periods.[2]

A short while after the Knox and Smith plans became public, the French expatriate Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours privately suggested to Thomas Jefferson a national system of education including a "General Council" which would annually "report to Congress on the situation and progress of education in the whole of the great American Republic" and would suggest "whatever it may believe helpful for the advancement of knowledge."[3]

---

[2]Both papers are published in Frederick Rudolph (ed.), Essays on Education in the Early Republic (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 167-223, 271-372.

[3]Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours, National Education in the United States of America, trans. B. G. du Pont (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1923), p. 153.

None of these early proposals came close to being adopted because a majority of Americans had not yet decided that public education was necessary. There was still widespread hope that private resources and philanthropy could provide all the schooling needed. Sentiment for public education had first to be encouraged at the local and state levels before any kind of national system was feasible. Educators, therefore, turned their attention to improving the educational conditions of the states.

Part of this drive consisted of establishing state organizations. During the third, fourth, and fifth decades of the nineteenth century, several states created, abolished, and then recreated the office of state superintendent of public instruction. By the time of the Civil War nineteen states and one territory had state school officers; ten other states and territories had people acting ex-officio in this capacity.[4] Capable superintendents had stimulated a higher quality of instruction by publishing information on their states' educational conditions, carefully describing practices in the most educationally advanced areas, and offering limited financial inducements for improvements. The efforts of Horace Mann in Massachusetts and Henry Barnard in Connecticut and Rhode Island are the most notable examples.

---

[4]Ellwood P. Cubberley, Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History, Revised and Enlarged Edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934), pp. 216-17.

The successful programs in upgrading education at the state level became the effective basis for subsequently seeking a national education office. Some educators began to ask if the entire country's educational level might not be raised by a national equivalent to the state organization.

II

In 1840 a detailed petition reached Congress asking for the establishment of a "department of agriculture and education." Joseph L. Smith and ninety-five fellow Americans wanted a department which would receive reports on educational progress from diplomatic dispatches and from the teachers in each community. This information the department would then condense into a report which would be sent back to each teacher, "thus keeping the teachers and youth of the country up with the improvements of the age--the history of the year." But the Smith petition, though it mentioned libraries, music, and school statistics, was primarily oriented toward agriculture and was therefore ignored by most educators.[5]

At the time of the above petition other moves were underway to establish a national agency devoted to educational fact gathering. Henry Barnard succeeded in getting

---

[5]U.S., Congress, Senate, Petition of Joseph L. Smith and Others, praying the establishment of a Department of the Government, to be called the Department of Agriculture and Education. 26th Cong., 1st Sess., 1840, No. 181, Vol. IV (Original in the National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 46).

some questions on education included in the 1840 census. He and a few others also sponsored an abortive move in the 1840's to have education included in the plans for the Smithsonian Institution.[6] Beginning with Alonzo Potter's Philadelphia convention in October, 1849, the subject of a national office of education became a recurring topic at educational conventions. John D. Philbrick, principal of the Quincy Grammar School of Boston, chaired a committee (1851) from the American Institute of Instruction which was to "consider the expediency of petitioning Congress with reference to the establishment of an educational department at Washington." Henry Barnard unsuccessfully proposed (1854) that the American Association for the Advancement of Education undertake sponsorship of a national central agency with Barnard as secretary. And the National Teachers' Association, from the first meeting (1857), annually heard speeches favoring a national bureau of education.[7] All of these activities increased sentiment for a

---

[6]Bernard C. Steiner, Life of Henry Barnard: The First United States Commissioner of Education, 1867-1870, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1919, No. 8 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 104-105; William Jones Rhees (ed.), The Smithsonian Institution: Documents Relative to Its Origin and History, 1835-1899, Volumes 42 and 43 of the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), I, 189-93, 466.

[7]William Torrey Harris, "Henry Barnard," Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1902 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), I, 887-926; Edith A. Wright and Henry Ridgely Evans, "The United States Office

national office of education, but states' rights sensitivity to anything remotely suggesting national control precluded any concrete moves until after the South's secession in 1861.

III

In several ways the Civil War fostered a climate of opinion in which a national education office was for the first time a possibility. Many of the states' rights advocates left Congress for the Confederacy. And the increased nationalism engendered by the war made federal involvement even in education more acceptable. Also, the war gave proponents of a national education agency an emotional issue upon which to build their case.

This issue centered about the cause of the Great Rebellion. According to an explanation advanced by several leading educators and accepted by a number of congressmen, the real cause of the war was illiteracy. Of course, slavery and states' rights were the immediate issues, but ignorance had allowed them to become so. While advocates of this theory admitted that Confederate leaders were literate, they argued that if most of the Southern people had been able to read and inform themselves, demagogues could not

---

of Education. History, Functions, and Activities, with a Brief Sketch of Each Commissioner of Education" (unfinished typescript in the Office of Education Library, Washington, D.C., 1939), unpaged.

have gained control and lured them down the road to ruin. Clearly, if this explanation were valid, education should play a vital part in any reconstruction plan. Even if the theory were not true, there were several million newly freed Negroes who needed educating. But reliable data on educational conditions in the South--and in the nation--were not to be had. Interested educators stepped forward with a plan. Why not, they asked, establish an agency in Washington which would spend the first year gathering educational statistics on which to base sound legislation?[8] It is against this background that the post-war move for an education department must be seen.

IV

The National Teachers' Association, which from its inception in 1857 had supported the idea of a national bureau or department of education, sounded the first note in a renewed campaign at its annual meeting in August, 1864, when S. H. White of Peoria, Illinois, spoke out for a national bureau of education. The following year Samuel Stillman Greene, professor of education at Brown University, and Andrew J. Rickoff, soon to become noted as an administrator in Cleveland, Ohio, continued the appeal. James Pyle Wickersham, Pennsylvania's new state

---

[8]Letter from Charles Brooks to N. P. Banks, April 6, 1866, in the Nathaniel Prentice Banks Papers (Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Illinois).

superintendent of public instruction, reinforced it with a paper on "Education as an Element in the Reconstruction of the Union." These efforts, however, resulted only in the appointment of committees to inquire into the feasibility of petitioning Congress.[9]

The first petition to reach Congress was sent by Charles Brooks, a Unitarian minister and long-time friend of public education in Massachusetts. Presented to the House by his congressman, Nathaniel Prentice Banks, on December 11, 1865, the detailed memorial (i.e., petition) embodied Brooks' attempt to Americanize what he considered the most essential features of the Prussian schools. Brooks called for an "all pervading and harmonious system of benevolent activity" which would begin by extending the "New England democratic republican system of free schools" to all the country. In addition to these common schools (to be locally supported and controlled), the national government would create, maintain, and control "as many free public universities as the times may demand."

---

[9]S. H. White, "A National Bureau of Education," American Journal of Education, XV (March, 1865), 180-84; S. S. Greene, "The Educational Duties of the Hour," American Journal of Education, XVI (June, 1866), 229-43; A. J. Rickoff, "A National Bureau of Education," American Journal of Education, XVI (June, 1866), 299-310; J. P. Wickersham, "Education as an Element in Reconstruction," American Journal of Education, XVI (June, 1866), 283-97. The Proceedings of the National Teachers' Association for the years 1864, 1865, and 1866 contain the above papers along with other pertinent material.

There would also be a "Bureau of Education at Washington, whose head would be the Secretary of Public Instruction." All public schools would annually report to the Bureau of Education, which would in turn make a report to Congress along with "such elaborate discussions or criticisms. . . as experience and good judgment may suggest." Brooks defended the constitutionality of his proposal at some length, summing up his case with "what ought to be done can be done." As a final inducement, Brooks cited the needs of the recently freed Negro: "Slavery kept the word EDUCATION out of our national Constitution; now four millions of liberated slaves, four millions of starved minds implore its introduction. They ask of us bread: shall we give them a stone?"[10]

Three days after Congress heard Brooks' petition, Ignatius Donnelly, a radical Republican from Minnesota, introduced a resolution to the House of Representatives asking the Joint Committee on Reconstruction to "inquire into the expediency of establishing in the capital a national Bureau of Education, whose duty it shall be to

---

[10]Charles Brooks, et. al., Free Education in the United States: Petition of the Town of Medford, Middlesex Co., Massachusetts, for Governmental Aid in Securing Free Education to All the Children in the United States. U. S. House of Representatives, Misc. Doc. No. 5, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1865, 5 p. For biographical material on Brooks, see John Albree, Charles Brooks and His Work for Normal Schools (Medford, Mass.: Press of J. C. Miller, Jr., 1907), 31 p.; Wayland J. Chase, "Brooks, Charles," DAB, III, 74-75.

enforce education, without regard to race or color, upon the population of all such States as shall fall below a standard to be established by Congress." The House approved the resolution by a vote of 113 to 37.[11]

Here the matter stood when the National Association of State and City School Superintendents met in Washington in February, 1866. After an address by Emerson E. White, commissioner of Ohio's common schools, calling for improvement of state systems of education through conditional appropriations and a national bureau of education, the group appointed a committee composed of Newton Bateman, Illinois state superintendent of public instruction, J. S. Adams, secretary of Vermont's state board of education, and White to petition Congress along the line suggested by White's speech.[12] The resulting memorial, presented to Congress on February 14, was less flamboyant in tone and was more nearly in line with American experience than was Brooks' proposal.[13] It omitted any reference to providing funds for schools, including White's "conditional

---

[11] U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1865, Part I, 60.

[12] Emerson E. White, "National Bureau of Education," American Journal of Education, XVI (March, 1866), 177-86.

[13] E. E. White, Newton Bateman, and J. S. Adams, National Bureau of Education: Memorial of the National Association of State and City School Superintendents, Asking for the Establishment of a National Bureau of Education. U. S. House of Representatives, Misc. Doc. No. 41, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, 3 p.

appropriations," and made no mention of forcing minimum standards upon the states. The petitioners asked only for a national bureau which would not "direct officially in the school affairs in the States, but rather . . . cooperate with and assist them in the great work of establishing and maintaining systems of public instruction." It would accomplish this in several ways: by standardizing and publicizing statistics, by circulating reports of recent experiments, by comparing different systems, by providing information about school plants and methods of instruction and management, and by diffusing "correct ideas respecting the value of education."[14] When Representative James A. Garfield of Ohio presented the above memorial to the House, he accompanied it by an enabling bill which he and White had written. The House referred the bill to a seven member select committee chaired by Garfield.[15]

V

The Association of Superintendents chose well in asking Garfield to shepherd their bill. A product of the Ohio frontier and a student of Mark Hopkins at Williams College, Garfield had been a college president before

---

[14]The numerous other petitions presented to Congress in 1866 are detailed in Walker Fowler Agnew, "The Federal Government in Education from 1855 to 1900" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1949), pp. 133-39.

[15]U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, Part I, 835.

appropriations," and made no mention of forcing minimum standards upon the states. The petitioners asked only for a national bureau which would not "direct officially in the school affairs in the States, but rather . . . cooperate with and assist them in the great work of establishing and maintaining systems of public instruction." It would accomplish this in several ways: by standardizing and publicizing statistics, by circulating reports of recent experiments, by comparing different systems, by providing information about school plants and methods of instruction and management, and by diffusing "correct ideas respecting the value of education."[14] When Representative James A. Garfield of Ohio presented the above memorial to the House, he accompanied it by an enabling bill which he and White had written. The House referred the bill to a seven-member select committee chaired by Garfield.[15]

V

The Association of Superintendents chose well in asking Garfield to shepherd their bill. A product of the Ohio frontier and a student of Mark Hopkins at Williams College, Garfield had been a college president before

---

[14]The numerous other petitions presented to Congress in 1866 are detailed in Walker Fowler Agnew, "The Federal Government in Education from 1855 to 1900" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1949), pp. 133-39.

[15]U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, Part I, 835.

entering Congress, and was seriously committed to American public education. Erudite but not pedantic, he was among the best-read men in the House, yet he was intensely practical and was respected and liked by less intellectual colleagues. An astute manager of legislation, he knew how to use the Republican organization to promote the causes in which he believed.[16]

Garfield had the active support of four fellow congressmen, though they did not completely agree on the bill. Young Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota wanted more than the Garfield bill provided, but he eloquently defended the measure.[17] Nathaniel Prentice Banks, the "Bobbin Boy" of Massachusetts, had been a publicity agent for the Massachusetts Board of Education before going to Congress.[18] His friend from the same state, George S. Boutwell, had been Secretary of the Board of Education and had written a

---

[16]Theodore Clarke Smith's The Life and Letters of James Abram Garfield (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), II, 778-87, gives the best description of Garfield's relation to the Department. For a short treatment of his interest in and contributions to education, see Melvin A. Anderson, "James Abram Garfield: Scholar and Statesman," School and Society, LXXXVII (November 7, 1959), 448-50.

[17]Martin Ridge, Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of a Politician (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 100-101, and John D. Hicks, "Donnelly, Ignatius," DAB, V, 369-71.

[18]Fred Harvey Harrington, Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948), pp. 1-10, and G. H. Haynes, "Banks, Nathaniel Prentice," DAB, I, 577-80.

book on education.[19] Josiah Bushnell Grinnell, "pioneer, farmer and radical" from Iowa, had taught school and helped found Grinnell College.[20] Like Garfield, all four of these men were Republicans and all were allied with the radicals against Andrew Johnson. To this group should be added Samuel Wheeler Moulton of Illinois, the only Democrat to break party ranks and speak out for the Department.[21]

Opposition came primarily from the Democrats, led by Samuel J. Randall of Pennsylvania. Retrenchment was his watchword and a strong will his chief quality of leadership. One of Randall's colleagues later remembered him as a man whose "resources were limited," a man "not bred to any profession, and . . . not a man of learning in any direction." The same critic thought him destitute of moral perception in public affairs--not corrupt, merely immune to any consideration other than cutting the budget.[22] Joined with Randall were Sydenham E. Ancona of Pennsylvania,

---

[19]Boutwell, a member of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, was one of the managers at the impeachment trial who presented the House's case against the President. Henry G. Pearson, "Boutwell, George Sewall," DAB, II, 489-90, and George S. Boutwell, Reminiscences of Sixty Years in Public Affairs (New York: McClure, Phillips & Co., 1902).

[20]Charles E. Payne, "Grinnell, Josiah Bushnell," DAB, VIII, 4-5.

[21]Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 1368.

[22]Boutwell, op. cit., II, 16; also Albert V. House, Jr., "Randall, Samuel Jackson," DAB, XV, 350-51.

Andrew J. Rogers of New Jersey, and one Republican, Frederick August Pike of Maine.[23]

VI

The first version of Garfield's bill provided for a bureau in the Department of the Interior, but in April he substituted an amendment for an independent department.[24] Like the State Superintendents' memorial, the bill made no mention of money other than that required for running the Department. A commissioner and five clerks would collect information on education and transmit it to Congress each year along with suggestions for improvement.

On June 5, the House opened debate on the bill, and Ignatius Donnelly delivered an energetic defense, describing its anticipated effects in glowing terms.[25] "It will throw a flood of light upon the dark places of the land, . . . and ignorance will fly before it," he asserted. Garfield added: "It will shame out of their delinquency all the delinquent States of this country." "This is a

---

[23] Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961, pp. 477, 1459, 1495-96, 1536.

[24] U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, Part II, 1751. Provisions of the bill are in ibid., Part IV, 2966. One of the major reasons for the change was to give the commissioner direct appointive and removal power over his subordinates.

[25] For the debate, see ibid., Part IV, 2966-70, 3044-51, 3269-70.

foundation," concluded Donnelly, "upon which time and our enormous national growth will build the noblest of structures. . . . Pass this bill and you will give education a mouth-piece and a rallying point."

Opponents quickly responded, basing their arguments largely on conservative objections. "We should stand by principles and axioms which have been established for years and years past," Andrew J. Rogers reminded his colleagues. This Department would be something "never before attempted in the history of this nation," added Samuel J. Randall. Besides, he said, "there is no authority under the Constitution." The cost, they all agreed, would be something stupendous to behold. "I guarantee you that in the very first year the expense . . . will not fall short of $100,000, and it will run on until it costs $500,000 a year," lamented Rogers. "And where," he wondered, "will it end?" Not before it reaches $5 million a year, replied an editorial writer in the New York Herald.[26] This whole business, Rogers concluded, is a "mere wild scheme of philanthropy." "It is a poor time," cautioned Randall, "in the present deplorable condition of our finances, to inflict upon the country a centralization of power and influence at the capital of this Government, to interfere with the domain of the States, . . . and at an expense of $100,000 a year."

---

[26] New York Herald, July 16, 1866, quoted in Howard K. Beale, The Critical Year: A Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1958), p. 229 fn.

Advocates of the Department justified their case on the theory that the Civil War had resulted from educational failings in the South. To the cry that education should be left to the states, Donnelly replied that it had been, "and we have had the rebellion as a consequence." "A tenth of our national debt expended in public education fifty years ago," added Garfield, "would have saved us the blood and treasure of the late war." Opponents answered that illiteracy was not to blame for the war and that education was not all that essential in reconstruction. The educated classes of the South, they pointed out, had instigated the rebellion. And even if education were a needed ingredient, the proposed department did not have the power to teach a single person how to read or write. If educators were bent on statistics, observed Pike, "two clerks in the Department of Interior could do what the proposed department would do."

A move to adopt Pike's suggestion of two clerks failed by only fourteen votes, and sponsors of the Department felt compelled to retreat somewhat from their original demands. They reduced the commissioner's salary from $5,000 to $4,000 and the number of clerks from five to three. But even this failed to enlist the support of a majority of the House, and on June 8 the bill lost by a scant two votes. Most radical Republicans and many

moderates had supported it; all but two Democrats opposed it.[27]

Obviously if the bill was to pass, some of the moderate Republicans who had opposed it or who had abstained in the voting had to be persuaded to favor it. Garfield and a handful of other congressmen quietly set about this task and succeeded so well that when the measure came up for reconsideration on June 19, it passed by almost a two-thirds majority.[28] Supporters of the bill, while not entirely satisfied, were generally pleased. Henry Barnard, who had closely observed the proceedings, wrote to Garfield, "May you live a thousand years. . . , but I don't believe you will ever do a work more beneficial and fruitful than this brief act creating a 'Department of Education.'" "The form of your measure," he added, "is better than I feared you could ever get."[29]

---

[27]The vote was 61-59 with 63 abstentions. U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, Part IV, 3051. Samuel Wheeler Moulton of Illinois and Rufus Paine Spalding of Ohio were the two Democrats.

[28]The vote was 80-44 with 58 abstaining. Ibid., 3270. Comparison of the June 8 vote with that of June 19 shows that: 10 who had voted "yes" the first time did not vote the second time (9 Rep., 1 Conservative), 1 who had voted "yes" changed to "no" (Joseph H. Defrees, R-Indiana), 9 who had not voted the first time voted "no" (6 Dem., 3 Rep.), 7 who had voted "no" changed to "yes" (all Rep.), 20 who had voted "no" did not vote the second time (14 Rep., 5 Dem., 1 Unionist), and 25 who had not voted the first time voted "yes" (24 Rep., 1 Unionist).

[29]Letter from Henry Barnard to James A. Garfield, February 28, 1867, in James A. Garfield Papers (Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.), Letters Received, Vol. 8, Item 71.

VII

Having cleared the House, the bill went to Lyman Trumbull's Senate Committee on the Judiciary, where it stayed until the end of January, 1867, despite efforts by White, Barnard, and others to dislodge it.[30] Trumbull's committee reported it without change and the Senate opened debate on the proposed department on February 26.[31] A few senators agreed with House critics in not wanting any kind of national agency. Garrett Davis, a Whig from Kentucky, bemoaned "this thing of Congress drawing into the vortex of the power of the national government so many subjects" as a "very mistaken policy"; Thomas A. Hendricks, an Indiana Democrat, contended that there was no need for the department; and Willard Saulsbury, a fellow partisan from Delaware, thought it unconstitutional. But most members of the Senate accepted the basic idea of the bill. By far the strongest objection came over the provision for an independent department rather than a bureau under the Secretary of the Interior. The designation of "department" was normally reserved for the largest governmental organizations and carried great prestige. The idea of a four-man department tucked away in some obscure room struck several senators as absurd.

---

[30] U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, Part IV, 3267, and 2d Sess., 1867, Part II, 853.

[31] Ibid., Part III, 1842-44, 1893.

Champions of the bill would have been willing to change the "department" to a "bureau," but feared that a conference committee might pigeonhole the measure. Hence, they pressed for its adoption without any alterations. "Call it. . . a bureau, or call it a department, but give us the bill," pleaded Charles Sumner, "and do not endanger it, at this late hour of the session, by any unnecessary amendment." The bill passed without a roll call challenge, and Garfield wrote Barnard: "The schoolmaster is abroad."[32] A Democratic move for reconsideration a few days later suffered a twenty-eight to seven defeat.[33]

The bill was safely through Congress, but President Andrew Johnson was at serious odds with congressional radicals by March of 1867. Fearing their reconstructionist defenses of the bill, he decided to veto it. But Senator James Dixon of Connecticut, one of the President's few Republican supporters, persuaded him to sign the bill.[34]

---

[32]Letter from James A. Garfield to Henry Barnard, February 28, 1867, No. 8486 in the Will S. Monroe Collection of Henry Barnard (Fales Collection, New York University, New York, N. Y.).

[33]U.S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 2d Sess., Part III, 1949-50. If the move to reconsider may be taken as an indicator, party lines were almost as evident in the Senate as in the House. Of the 35 senators listed as Republicans, 25 voted against and only 1 voted for reconsideration; of the 12 Democrats, 4 voted for and only 1 against reconsideration.

[34]On Dixon's role, see "The Department of Education at Washington, 1867-1870," American Journal of Education, XXX (March, 1880), 197.

This Johnson did on March 2, 1867, and the United States Department of Education became a legal reality.

CHAPTER II

THE INAUGURATION OF THE DEPARTMENT, 1867-1870

I

With the enabling bill safely past Congress and the President, the important question remained: Who would be appointed commissioner? Several prominent educators had been closely identified with the effort to create the Department and would have liked the post: Charles Brooks, common school advocate in Massachusetts; Newton Bateman, superintendent of public instruction in Illinois; Samuel Stillman Greene, the first agent of the Massachusetts State Board of Education and professor at Brown University; John S. Hart, Pennsylvania school administrator and publicist. Garfield's official blessing went to Emerson White, editor of the Ohio Educational Monthly, ex-commissioner of Ohio's common schools, and virtual author of the bill creating the Department. None of these men, however, had even a remote chance, for each was being advocated by political foes of the President. The only man, in fact, who was ever seriously in the running was Henry Barnard. Barnard had a national reputation, and, what was more

important in this case, had a personal friend in Senator James Dixon, who had enough influence with the President to secure the nomination for him.[1]

II

Henry Barnard (1811-1900) was one of America's outstanding nineteenth century educators. Born in Hartford, Connecticut, the son of a well-to-do farmer, he received a good education except for an interlude in a "miserable" district school. In 1826 he entered Yale College and, despite being sent home temporarily for participating in a student demonstration against the quality of the college's food, graduated in 1830 with a Phi Beta Kappa key.

Upon graduation he was uncertain about what specific career to follow but felt it had to be in the broad area of public service. While making up his mind, he sought and gained admission to the bar. To extend his education he read and traveled in America and Europe. In 1836 he found himself elected to the Connecticut legislature. There he helped formulate and secure passage of a comprehensive school code and then, with reluctance, undertook to see it into effect.

---

[1]"The Department of Education at Washington, 1867-1870," American Journal of Education, XXX (March, 1880), 197. See also letters from Dixon to Barnard in the Henry Barnard Collection (Watkinson Library, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut). Cited hereafter as Barnard Papers.

From 1839 to 1842 he served as the chief state school official under the law which he had helped pass. When Connecticut abolished the office, Rhode Island called him to fill a similar position. After seven years of successful work there he returned to Connecticut to serve in a restored version of his first office. In both states Barnard edited high quality journals to help build public support for school reforms. In both states the success he enjoyed in raising the level of schooling enhanced his reputation as an educator. Without really expecting to, he had found his life's work in public education. When he retired from these efforts in 1855, he was widely known and highly respected.[2]

Up to 1854 Barnard's educational activities had been largely confined to two states, but his interest in and plans for the growth of American education ranged far beyond their borders. He especially wanted to see some central agency created for assembling data on education and making the results available to educators all over the country. He had long hoped for a national central office, supported from public or private institutional funds, to

---

[2]Charles F. Arrowood, "Young Henry Barnard, As Revealed in His Letters to Ashbel Smith," Educational Forum, XIV (March, 1950), 307-21; Harris Elwood Starr, "Barnard, Henry," DAB, I, 621-25; Richard K. Morris, "Parnassus on Wheels, a Biographical Sketch of Henry Barnard, 1811-1900," Teacher Education Quarterly, XVIII (Winter, 1960-61), 45-57. Pages 53-57 of the Morris article contain an excellent bibliography of writings about Barnard.

collect this information and disseminate it by means of bulletins, circulars, pamphlets, and a quarterly or monthly journal. Many colleagues and some professional groups expressed interest in his idea, but none would underwrite it. Barnard decided to try to carry out the heart of the plan on his own and began publishing the American Journal of Education. Until a national office could be effected, he reasoned, the Journal would serve as a substitute.[3]

From the appearance of the first issue, the Journal became Barnard's chief project in life. In good health or ill, with occasional profit and usually a loss, he saw it off the press. For more than twenty years he gave it the major part of his attention, so much so that he often had insufficient physical and emotional energy to meet other demands. Partly for this reason he had little success in the only two professional appointments he held from 1854 to 1867--Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin (1858-60) and President of St. John's College (1866-67). Even his home life suffered, and his wife

---

[3]On Barnard's efforts to secure a national agency, see Bernard C. Steiner, Life of Henry Barnard: The First United States Commissioner of Education, 1867-1870, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1919, No. 8 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 104-13. On the plan itself, see Henry Barnard, "Plan of Central Agency for the Advancement of Education in the United States," American Journal of Education, I (August, 1855), 134-36.

complained at his tendency to sacrifice everything for the Journal.[4]

In view of Barnard's commitment, it is not difficult to understand why he took heart from the movement in 1866 to create a national department of education and why he neglected his duties at St.John's College to lobby for Garfield's bill. If the measure could be passed, the work which he had done privately for over a decade would be carried on by an agency having far more resources than he had. Nor should it be surprising that Barnard wanted to be the first commissioner. Thirty years of work and study, he felt, had uniquely fitted him for the job.[5] "It is the only office under gift of government which I would turn on my heel to get," he confided to Daniel Coit Gilman in January, 1867; and he added, "I should like to wind up my educational career in inaugurating this office."[6] Four days later he told another friend that he was going to

---

[4]Richard Emmons Thursfield, Henry Barnard's American Journal of Education. Number 1 of the 63d Series of the Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), pp. 17-91; Louis Phelps Kellogg, "Henry Barnard," Wisconsin Alumnus, XLI (February, 1940), 115-21; and Steiner, op. cit., 100-103.

[5]Richard K. Morris, "The Barnard Legacy," Teacher Education Quarterly, XVIII (Spring, 1961), 103.

[6]Letter from Henry Barnard to Daniel C. Gilman, January 10, 1867, in the Daniel Coit Gilman Papers (Johns Hopkins University Library, Baltimore, Maryland). Cited hereafter as Gilman Papers.

Washington to spend a day or two calling on "some of the prominent Senators," saying "I know full well that a novice, or a politician can render this department obnoxious or injurious--but I believe that I can make it useful and popular."[7]

Barnard was in an excellent position to secure the commissionership. Political considerations did not rule him out with Andrew Johnson, as it did most of his competitors for the post. Barnard had no strong party attachments, though he was a Whig at heart, and had not taken a position on reconstruction. Also his friendship with Senator James Dixon, who was close to the President, virtually ensured his nomination.[8] On March 11 the President sent his name to the Senate, which gave unanimous consent five days later. But the easy confirmation did not augur quiet days ahead, as Barnard soon learned to his regret.

---

[7]Letter from Barnard to Elisha Reynolds Potter, January 14, 1867, No. 8447 in the Will S. Monroe Collection of Henry Barnard (Fales Collection, New York University, New York, New York). Cited hereafter as Monroe Collection.

[8]Barnard did take the precaution of having friends write other senators in his behalf: Letter from W. R. White to W. T. Willey, January 24, 1867, in the Waitman Thomas Willey Papers (State and Regional History Collection, Morgantown, West Virginia); Barnard to Gilman, January 10 and February 11, 1867, Gilman Papers; J. M. Hoyt to Barnard, February 18, 1867, No. 8063 in the Monroe Collection.

III

Trouble developed immediately over the appointment of the chief clerk. To work with him the new Commissioner wished to invite Elisha Reynolds Potter, a prominent educator, lawyer, and politician who had succeeded him as school commissioner in Rhode Island. But Andrew Johnson had different ideas about the matter. Edward Duffield Neill (1823-1893), pioneer educator and Presbyterian missionary in the Minnesota Territory and at the time one of Johnson's secretaries, applied for the job.[9] Barnard ignored his letter, and Neill turned to the President for help.[10] Word reached the Commissioner that Johnson expected Neill's appointment, but instead of bowing gracefully to political necessity, Barnard still demurred. The President grew insistent. "You had better be careful or you will be in trouble," Senator Dixon warned his friend Barnard. "From a hint to me from a person near the Prest (not Dr Neil[l]) the Commission may be held back by the President if Neil[l] is not appointed."[11]

---

[9]Solon J. Buck, "Neill, Edward Duffield," DAB, XIII, 408-9; Huntley Dupre, Edward Duffield Neill: Pioneer Educator (Saint Paul, Minn.: Macalester College Press, 1949).

[10]Two letters from James Dixon to Barnard, March 14 and 16, 1867, Barnard Papers.

[11]Ibid., letter of March 14.

After further delay Barnard acquiesced, but the seeds of disruption had already been sown. Neill was sensitive to any affront to his honor, and it was evident that the Commissioner did not want him. In fact Barnard tried to avoid naming him "chief" clerk. Neill threatened to go over the Commissioner's head to the President if changes were not made. "If he has the influence with higher powers, which he claims," Zalmon Richards, one of the Department's other clerks, told Barnard, "you will need some wisdom, and prompt decision to get along smoothly, . . . with him as your chief subordinate officer."[12]

Even without the bad beginning, the two men probably would not have gotten along. In the first place, they differed on some educational questions (e.g., Barnard strongly advocated co-education; Neill was irrevocably opposed to the idea). More significant than any abstract disagreement, however, was Neill's basically volatile personality. Although most people who knew him liked him, no one enjoyed opposing him. He had a "top quality" gift for sarcasm and was accustomed to expressing his numerous opinions freely. These were hardly qualities needed to make him a quiet, loyal lieutenant; and Barnard definitely needed a chief clerk who would carry out efficiently rather than

---

[12]Letters from Zalmon Richards to Barnard, April 6 and 26, 1867, Nos. 8504 and 8518 in the Monroe Collection.

question policies, since Barnard himself "did not receive suggestions well, and usually resented criticism."[13]

In fairness to Neill it must be admitted that Barnard seemed almost to invite criticism. As soon as he had appointed his clerks, the Commissioner left Washington without securing furniture or stationery for the Department, without making provision for salaries or expenses, without delineating responsibilities and authority, and without saying when he would return.[14] Barnard stayed away, except for very brief interludes, for months at a time, leaving his three-man staff to quarrel among

---

[13]Dupre, op. cit., pp. 84, 99-100, 102-03, affords the best insight into Neill's personality. One of Neill's contemporaries said that he appeared to be a bundle of nerves, that he walked "like a man on springs," that he was "extremely sensitive as to points of honor, of true manhood, of principle." Another associate remembered that all of Neill's family were "quick on the trigger." Thursfield, loc. cit., reveals Barnard's intractability more clearly than other published sources.

[14]Barnard's negligence and Neill's reaction to it are revealed in the following letters from Zalmon Richards to Barnard in the Monroe Collection: April 6 (No. 8504), April 26 (No. 8518), May 10 (No. 8528), June 18 (No. 8552), November 16 (No. 8797), 1867. The letter of May 10 is illustrative: "Mr. Neil[l] is very anxious to have, (as he says) 'the office organized' -- I think it would be well for you to authorize some one to draw funds from the Treasury to meet current expenses, of salaries &c, and furnish some stationery, &c for the office. I have paid nearly $60 out of my own money for fixing the furniture, and must pay the Bill in full tomorrow. If you will authorize me to open some book for accounts &c I will do so at once -- I think it should be done without delay."

themselves.[15] Neill concluded that the Department of Education was a joke and that the Commissioner intended to do nothing more than draw his $4,000 per year while living at home in Hartford, Connecticut, and pursuing his own affairs.

Barnard felt entirely justified in staying out of Washington. The Capital's climate did not agree with his precarious health. Moreover, his home in Hartford was a more convenient place to work on the Journal, which he intended to make one of the Department's publications. To Barnard, the merging of his Journal with the Department was only logical since the periodical was already doing on a limited scale what he thought a department of education should do. Time spent on one was no less in the public interest than time spent on the other. Whether he was in Hartford or Washington he felt he was fulfilling

---

[15]Besides Neill, the office staff consisted of Zalmon Richards in the $1800 clerkship and many transients in the $1600 clerkship, including the noted German kindergarten expert, John Krause, and the future president of Johns Hopkins University, Daniel Coit Gilman. Richards, a graduate of Williams College, had long been involved in educational enterprises and had served as the first president of the National Teachers' Association. From 1861 until he transferred to the Department of Education at its inception, he worked for the government in the Treasury Department and the Bureau of the Statistics. He had an active part in lobbying for passage of the bill creating the Department and had supported Barnard for Commissioner. See Sarah G. Bowerman, "Richards, Zalmon," DAB, XV, 561-62, and J. Ordman Wilson, "Zalmon Richards," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, XXXIX (1900), 713-14.

his duties as Commissioner. Neill did not agree.[16]

As time passed Neill's dissatisfaction with Barnard turned to disgust and open rebellion. Neill became irregular in attendance at the office. Apparently he concluded that if the Commissioner could draw a salary without going to the office, the chief clerk could too. When Barnard retaliated by paying him only part of his salary, Neill dropped all pretense of restraint, and the Commissioner found himself enmeshed in an intolerable situation.[17] It was evident that he was not going to appease his clerk. The only alternatives left were to fire him and risk the President's displeasure, or resign in protest over having an unacceptable employee forced upon him. Toward the end of the first year, Barnard chose the former course and dismissed Neill; but this action only aggravated his problem.[18]

---

[16]William Torrey Harris, "Establishment of the Office of Commissioner of Education of the United States, and Henry Barnard's Relation to It," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, XXXX (1901), 409.

[17]On November 16, 1867, Richards, who was chief clerk in fact though not in name or salary, wrote Barnard that Neill was spending very little time in the office, that he would not let Richards have the mail, and that he was giving instructions contrary to Barnard's. Richards was of the opinion that Neill, having failed to win any concessions from Barnard, was going to try to ruin the Department. (No. 8797, Monroe Collection). The following month Barnard paid Neill for only fourteen days, diverting the other seventeen days of his pay to another man. (Richards to Barnard, December 26, 1867, No. 8880, Monroe Collection).

[18]Just when Barnard fired Neill is not clear from existing records. It was apparently not earlier than January, 1868, and probably not much after that.

Neill complained to influential people. Poisonous rumors began to spread. "My dismissed clerk," Barnard told Gilman, "is pursuing me with great rancor, . . . and has now got the president's ear."[19]

Neill's gossip gained credibility because of another of the Commissioner's administrative errors. Barnard wanted information for the Department which only highly qualified experts all over the country could supply, but he had no appropriation for securing their services. Hence he resorted to the expedient of hiring first one of these persons and then another as clerk for brief periods without requiring them to come to Washington and work in the offices of the Department. Critics of the Commissioner seized upon this practice as evidence that he was misusing his funds; they even hinted that he might be padding his own purse with some of the money drawn to pay these non-Washington clerks.[20]

---

[19]Undated letter from Barnard to Gilman marked "Private" in Gilman Papers.

[20]Ibid. See also a letter from Andrew Johnson's secretary (William G. Moore) to Henry Barnard, October 29, 1868, in the Andrew Johnson Papers (Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.), Series 3A, p. 415, which tells Barnard to furnish at his earliest convenience a "list of all persons who have been enrolled as clerks or otherwise employed in the Department of Education since its organization, the number of months for which they have been respectively paid, the amount of money received by each, and the number of days each was actually on duty in the office."

With Neill pointing to Barnard's absence from the office and his irregular administration of funds, it is not difficult to understand that when Barnard or his Department was mentioned in Washington circles, the best picture conjured up was one of an incompetent, sinecured old man, and the worst, of an unscrupulous pocketer of public funds. Washington society, in which he had had little interest anyway, completely turned its back on him.[21]

IV

Barnard might have headed off some of the difficulty by sending Congress a succinct document fulfilling the requirements of the law creating his Department. The first annual report was due, and Congress had also asked for an investigation by the Commissioner of the status of land given the states in 1862 for education, and for suggestions on improving the schools of the District of Columbia.[22] But March, 1868, came--a year gone by--with no evidence that any of these three requirements would ever be met.[23] When April passed with appropriations discussions for the next year already under way, friends of the Department in Congress became seriously alarmed.

---

[21]Barnard to Gilman, June 26, 1868, Gilman Papers.

[22]U. S., Congressional Globe, 40th Cong., 1st Sess., 1867, Part I, 281, 290.

[23]According to one biographer, Barnard had never been very punctual in meeting publication deadlines. Thursfield, op. cit., pp. 25, 28.

On May 5 Garfield wrote to Barnard, who was in Hartford, detailing the stark realities facing the Department:

> My great interest in the permanence and success of the Dept. of Education, induces me to suggest to you my fear that nothing but an early presentation to Congress of the valuable Reports which you have so nearly ready, will enable the friends of the Dept. to save it from abolition and to defend you from the charge that is constantly being reiterated, that no good to the Nation is being accomplished by the Dept--and that you are using the office in the interest of your Journal.[24]

The bluntness of Garfield's note must have hurt Barnard. Certainly it shocked him into an immediate reply. His answer revealed him as a man physically ill and emotionally distraught, yet still unable to see any need of dropping the Journal. This monumental publication was a part of his dedication to public service, and he was already over $20,000 in debt because of it.[25] The charge that he was using public office to further his private interests was incomprehensible to him, especially when in his own view the exact reverse was closer to the truth. On May 6 he wrote:

> Gen. Garfield
> My dear Sir
>
> I thank you for your note of the 5th -- I am overwhelmed with anxiety, as you may suppose -- & no

---

[24]Garfield Papers, Letters Sent, 1868, p. 16.

[25]Thursfield, op. cit., p. 46, makes the following statement: "A large share of Henry Barnard's financial difficulties in supporting his costly Journal can be attributed . . . to his own utter lack of managerial ability.

earthly consideration would induce me to work an hour, but my desire to bring some of my documents to that state of completion, that they can be brought together -- and I think I can see my way to the end at last.

I left Washington -- fearing if I staid any longer I should break down -- Mr Morrill told me nothing would be done with the appropriation until after the impeachment trial was ended. . . . The very day of my return [to Hartford], I was taken ill, which with my nervous exhaustion has made the last four weeks the most critical of my life, & yet by the greatest care -- by rising early -- by employing help, I have continued to finish up nearly two hundred & fifty pages, which constitute a portion of my circulars, (and which are part of the several documents which I propose to make up, with additional matter for which the Govt payed nothing) referred to in my Report.

These Circulars, except No 3, 4, & 5 have cost the Govt nothing.

As for my poor journal which I have continued at a pecuniary loss of nearly two thousand dollars [since taking office], simply to help the object of the Dept -- it is too bad, it should have to bear the signature of the Commissioner!!

My highest aim, is to save the Dept -- & if I escape the exhaustion of this year's labor without the ruin of my health -- I shall be thankful -- If I am able to travel, I shall be in Washington at the close of this week -- & after I reach [there], all the printing which will have to be done, will not exceed 15 or 20 pages --

Have patience & charity -- & I shall probably not trespass on either much longer --

Very truly your friend
Henry Barnard

I am working against the insistence of family, & friends.[26]

---

[26]Garfield Papers, Letters Received, Vol. 9, Item 74.

By the end of May, Barnard had managed to get a partial report to Congress, and by June had the complete volume to the printer so that congressmen received copies during the summer.[27]

Though well-written, the content of the report was tactically an error and demolished whatever remained of the Department's tattered image. It was not at all the kind of document which Congress had expected or what most of the Department's original exponents had intended. Congressmen had expected a factual report describing actual educational conditions throughout the country, with recommendations for improvement. But instead of presenting facts, the Commissioner only described the kinds of information he would eventually seek. The introductory statement and accompanying documents made up a bulky tome of over 900 pages set in small, hard-to-read print.[28] Most members of the Fortieth Congress would not have read that many pages on any subject, much less education. In fact, upon seeing the length of the report, the House hastily rescinded its printing order for all but the first thirty-three

---

[27] Theodore Clarke Smith, The Life and Letters of James Abram Garfield (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), II, 72.

[28] Department of Education. Report of the Commissioner of Education, with Circulars and Documents Accompanying the Same, Submitted to the Senate and House of Representatives June 2, 1868 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868).

pages.[29] The most serious defect was that nearly half the volume consisted of reprints from the 1867 American Journal of Education--this in spite of Garfield's urgent recommendation that such material be omitted.[30] The report hardly quieted rumors that Barnard was using public office in the interest of his periodical. Nor did the Commissioner's complaint that he was being overworked to the point of impairing his health induce Congress to grant the additional funds and clerks for which he asked.[31]

Congressional supporters of the Department despaired over the ill-conceived volume. As Garfield told Burke Hinsdale, Barnard had "utterly missed the point of proving to Congress that his Dept. was a good thing." "The mistake of the Commissioner," he added, "was in not understanding that he was serving under a body of men who were not educated in his line and who had given a reluctant consent to the establishment of the Dept. and in order to secure their consent for its continued existence must see something of direct value in it."[32]

---

[29]U.S., Congressional Globe, 40th Cong., 2d Sess., 1868, Part V, 4469. The Senate voted 1500 copies of the rest of the Report for Barnard's use. Ibid., 4501.

[30]Garfield to White, December 26, 1868, Garfield Papers, Letters Sent, 1868, p. 437. Barnard included Garfield's speech in the House on June 8, 1867, in defense of the Department, thus making it very difficult for Garfield to defend Barnard's report. See Appendix A containing Garfield's letter on this subject.

[31]Report of . . . 1868, op. cit., p. xxxii.

[32]Quoted in Smith, op. cit., p. 783.

Even before the report appeared in final form, the House had attempted to abolish the Department by omitting all appropriations for it and had reluctantly authorized $20,000 only after the Senate strongly urged it. As consolation to the House for keeping any appropriation, the conference committee provided that after June 30, 1869, the Department of Education would cease and that the Commissioner of Education would be retained with a reduced salary ($3,000) in charge of an "office of education" in the Interior Department.[33] "Our Dept of Education has escaped destruction only by a hairs breadth," Garfield wrote Emerson White after the appropriations fight. "Barnard is utterly destitute of administrative ability and has made the impression on Congress that his faults are far worse than that. It was a great misfortune that he should have been appointed."[34] "I knew Dr. Barnard would fail," White replied. "He is not the man (between us) for such work. He scatters too badly--undertakes too large schemes. But he must be sustained and the Department must be saved."[35]

---

[33]U. S., Congressional Globe, 40th Cong. 3d Sess., 1869, Part III, 1541-42.

[34]Garfield to White, July 25, 1868, Garfield Papers, Letters Sent, 1868, p. 262.

[35]White to Garfield, August 6, 1868, Garfield Papers, Letters Received, Vol. 10, Item 54.

V

Ill and discouraged, Barnard considered resigning. To Gilman he confided: "Washington's weather, physical and political, makes me very uncomfortable."[36] If he could have found a "younger and abler soldier" to save the Department, he probably would have resigned, but men of talent were not eager to take over a Department which was awaiting the coup de grâce. Nor was there any reason to think that the President, who undoubtedly lamented not having vetoed the original bill, would appoint anyone satisfactory to Barnard. So the unhappy Commissioner stayed. But with no power to print and with one of his clerks editing the Journal, the image of the Department hardly improved--not even after Edward D. Neill left the country to become the American consul in Dublin.[37]

As the date for the Department's reduction to an "Office" drew near, Garfield led a move to combine it with other agencies doing similar work. "Such a consolidation may present commercial features sufficiently attractive

---

[36]Barnard to Gilman, April 28, 1868, Gilman Papers. See also a letter from White to Garfield, August 6, 1868, Garfield Papers, Letters Received, Vol. 10, Item 54: "Dr. Barnard writes me that he shall probably resign. . . . His health is poor and he is much discouraged."

[37]After his first report, Barnard continued gathering material, but the Department (Office) issued no more printed matter while he was Commissioner. He utilized some of the information gained in office in his Journal and his successor in office issued a revised version of a manuscript left by Barnard on the District of Columbia schools.

to secure the approval of Congress," he told White. "I see no other hope of saving even the pieces of the wreck."[38] This attempt at reorganization, however, availed nothing. A majority of senators, led by Charles Sumner, were still favorably disposed to the idea of a Department, but the objections of House critics were growing. Democrats who had opposed it from the first now had the backing of President Johnson and Orville H. Browning, his Secretary of the Interior.[39] Some radicals in the House who had originally been friendly grew openly hostile. Thaddeus Stevens had voted for the bill, but a year later in a savage speech he characterized the Department's chief as a worn-out old man whose only function was to issue useless reports. Many moderate Republicans had voted for the bill, or abstained from voting against it, only at the request of a few colleagues; now they felt they had been duped. As the opposition's moves to "get rid of this excrescence" gained support, defenders of the Department found themselves badly outnumbered.[40]

---

[38]Garfield to White, December 26, 1868, Garfield Papers, Letters Sent, 1868, p. 437.

[39]Browning called for the repeal of all legislation concerning the Department (and Office) of Education in his 1868 annual report. Failing that, he at least wanted the Secretary of the Interior to have all appointing and removing power over clerks in the Office. Congress adopted neither suggestion and fortunately for Barnard, Browning left office four months before the Office came under the Department of the Interior. Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1868 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), pp. iv-vi.

[40]U. S., Congressional Globe, 40th Cong., 2d Sess., 1868, Part IV, 3703-04.

The House Committee on Education and Labor, which still had a majority in favor of the Department, issued a report in February, 1869, exonerating it and Barnard, but the statement had little effect.[41] The Committee on Appropriations also conducted an investigation about the same time, and one of Barnard's defenders on it tried to portray him to the House as the innocent victim of a wicked President's machinations:

> The Committee on appropriations . . . had Professor Barnard before them, and they listened to all the scandal which the President of the United States had condescended to throw around this man. The committee came to the conclusions that Professor Barnard stood in the same relation that do all the good men of this country who are assailed by the President of the United States. It is only the bad men of the country who have escaped the assaults of the highest office-holder in the land.[42]

But most of the Republicans would not accept any defense. Not even hatred of Andrew Johnson would warm their hearts to the disgraced Commissioner. Most representatives only wanted to erase the whole affair from memory. A move to renew the 1868-69 appropriation of $20,000 for the following year drew only nine affirmative votes. The House finally agreed to $6,000 after the Senate insisted.[43]

---

[41] U. S. House of Representatives, Committee on Education and Labor, Report: Department of Education, 40th Cong., 3d Sess., 1869, Report No. 25, 9 p.

[42] U. S., Congressional Globe, 40th Cong., 3d Sess., 1869, Part III, 1542.

[43] Ibid.

VI

Barnard continued working as best he could with only two underpaid clerks. Apparently he thought that when Andrew Johnson left the White House in March, 1869, the removal of this source of the animus against the Office and himself might enable him to regain the support of Congress. He still believed his difficulties were chiefly traceable to opponents of educational advancement and to people who had been "poisoned" by Neill. There is no evidence that he ever admitted that his own policies and mistakes were part of the problem.

The Republicans who had fought to sustain the Department and then the Office while Johnson was President fully expected Barnard's resignation with Grant's inauguration. Grant expected it, too. In January, 1870, Barnard did resign, though he requested some time, according to the Massachusetts Teacher, "to clear up his affairs" in Washington.[44] Perhaps he wished to complete what may have seemed to him a full term of service. At any rate, he did not actually leave office until March 15, three years to the day from his confirmation by the Senate.

Barnard returned to Hartford, Connecticut, to recuperate from his frustrating period of government service. For the rest of his life he thought of his Washington

---

[44] Massachusetts Teacher, XXI (March, 1870), 110.

days as a dismal experience. But his general reputation suffered little from his failure as Commissioner, since his thirty years of devoted and largely successful activity before 1867 had already guaranteed him a place as the dean emeritus of American education. He lived another three decades to hear himself honored by many as the equal of Horace Mann, a pleasure marred only by recurring ill health and poverty brought on by sacrifices for the Journal. Meanwhile, his successors were making of the Bureau of Education (as the Office had become known by 1870) a useful force in American education.

CHAPTER III

THE BUREAU REBUILT, 1870-1886

I

With U. S. Grant inaugurated as President in March, 1869, and Henry Barnard's resignation imminent, the scramble for the commissionership began. The office was not as desirable as it had been initially, but there were still a number of people who would have been willing to take it. Emerson White seemed the most likely both because he was a good Republican and because he was virtually the father of the enabling bill. With James A. Garfield pushing him and a large segment of the educational community behind him, he was easily the most frequently mentioned candidate.[1] Another strong contender was Major General Oliver Otis Howard, who was head of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau).[2] Howard's agency

---

[1]Letter from E. E. White to James A. Garfield, February 9, 1870, marked "Confidential," James A. Garfield Papers (Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.). Cited hereafter as Garfield Papers.

[2]Letter from Shelden N. Clark to John Eaton, February 10, 1870, marked "Confidential," John Eaton Papers (Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville, Tenn.). Cited hereafter as Eaton Papers.

was extensively involved with education in the South and was one of those with which Garfield had earlier sought to combine the Office of Education.

President Grant, however, passed over all the people who seemed to have a special claim on the Office and named a friend and ex-army subordinate not previously mentioned. This was forty-year-old John Eaton, a native of New England living in Tennessee. Grant's announcement of his choice came as a surprise to most of the people interested in the Bureau's development. Many were frankly skeptical. "Gentlemen of large experience in educational affairs entertain some misgivings of your appointment," wrote one of Eaton's correspondents.[3] The few who were personally acquainted with the new Commissioner were more hopeful.[4] Emerson White, for example, who had worked with Eaton in Ohio before the War, replied optimistically to a query by Garfield: "I know Gen Eaton well. . . . He possesses very good abilities and I hope he may save the Bureau by skillful management."[5] Others hoped so too.

---

[3]Letter from C. Thurston Chase to John Eaton, March 25, 1870, Eaton Papers.

[4]Rev. C. F. P. Bancroft, Principal of the Lookout Mountain Educational Institutions, wrote Eaton on May 19, 1870: "We expect you will redeem the Department of Education from the contempt into which it had well nigh fallen." Eaton Papers.

[5]White to Garfield, February 9, 1870, Garfield Papers.

II

John Eaton, Jr. (1820-1906) had deep roots in New England.[6] His great-grandfather had been an officer in the Revolutionary War. His father was a hard-working farmer who owned 2,000 acres of land in Merrimack County, New Hampshire, where John was born in 1829, the oldest of nine children. His mother, with a strong Presbyterian faith and an unbounded confidence in education, imparted to the family a conception of "duty to be fulfilled through love," which became the dynamism of John's later life.

John Eaton's education was a typical nineteenth century example of success despite obstacles. At his mother's insistence he started to school when he was only three but broke off this pleasant pursuit at five because his father thought school an unnecessary frill for the farmer's life he had envisioned for his son. Neither John's interest nor his mother's determination was stifled, however, and young Eaton still went to school on winter days when it was too cold to work on the farm. To supplement

---

[6]Biographical data are from the following: John Eaton (in collaboration with Ethel Osgood Mason), Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen: Reminiscences of the Civil War with Special Reference to the Work for the Contrabands and Freedmen of the Mississippi Valley (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907); Philip Wade Alexander, "John Eaton, Jr. -- Preacher, Soldier, and Educator" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1939); Sheldon Jackson, "John Eaton," in the Fiftieth Anniversary Volume: 1857-1906, National Education Association (Winona, Minn.: The Association, 1907), 283-93.

this meager schooling, John borrowed books from anyone in the area who would lend them and read in bed after he was supposed to be asleep--a pastime which almost ended tragically when he fell asleep one night and knocked over the lamp, setting the bed on fire. He awoke in time to put out the flames; his sister replaced the damaged bedding and destroyed the evidence of the mishap, so his nocturnal study continued.

Finally, John's father relented and sent his son to Thetford Academy, Vermont. After Thetford, Eaton entered Dartmouth College, earning his way by mowing hay, shearing sheep, teaching district school, and living mainly on beans. When he graduated in 1854, he went to Cleveland, Ohio, as principal of an elementary school. After two years there he moved to Toledo, Ohio, where he enjoyed three successful years as superintendent of schools. It was as superintendent that Eaton first began to work on the sociological problems of education by collecting and analyzing statistical data.

Supervising schools, however, left Eaton unsatisfied, and he decided to enter the ministry. A few years earlier his severe religious skepticism had given way to a non-doctrinaire Christian commitment of service to one's fellow man. In 1859 Eaton left Ohio for Andover Theological Seminary. By the time he graduated, the Civil War was under way. In fact the day he was ordained in the Presbyterian

Church (September 5, 1861) he joined the 27th Ohio Volunteer Infantry as chaplain.

III

When Eaton became an army chaplain he thought he had permanently closed the door on a career in education. But within two years he found himself trying to inaugurate in Memphis, Tennessee, an elementary system of instruction for thousands of ex-slaves, as well as feed, clothe, house, and secure medical attention for them. Chaplain Eaton had been placed in charge of most of the Negroes in the Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee area who had been freed by President Lincoln's 1863 proclamation.

Eaton's assignment to care for the "contrabands," as the ex-slaves were usually called, came in 1862 apparently because General U. S. Grant picked his name at random from a list of officers. When Eaton received the order he tried his best to get it changed. He was not an abolitionist and was not particularly interested in Negroes. Moreover, he did not wish to work directly under Grant, who he had heard was a drunkard. Grant refused to rescind the order, however, and Eaton soon had his charges organized around Grand Junction, Tennessee. A short time later he moved his headquarters to Memphis, where it remained throughout the war.[7]

---

[7]Alexander, op. cit., pp. 15-17.

As far as the army was concerned, Eaton's chief task was to keep as many Negroes as possible from either getting in the way of the Union forces or being an economic asset to the Confederacy. But he quickly became a staunch defender of Negro rights and an advocate of the view that an ex-slave wanted only educational opportunity to become a first-class citizen.[8] Eaton's three years of work with the freedmen gave empirical evidence for the position held by many abolitionists only as an article of faith--i.e., that Negroes had the same range of abilities as white people.

Eaton's opinions and his position made him unpopular in some quarters. Many of the officers assigned to work under him flatly refused, saying they had come to fight rebels, not to wait on "niggers." Confederate sympathizers were even more hostile and made occasional assassination attempts upon the Union chaplain. To counterbalance this opposition, Eaton had the active support and advice of both Grant and Lincoln. In fact, Eaton came greatly to admire both men and acted as liaison between them in 1864 when Lincoln was uncertain of Grant's backing in his bid for re-election as President. Additional support came from several private and religious groups in the North in the

---

[8]As Eaton put it: "To make the Negro a consciously self-supporting unit in the society in which he found himself, and start him on the way to self-respecting citizenship, -- that was the beginning and end of all our efforts." Eaton, op. cit., p. 34.

form of medical facilities and educational opportunities for the freedmen.[9]

By the end of the war Eaton had under his supervision fifty-one schools for Negroes, staffed by 105 teachers. Though he admitted this represented only a "rudimentary" beginning, he regarded his efforts in behalf of Negro education as the most important of his war activities.[10]

IV

At the end of the war Eaton tried, with Grant's active support, to become commissioner of the newly formed Freedmen's Bureau, which was designed to institutionalize what Eaton and others had been doing for the ex-slaves in the South.[11] Lincoln, however, sought a man of greater national prestige and chose Oliver Otis Howard. Eaton worked as one of Howard's assistant commissioners for a few months but left the Bureau in December, 1865, to found a newspaper in Memphis, Tennessee, devoted to the radical Republican cause.[12]

---

[9]Alexander, op. cit., pp. 31-57.

[10]Eaton, op. cit., pp. 192, 204.

[11]George R. Bentley, A History of the Freedmen's Bureau (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1955), pp. 21-23, 50-51.

[12]Frank B. Williams, "John Eaton, Jr., Editor, Politician, and School Administrator," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, X (December, 1951), 291-94.

The Memphis Post, edited by John Eaton and two of his brothers, proclaimed as its platform "the civil and political equality of all loyal men; the security of person and property of all men; free speech, free schools, a free country."[13] Since few Tennessee whites agreed with the Republican-financed, equalitarian-oriented Post, the readership turned out to be largely literate Negroes.[14]

John Eaton still thought he had finished with professional education, but his radical commitments and his deep involvement in state politics brought him an offer in 1867 of the newly created position of Tennessee State Superintendent of Instruction. Eaton's brother Lucian stayed with the Post and John went to Nashville.

The new job was no easier than editing a pro-Negro newspaper. Eaton's salary was only $1200 per year. There were no quarters or furniture until the Governor personally intervened. He had insufficient money for salaries and little clerical help. Furthermore, large segments of the white population were opposed to equal education for white and black.[15]

Eaton plunged into the work with characteristic zeal. For two years he toured the state speaking and

---

[13]From Memphis Post letterhead in the Eaton Papers.

[14]Bentley, loc. cit., p. 293.

[15]Ibid., p. 304.

organizing schools and trying with little success to get a free public library in every county. By 1869 he had made a good beginning toward a state system of free public education, even though he had had to raise about $450,000 from outside sources. But opposition to the social and political philosophy of reconstruction which Eaton represented was so strong that he decided it would be futile to seek re-election as state superintendent.[16]

Accordingly, he accepted an appointment at West Point as Secretary of the Board of Visitors. From this vantage point he renewed his friendship with Grant, who was by then President, and sought positions for himself and his brother Lucian.[17] Again trying to leave the world of professional education, he asked for an appointment as ambassador to Constantinople. Grant, however, offered him the post of U. S. Commissioner of Education. Because of the low esteem in which the Office was held and the possibility that it might even be abolished, Eaton was understandably reluctant to accept the offer; but with Grant's promise of backing, and with no prospect of anything better to do, he consented.

---

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 305-16.

[17] On March 15, 1869, Eaton's wife wrote him: "I don't ask what you are doing . . . . I hope you are not among the crowd of office seekers who daily make a rush to see the President and are denied admittance. I can't bear the name of office seeker." Eaton Papers.

V

On March 16, 1870, Eaton received from Henry Barnard the keys to the U. S. Bureau of Education. His total office force consisted of two clerks of the lowest classification permitted by law. The Bureau's quarters were "so crowded with books, pamphlets, and desks as to be wholly unfit for successful clerical work."[18] Eaton set out immediately to bring order out of the chaos and to make the office useful to educators.[19]

His opposition was formidable. Professional schoolmen not only regarded the Bureau as a failure, but considered Eaton a politician rather than an educator. Many congressmen thought of the position as a sinecure, and some Republicans felt free to call upon Eaton for speech writing services. One representative who virtually ordered Eaton to write a speech for him concluded the note with "you might as well be useful." Little wonder that opposition newspapers labeled the Bureau nothing more than a political plum.[20]

---

[18] Report of the Commissioner of Education Made to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1870, with Accompanying Papers (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 5. Cited hereafter as Report . . . 1870.

[19] Eaton early had a long talk with Garfield, asking his advice. Eaton to Garfield, May 9, 1870, Vol. 15, Item 153, Garfield Papers.

[20] Quotation from William Lawrence (R-Ohio) to Eaton, July 25, 1876; see also Thurston Chase to Eaton, March 25, 1870; and S. N. Clark to Eaton, February 10, 1870, Eaton Papers.

To forge a useful educational tool from such raw material required a combination of energy, patience, resourcefulness, political finesse, and tact possessed by few men. Fortunately for the Bureau of Education and the educational community which it served, Eaton had the requisite qualities. His experience in the Cleveland and Toledo schools, his educational work with the freedmen during the war, his experience as superintendent of instruction in Tennessee, combined with his political connections and his winning personality, made him the right man in the right place.

To allay professional skepticism, Eaton worked closely with the National Education Association and other professional groups, speaking before them frequently and encouraging their meetings to be held in Washington as often as possible.[21] As an antidote to congressional hostility, he began quietly to build good personal relations with individual congressmen and to invite them to stop by to see his office in operation. As his first project he devised statistical questionnaires which he immediately

---

[21]When Eaton spoke to the National Teachers' Association meeting in Cleveland, August 19, 1870, on the subject of the relation of the national government to education, President Grant and his entourage came to hear the new Commissioner to show that the executive office was giving full support to the Bureau of Education. Through Eaton's influence the National Teachers' Association (later NEA) held most of its annual meetings in Washington from 1871-1886. Eaton, op. cit., p. 260.

sent to state and local officials to obtain facts on education in their institutions or areas. As soon as he had enough returned, he compiled his first annual report and rushed it to the printer.

This first report, appearing only eight months after Eaton took office, was not without its defects nor its critics. Its weaknesses were due to its having been hastily done before many respondents had supplied the information asked for. It was criticized, however, not because it had real deficiencies, but because it touched sensitive nerves. Eaton dared to suggest that the Chinese in this country deserved fair treatment. And he proposed to deal with the conflict between capital and labor by asking the opinions of working men as well as of management.[22] Senator Eugene Casserly, an Irish-born Democrat from San Francisco, rebuked Eaton for his presumption in writing so boldly. In a three-hour speech filled with sarcastic witticisms, Casserly characterized the volume as "a farrago of incongruous and improper matter," adding that it was "the rankest specimen of mere book-making" he had ever seen. The title page, he thought, should have read: "De omnibus rebus et quibusdem aliis--'About everything in the world and several things besides.'"[23]

---

[22] Report . . . 1870, pp. 35-52, 422-34, 447-67.

[23] U.S., Congressional Globe, 41st Cong., 3d Sess., 1871, Part II, 1463-66, and Part III (Appendix), 296-302.

The report also contained a statement signed by forty-two Delaware educators saying that education in their state was in a deplorable condition.[24] The description of conditions was true and was no more severe than charges made about several other states which went unchallenged. But Delaware Senator Thomas F. Bayard, who had opposed the Bureau from the first, demanded that the offensive pages be expurgated because they were "contemptibly false and absurd" and only increased the "mass of ignorance" in the country.[25] Several Republican senators defended Eaton and the report.[26] The Senate finally agreed to eliminate the three pages which Bayard found objectionable but fortunately rejected New York Senator Roscoe Conkling's additional suggestion that in the future all senators be permitted to censor the annual report. When the speeches were over, Congress doubled the Bureau of Education's appropriations and approved an additional 20,000 copies of the 1870 report.[27]

Educators on the whole, as well as congressmen, were favorably impressed with Eaton's first publication. Emerson

---

[24] Report . . . 1870, pp. 103-105.

[25] U. S., Congressional Globe, 41st Cong., 3d Sess., 1871, Part II, 1078, 1100, 1131-35, 1418.

[26] The senators who defended Eaton and the report were: Frederick A. Sawyer, South Carolina; Henry Wilson, Massachusetts; Timothy O. Howe, Wisconsin; William M. Stewart, Nevada.

[27] U. S., Congressional Globe, 41st Cong., 3d Sess., 1871, Part I, 16; 42d Cong., 1st Sess., 1871, Part II, 666-71.

White wrote Garfield that it was "a great improvement on Dr. B's compilations."[28] This initial success blunted the effectiveness of the Bureau's critics. Although objections continued and there were even occasional bills introduced for abolishing the Bureau, none of the challenges after 1870 ever came close to ending the Bureau's existence. In January, 1871, Garfield told White: "We have at last conquered in the first stage of national recognition of education. Only a small vote can now be mustered for abolishing the Bureau and we shall be able to increase the appropriation a little each year."[29]

Gradually, with occasional setbacks, the Bureau's staff and appropriations were increased. When Eaton took office, the annual appropriation was $6000; the personnel consisted of two clerks; and there was no library or printing allowance. When he resigned in 1885, the annual appropriation was $101,000, including allowances for printing and the cost of education in Alaska. There were thirty-eight full-time employees, the Bureau library had 65,000 accessions, and the Bureau annually distributed 350,000 copies of its printed documents. The Bureau correspondence had grown from a few hundred letters sent in 1870 to 22,000 in 1885. The flood of requests for information and advice

---

[28]White to Garfield, February 4, 1871, Garfield Papers, Letters Received, Vol. 20, Item 50.

[29]Garfield to White, January 18, 1871, Garfield Papers, Letters Sent, 1870-71, pp. 64-66.

grew every year. After a visit to the Bureau, an incredulous congressman told his colleagues, "You would have no conception, if you were not daily in that office, of the enormous number of letters coming in . . . asking for information on an immense variety of subjects." By 1883 the Bureau was annually receiving nearly 68,000 such requests.[30]

VI

Eaton's major contribution to education, however, was not that he saved the Bureau from extinction but that he used it so effectively. In fact, he and the Bureau were much more significant as catalysts in spurring along educational development than most people have realized. A particularly striking example of this may be seen in the development of the professional field of library science.[31]

Public libraries had long had priority on Eaton's list of things needed in America, and he had tried to secure one in every county in Tennessee. When he became commissioner of education, he gathered statistics on libraries and devoted a small section of each report to

---

[30]Alexander, op. cit., pp. 97, 116; Eaton, op. cit., p. xxii; Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1885 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), IV, pp. v-vii. Quotation is from U. S., Congressional Record, 43d Cong., 2d Sess., 1874, Vol. III, Part I, 136.

[31]Scores of letters documenting Eaton's role with respect to the library movement are in the "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12.

that subject. He quickly discovered that the country had far more significant libraries than he had supposed, but that they were all operating in isolation. There were no uniformly accepted rules for cataloging or shelving nor any standard guidelines for most of the myriad topics with which librarians had to deal--such as bookbinding and library building construction. In 1874 Eaton decided to make a list of all public libraries in the country with holdings of more than 1,000 volumes, and to publish this list along with a few papers on special topics by leading librarians. The task required an enormous correspondence, took over two years to complete, and virtually exhausted the Bureau's printing allowance for a year.

The correspondents, who included nearly all the leading librarians of the country, became so interested in the government report, which was scheduled to appear in conjunction with the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial celebration, that a meeting of librarians at the Centennial was suggested. At the request of some of the librarians, Eaton issued invitations, and out of the resulting meeting grew the American Library Association. The voluminous special report on Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition and Management immediately became the bible of librarians. The classification and cataloging systems proposed for the first time in the special report by Melvil Dewey and Charles A.

Cutter became standard in most American libraries and remain so today.

The latent sentiment for building up the profession of librarianship was present. All that was needed was a focal point and a catalyst to get the move under way. The Bureau of Education provided both. Eaton was not a library specialist but he knew how to elicit the best from experts and how to utilize their insights.

Another field which owes a special debt to the Bureau of Education under John Eaton is nursing. Eaton brought together physicians interested in the training of nurses and gave impetus to the few training schools in existence by having knowledgeable people write treatises on the subject, then circulating this information freely.[32]

International education is also an area in which the Bureau was influential. Until the Bureau of Education became an effective force, no agency in the government had either the desire or the professional competence to meet the educational interests of other governments. Under Eaton's leadership contact increased significantly between the American and foreign educators. For the first time the United States began a systematic program of exchanging educational information and undertook to display American education at the world fairs, which were gaining in popularity.

---

[32]Eaton, op. cit., p. xxvi.

One result of these efforts was a marked increase in the export of American educational ideas. Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Egypt, South Africa, and Japan all sought Eaton's advice and help. Several countries offered awards and decorations to him, but he declined these on republican principles.[33]

Because of its participation in international expositions, the Bureau of Education found itself with several boxes of educational appliances and aids. These Eaton organized into a permanent museum, where both American and foreign visitors could see displayed the latest technological devices of education. It was also a bank of material on which the Bureau could draw for its exhibits and exchanges with other governments. The museum lasted until 1906, when Commissioner Elmer Ellsworth Brown disbanded it because of the high cost of maintenance. While it lasted, it served as a valuable part of the Bureau machinery for the exchange and dissemination of educational ideas.[34]

Eaton's activities did not stop with libraries, nursing, international education, or museums. He was deeply involved in all of the questions agitating American

---

[33]Jackson, loc. cit., p. 290.

[34]Darrell Hevenor Smith, The Bureau of Education; Its History, Activities, and Organization. No. 14 of the Institute for Government Research Service Monographs of the United States Government (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1923), p. 25.

education while he was Commissioner and lent his support wholeheartedly to such diverse enterprises as the kindergarten movement, agricultural training, and art instruction. He was also active in getting several notorious "diploma mills" put out of business. Besides these interests, he labored continually in behalf of education for the Negro, the immigrant, the Indian, and the natives of Alaska.[35]

Of all Eaton's many efforts probably the most vital in his own mind was the long struggle for federal aid to education. For sixteen years he worked diligently for this because he saw no other way of realizing the ideal of universal free public education. While Commissioner, he lobbied with congressmen, spoke to and corresponded with educators, wrote articles for newspapers and magazines, and supplied statistics and arguments to anyone who asked for them in an effort to gain passage of the several general aid to education bills before Congress. By 1885 sentiment was strong enough to ensure passage of one of these, but opponents managed to keep it bottled up in committee. Although general aid to education from the national treasury did not come in the nineteenth century, John Eaton probably did more effective campaigning during the sixteen years he was Commissioner than any other one man. Partly because

---

[35]See Chapter VIII (pp. 159-63) for Eaton's relation to diploma mills and Chapter IX (pp. 172-75) for a discussion of his efforts in behalf of Alaskan education.

of his efforts there was a stronger sentiment in favor of national aid when he resigned than there was to be again until 1918.[36]

VII

In 1886 Eaton resigned his position as Commissioner of Education so that President Grover Cleveland could appoint a Democrat, and accepted the presidency of Marietta College in Ohio.[37] After six years there, he suffered a "paralytic stroke," resigned, and went into retirement, dividing his time between Washington, D.C., and Warner, New Hampshire. In 1898 when he was nearly seventy years old, he briefly returned to public service to take charge of educational affairs in Puerto Rico, which the United States had just acquired from Spain. In the sixteen months he spent there, Eaton made a slow but apparently good start at giving Puerto Rico a democratic system of public education. Before anything more than preliminary work could be carried

---

[36]Gordon Canfield Lee, The Struggle for Federal Aid. First Phase: A History of the Attempts to Obtain Federal Aid for the Common Schools, 1870-1890, T.C.C.E., No. 957 (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949), pp. 37, 64, 105. W. W. Gardner to John Eaton, December 30, 1884, and John Eaton to A. L. Wade, May 9, 1884, RG 12.

[37]Arthur Granville Beach, A Pioneer College: The Story of Marietta (Chicago: Privately printed by the John F. Cuneo Company, 1935), pp. 204-208.

out, however, his health forced him to resign.[38] The remaining six years of his life he devoted to the preparation of a manuscript which appeared posthumously as Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen, a charmingly written account of his own activities during the Civil War. Eaton died February 9, 1906, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.[39]

What Eaton did from 1870 to 1886 was, in the words of Ethel Osgood Mason, to marshal "all the forces at his command to convince the people of the supreme obligation to educate."[40] Or, as Eaton himself put it: "Every generation of adults needs to be thoroughly indoctrinated with the sentiment of universal education, and familiarized with the management of school systems."[41] Eaton tried to do for the nation what Horace Mann had done for Massachusetts and Henry Barnard for Connecticut and Rhode Island twenty-five years earlier. What he proposed was free, public education available to all regardless of race, sex, or age. He was not as successful in convincing the public of the

---

[38] John Eaton, "Education in Puerto Rico," Report of the Commissioner of Education, 1899-1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), I, 221-73.

[39] Donald L. McMurray, "Eaton, John," DAB, V, 608-609.

[40] Eaton, op. cit., p. xxiv.

[41] Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1871 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 5.

value of education as he wanted to be, but he was nevertheless a powerful force in favor of the American dream of equal educational opportunity for all. One writer has asserted, and the facts bear it out, that from 1875 to 1885 "no man in America wielded a greater influence over the men and the problems connected with questions of public instruction in the country" than did John Eaton.[42]

---

[42]Eaton, op. cit., p. xxx.

CHAPTER IV

THE N. H. R. DAWSON INTERLUDE, 1886-1889

I

In 1885 Grover Cleveland became the first Democrat in a quarter of a century to occupy the White House. Until this time most Democrats had made it clear that they would like to abolish the Bureau of Education, but now that their man was in office, their only concern was how to replace as many Republicans as possible with Democrats. Within a few months John Eaton left for Marietta, Ohio, because of "ill-health."[1] To succeed him, Cleveland named Nathaniel Henry Rhodes Dawson, a lawyer from Selma, Alabama.

The educational community was aghast at the choice because Dawson's only apparent claim to office was that he

---

[1]Several leading Southern educators petitioned for Eaton's retention. Included in this group were Atticus G. Haygood, President of Emory College and first Agent of the John F. Slater Fund; and J. L. M. Curry, General Agent of the Peabody Education Fund. Louis D. Rubin, Jr. (ed.), Teach the Freeman: The Correspondence of Rutherford B. Hayes and the Slater Fund for Negro Education, 1881-1887 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), I, 139; Jessie Pearl Rice, J. L. M. Curry, Southerner, Statesman, and Educator (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949), pp. 122-123.

had been chairman of the state Democratic committee in an area which had helped elect Cleveland. As one observer put it, "Col. Dawson was . . . being pushed for something and it was thought that this was a harmless place for him."[2] The President received some stinging rebukes from the educational press. The following editorial from the Journal of Education represented the feelings of most educators, including those who were Democrats:

> There were a score of prominent Democratic teachers and superintendents mentioned in connection with the office, any one of whom would have reflected credit upon all concerned. President Cleveland did not select any one of these. He ignored the petitions of the multitude of teachers; he forgot that there was an educational system, a school-room science, a teaching fraternity, at the head of which he was to appoint a national leader. He passed over every State that has made a specialty of educational advancement, and took that State that ranks every other in the Union in the intensity of ignorance and the neglect of general education. He passed by every man who has taught, who has supervised, who has studied education, or written thereon, and selected a man who has done none of these things.[3]

It was in such an atmosphere that N. H. R. Dawson took office in August, 1886.

II

Nathaniel Henry Rhodes Dawson (1829-1895) was a part of the aristocratic tradition of the American South. Both

---

[2]Isaac Miles Wright, "History of the United States Bureau of Education" (unpublished D.Ped. thesis, New York University, 1916), p. 38.

[3]Journal of Education, XVIII (August 19, 1886), 117.

sides of his family had come to America before the Revolutionary War and had fought for independence. Nathaniel's father, Lawrence Edwin Dawson, was a successful South Carolina lawyer who had been a friend and classmate of Horace Mann in Judge Gould's law office in Litchfield, Connecticut. When Nathaniel was thirteen years old, the family moved to Cahaba, Alabama. There his father lived as a gentleman farmer, sometimes practicing law.[4]

Young Nathaniel grew up in easy circumstances as a part of the genteel planter class. He did not attend public school but received all of his early training from his father, who taught him Greek and Latin and prescribed a course of classical readings which the two discussed daily. In 1845 he went to St. Joseph's College (now Springhill College) in Mobile, Alabama; and in 1847, during his last year there, he came home to read law in his father's office. Upon his father's death in 1848, young Dawson continued his law study under another Cahaba attorney and in 1851 was admitted to the bar.

Throughout the 1850's Dawson lived the life for which his background, temperament, and training had suited him. He dabbled without great success in politics and by

---

[4]All biographical information on Dawson is from letters, newspaper clippings, memorabilia, and a typed introduction, in the N. H. R. Dawson Papers (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, N. C.). Cited hereafter as Dawson Papers.

practicing law augmented the ample financial legacy his parents had left him (his mother had died in 1851). By 1858 he listed his total assets at just under $134,000, including fifty-one slaves.[5]

The Civil War of course changed all this, though Dawson was not hurt by it nearly so much as some of his contemporaries. He served for a year as captain of a company in the 4th Alabama Infantry early in the war. Then in 1863 he went to the Alabama Legislature from Dallas County. During the last months of the war he commanded, apparently with the rank of colonel, a battalion of mounted troops which operated along the coast.[6] Upon cessation of hostilities, he applied for and received a Presidential pardon and returned to Selma to recoup his financial losses.[7]

The law practice did not go especially well, but his political activities were relatively successful for a time. He was active in local politics, holding several chairmanships in connection with the Democratic Party, and in 1872 he was an elector on the Horace Greely ticket. For ten years beginning in 1876, he was a member of the

---

[5]From a list in Dawson's hand in the Dawson Papers.

[6]Most people referred to Dawson as "Colonel" during the rest of his life.

[7]The pardon was dated September 14, 1865, Dawson Papers.

state executive committee of the Democratic Party and during the last two years served as chairman. He was in the state legislature again in 1880-1881 where he served as Speaker of the House of Representatives. In 1884 he was president of the Alabama Bar Association and two years later ran a close but unsuccessful race for governor. It was at this point that Grover Cleveland, still politically indebted to Alabama for helping him win the close 1884 presidential race, was looking for Eaton's replacement.

III

Dawson always maintained that his appointment was unsolicited and unexpected. This was probably true. He definitely hoped for something, but it must have come as quite a surprise when Cleveland proffered the job of Commissioner of Education. To J. L. M. Curry, then Minister to Spain, Dawson wrote:

> I considered the appointment a great compliment under the circumstances, and accepted it reluctantly at the instance and persuasion of my friends in Washington, who deemed it important that I should not decline. I find it a pleasant and agreeable position, and I trust that I will be equal to its responsibilities. The duties are of a very responsible character, and while not very laborious, are very confining and the salary is inadequate.[8]

A few days after his letter to Curry, Dawson confided to a friend another and probably more telling reason for his

---

[8]Dawson to J. L. M. Curry, November 29, 1886, Dawson Papers.

acceptance: "The law practice in Alabama . . . has declined to so low an ebb that it is hardly worth pursuing . . . . I thought that in a few years, probably the pra[c]tice would improve, and that I could spend the interval here in a pleasant manner where I would have opportunities that I could not have anywhere else."[9]

The education fraternity was naturally upset over Cleveland's choice. A Democrat in the post was bad enough to some, but a man with no experience in public schools was completely unacceptable. And the appointment of one who had fought to sustain the slavocracy system seemed a betrayal of the Bureau's ideal of equal educational opportunity. In view of these feelings it is not hard to understand why Dawson encountered a cold reception from educators or why he seemed always on the defensive.

The new Commissioner tried to reassure the state superintendents at their 1887 meeting.[10] He referred to education as "one of the highest duties of the State," and hoped its advantages would soon "be offered to all the children of the land without distinction of race." To be sure, neither of these declarations was revolutionary, but coming from a man who had been reared to believe in the

---

[9]Dawson to General J. C. Devant, December 3, 1886, Dawson Papers.

[10]Typescript of an address delivered by N. H. R. Dawson to the Department of State Superintendents, March 15, 1887, Washington D. C., Dawson Papers.

sanctity of Negro slavery and who had been a member of the states' rights wing of the Democratic Party, they were fairly sweeping concessions. Many of the educators whom he was addressing would not have been willing to go much farther. Dawson also called for increased appropriations for the Bureau, which was a remarkable stand considering the position most members of his party had taken on the matter up to that time. He spoke out for increased funds for Alaskan education and for passage of the Blair Bill, which would have given national aid to education. Dawson concluded his speech to the superintendents with an appeal for their support:

> I trust that you will see that I am no iconoclast, and that my only purpose is to increase the usefulness of the Bureau and its publications to the profession which it represents in the government of the country.

Although Dawson's speech hardly marked him as the radical Eaton had been, it did place him within the broad stream of current educational thought and won for him a measure of grudging support. The NEA Department of Superintendence even passed an "emphatic" resolution of endorsement of him at its 1888 meeting.[11] But the Commissioner from Alabama was never really accepted by most educators as one of them. They could not forgive him for being a

---

[11]"Resolutions Endorsing the Administration of Hon. N. H. R. Dawson, the Commissioner of Education," n.d. Copy in the Dawson Papers.

politician from the wrong party and the wrong section of the country, with the wrong background and no professional training in education.

IV

Because of the opposition which his appointment engendered and his own dearth of experience in educational affairs, Dawson adopted a very cautious policy as Commissioner. Fears by the Bureau staff that their new chief might make a clean sweep of personnel, almost all of whom were Republicans, proved to be unfounded.[12] In fact Dawson apparently replaced only one clerk, and it is not clear whether this had any partisan motivation.[13]

Although Dawson continued to rely upon the same office staff that Eaton had built, he did make organizational changes. Eaton had not had a highly structured approach to the Bureau, for he and his staff had grown into the work together, and many of the informalities of the early years when there were only a few clerks had been retained. Dawson reduced the number of divisions from

---

[12]After Dawson's retirement one of the clerks wrote him the following: "You came to us as a friend and not as a politician, and nobly, bravely have you sustained your part, when so many of your friends were sure to urge you to make changes." H. E. Shepherd to Dawson, [1889], Dawson Papers.

[13]Dawson asked for Mr. William H. Gardiner's resignation on April 30, 1887, because of "grave irregularities in the discharge of his duties." He hired John W. Holcombe of Indianapolis as chief clerk at the same time. See Dawson's Diary in the Dawson Papers.

seven to three and defined operational procedures more exactly. On the whole this renewed attention to detail brought about increased efficiency.[14]

The only other significant modifications Dawson made dealt with the annual report. By the time he assumed office, this document was appearing more than two years late. The fault partly lay with the public printer, who did not get the manuscript in print for several months, sometimes a year, after he received it. Delays were also caused by slowness in getting statistical returns from school officials and in tabulating the results. Eaton had been inclined to hold off publication in order to make each report as complete as possible. Dawson eliminated a few of the items which experience had shown were consistently responsible for delay; he simplified some of the statistical tables; and he prepared as much of the report in advance as he could, holding open spaces for information not yet in. What the annual report thus lost in completeness and detail it more than made up in timeliness. Even at that there was still a lag of nearly a year from the end of the period covered until the report of it appeared.

Dawson also attempted to improve the report's usefulness by increasing the type size to an acceptable level for readability. After Eaton had proved his point to

---

[14]See Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of the organization and office force under Dawson.

Congress the first year, he had steadily reduced the print size and margin space in order to crowd as much material as he could into each volume. The resulting document was very difficult to read. Dawson's change meant that less information could be published, but this loss was offset by a less forbidding appearance and a more accessible book.

V

If Dawson had done no more than to make improvements in the organization of the office and the annual report, his term would have amply justified itself. But in addition, he brought credit to himself and the Bureau through two other innovations. One of these was a visit to Alaska for first-hand information about educational conditions there. The other was a multi-volume work on the history of American education.

The Bureau of Education had been responsible for education in Alaska since 1884, when John Eaton assisted the colorful Presbyterian missionary, Sheldon Jackson, in lobbying Congress into making some provision for it.[15] Because of Eaton's obvious interest, and since there was no other bureau to which the work seemed to belong, the Secretary of the Interior assigned its supervision to the Bureau of Education. By the time this happened, however, Eaton was ready to leave office.

---

[15]See Chapter IX on education in Alaska.

Dawson inherited the problem of seeing that the children of Alaska got the rudiments of an education. The appropriation for this was too small ($25,000) in comparison with the need and the high cost of operations in that distant area. To help him in deciding how to expend the limited funds, he asked and received permission to visit the few schools which the Bureau was already supporting and to talk to people on the scene who were responsible for administering the schools.[16] As a result of his visit, Dawson got the schools off to as good a start as was possible under the awkward circumstances and administered them as judiciously as could have been expected. Had his successor in the Bureau, William Torrey Harris, followed his example, the schools of Alaska would have fared better than they did.

Dawson's most noteworthy undertaking was a series of monographs on the history of American education, under the editorship of the Johns Hopkins University historian, Herbert Baxter Adams. This project had its roots in an agreement between Eaton and Adams for a manuscript on the study of history at the post-secondary level in the United States. The paper was still not complete when Dawson became Commissioner, and on October 23, 1886, he wrote Adams to

---

[16]For a report of Dawson's trip, see Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Year Ending June 30, 1887 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), IV, 33-38. The total cost to the government was $535. Diary, Dawson Papers.

check on its progress.[17] Out of the resulting correspondence and personal conferences grew a plan for Adams to write a history of William and Mary College and then one of the University of Virginia and several other Virginia colleges. Before either of these books was in press, Dawson and Adams had conceived a plan to extend this limited historical coverage of higher education to several other Southern states. From the South to the rest of the country was a natural progression, and before the end of October, 1887, Adams had drawn up a statement asserting that "in no way could the Bureau of Education better serve the original object for which it was founded by the Act of March 2, 1867, than by showing historically 'the condition and progress of education in the several States and Territories.'"[18]

Whether Adams or Dawson first conceived the plan, or whether someone else suggested it to one of them is not clear from available records. At any rate, it was the kind of project which strongly appealed to both men. Adams, a youthful and vigorous German-trained historian, was then in the process of making the study and writing of history a distinct profession with high critical standards. He had been a leading light in the founding of the American

---

[17]Dawson to Herbert B. Adams, October 23, 1886, in Herbert Baxter Adams Papers (Johns Hopkins University Library, Baltimore, Md.). Cited hereafter as Adams Papers.

[18]Adams to Dawson, October 31, 1887, Adams Papers.

Historical Association in 1884. He also had established the Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science--a rather arid, but influential series of publications which pointed the way for similar undertakings at other universities. Finally, Adams had an overpowering interest in the history of education and saw the projected Contributions as the foundation of a later comprehensive history of American education.[19]

Dawson, too, had a natural interest in the history of higher education. The past in general held a great deal of fascination for him because of his own classical training and because it represented for him, as for nearly all white Southerners, a more enjoyable style of life than post-war conditions allowed. Higher education was particularly appealing to him because it was the one area of education in which the South had excelled before the war and therefore offered an opportunity for him to present a better image of the South than was then prevalent, without sacrificing the Bureau's standards of scholarship. As the series got well under way, and especially after Adams' The Study of History in American Colleges and Universities and The College of William and Mary had won acclaim, Dawson saw the Contributions

---

[19]W. Stull Holt (ed.), Historical Scholarship in The United States, 1876-1901: As Revealed in the Correspondence of Herbert B. Adams, Series LVI, No. 4 of the Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Sciences (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1938), pp. 7-18.

as his best opportunity for bringing "credit to the Bureau and to Mr. Cleveland's administration."[20]

The series proceeded with close cooperation among Adams, Dawson, and the authors. In general, Adams was free to appoint whoever he thought best to write the study in each state, with the stipulation that if at all possible the person chosen should be a resident of the state about which he wrote. Dawson made the full resources of his bureau available to Adams in finding writers and material and to the authors in sending out questionnaires, locating sources, arranging interviews, and reading proof. In all, Adams received $7,400 for the monographs, not including whatever he was paid for writing the paper on William and Mary.[21] Out of this he had to pay himself and his authors, including whatever expenses he and they incurred. The Bureau of Education paid all publication costs to the Government Printer out of its appropriations. The usual number of copies of each volume was 25,000, and these were

---

[20] Dawson to Adams, June 10, 1887, Adams Papers.

[21] The article on the teaching of history in American colleges was not numbered as one of the Contributions. The amount paid Adams is specified in the following letters from Dawson to Adams in the Adams Papers: April 5, 1888; November 4, 1887; April 3, 1888; June 1, 1888; November 13, 17, 1888 (two letters each date). The only record of how much Adams passed on and how much he retained relates to Contribution No. 9: The History of Federal and State Aid to Higher Education in the United States by Frank W. Blackmar. Of the $300 allotted for this 343-page volume, Blackmar received $200 and Adams kept $100.

distributed free of charge. Some of the histories were therefore out of print within a few months of their initial appearance.

The most frustrating aspect of the project for Dawson was the length of time required to get manuscripts from the editor. Under operational rules at that time, all printing had to be paid for out of funds for the year in which the printing was done, and unused printing appropriations did not carry over from one year to the next. It was important therefore that the manuscripts be delivered within the fiscal year for which printing allowances had been made for them. Dawson became particularly impatient when Grover Cleveland lost the 1888 presidential election to a Republican. Fearing he would be displaced, he pressed all the harder to have as many of the monographs as possible completed before Cleveland left office.[22] Actually only eight of them had been printed when Dawson had to resign, but all had been contracted and paid for, and Dawson's successor saw to it that printing allocations were made for the remaining twenty-eight volumes.

VI

The one potential danger area, as Dawson recognized from the first, was that some group or groups might take offense at something in one or more of the publications.

---

[22]Dawson to Adams, November 13, 1888, Adams Papers.

With Adams as editor, it was not likely that any of the histories would fall below an acceptable level of scholarship, but with state and local pride, as well as alumni sentiment, to contend with, it was almost inevitable that someone would be displeased with at least one of the thirty-six volumes. Indeed this happened.

The first case, a relatively minor one, involved a proofreading mistake in the volume on Smith College. Smith students and alumnae protested, but the incident died down quickly after Dawson and Adams sent a printed explanation to all the people who had received the book. The apology did not, however, stop an editorial writer for the New York Independent from asserting that the mistake had been made maliciously. Dawson was very put out over the incident and warned Adams:

> The material prepared for publication by this Office should be so edited as to modify or eliminate expressions calculated to excite hysterics in persons susceptible of that unpleasant afflication.[23]

This advice was sound, but it did not prevent another and more serious incident four years after William Torrey Harris succeeded Dawson as Commissioner.

Harris, whose career as Commissioner is treated in the following chapter, continued the series contracted for by Dawson, and according to one of Dawson's correspondents,

---

[23]Dawson to Adams, January 20, 1888, Adams Papers.

never lost an opportunity to praise it.[24] The appearance in early 1894 of No. 16 of the series entitled Higher Education in Tennessee, however, put Harris and the Bureau in an embarrassing situation.

The author of the book was Lucius Salisbury Merriam, a bright young economist who had taken a Johns Hopkins Ph. D. at the age of twenty-six before going to Cornell as instructor in political economy. He had written the manuscript while still at Hopkins. The first copies came from the press on February 22, 1894, and ten of these were immediately sent to the two Tennessee senators, ten to Representatives B. A. Enloe and James D. Richardson of Tennessee, and one to the Associated Press. At this point Harris, having just returned to Washington from Richmond, Virginia, where he had been in a conference, picked up the new book and immediately discovered "intemperate statements."[25] He stopped distribution of the monograph, but by then the Washington Post had carried a story revealing that the publication was critical of Tennessee.[26] Representative Enloe demanded to know "by what authority the Commissioner of Education publishes at the public expense an attack on the State of Tennessee, and

---

[24] J. W. Holcombe to Dawson, December 10, 1890, Dawson Papers.

[25] Harris to James G. Richardson, February 24, 1894, "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12.

[26] Washington Post, February 27, 1894.

whence the Commissioner of Education derives the authority to exercise a censorship over the educational system of any state."[27]

The material which triggered the outburst came at the very beginning of the book and charged among other things that Tennessee had been "false to her trust" and "niggardly and ungenerous." It also implied that private and religious interests had held back the cause of public education in Tennessee and that the state's financial operations had left something to be desired. What Merriam said was apparently true enough, for the Nashville American, while assailing the book at some length, failed to refute the main criticisms.[28]

It was not, however, the validity of the charges which bothered Harris, but the hurt feelings he would have to assuage, especially those of Representatives Enloe and Richardson, for the former was chairman of the Committee on Education and the latter of the Committee on Printing. He needed the goodwill of both men.

Because of the influence of the men he had offended, Harris became fearful that the Bureau might "strike a rock and go down." He wrote to Adams, "I . . . shall not be surprised if a very serious crippling of the Bureau results from this."[29] To lessen criticism, he apologized to the

---

[27]U. S., Congressional Record, 53d Cong., 2d Sess., 1894, Vol. 26, Part III, 2909.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Harris to Adams, February 27, 1894, RG 12.

Committee on Education, saying that inclusion of the objectionable material was an oversight and that the true policy of the Bureau was "to cut out of all documents published at the expense of the Government everything that could be construed as a reflection upon the conduct of any state."[30] Obviously, if this statement were taken at face value, the very existence of the Bureau would have been a farce, since the purpose of publishing comparative statistics was to show that some states were falling behind. But Harris was frightened. He further asserted that practically all manuscripts submitted for government publication "need more or less pruning, in proportion to the earnestness and incisive mental character of the writer."[31] In keeping with this position, he had two "experts," whom he did not name, mark the offending passages and then told Adams to expurgate them. Adams did so, remarking that he had already tried without success to get Dr. Merriam to soften them.[32]

And what did the author have to say about this mutilation of his book? Unfortunately for the world of scholarship (and probably fortunately for Harris), the earnest and forthright young professor had drowned after a boating accident in Cayuga Lake, New York, less than three months before and could not defend himself. Adams cut the

---

[30]Harris to B. A. Enloe, March 2, 1894, RG 12.

[31]*Ibid*.

[32]*Ibid*.

first chapter from eleven pages to three and inserted a very laudatory biographical sketch of the dead author in compensation.

Actually, the affair was probably not as serious as Harris thought. Richardson said very little, and Enloe's objections were chiefly for the benefit of his constituents. Had Harris quietly withstood the assault, leaving his defense to several congressmen who were ready to come to his aid, he probably would not even have needed to apologize publicly. Certainly he did not need to assume such an abject stance, and his efforts to blame Dawson, Adams, Merriam, and the clerk who did the proofreading for a fiasco that was his responsibility, even if not his fault, were hardly commendable. Nor did his espousal of the principle that the Bureau could publish only totally innocuous material aid his cause or that of his office.

In spite of the momentary difficulty, Adams completed the Contributions and they formed, as Dawson had hoped they would, a tribute to the Bureau's operations under the Democrats. The quality, though varied, was generally high and even some of the weaker studies contained annotated bibliographies which were helpful to later scholars. The series was a worthy successor to Eaton's special library report.[33]

---

[33]There were thirty-six monographs in all. The total series occupied 8503 pages of print. The last three monographs appeared in 1903 after Adams' death.

VII

In March, 1889, Grover Cleveland moved out of the White House to make room for his Republican successor. Most of the Democrats whom he had appointed, and even some he had not, left in his train. Before Cleveland left, Dawson tried to secure an appointment as ambassador to Spain to replace a fellow Alabama Democrat, J. L. M. Curry. But Dawson's political backing was not strong enough to get him the post. With nothing forthcoming from his own party, he thought that President Harrison might let him stay with the Bureau of Education. On March 29 he wrote the following halfhearted letter of resignation, which he obviously hoped would be declined.

> Sir:
>
> I was appointed Commissioner of Education on the 6th day of August, 1886, from the State of Alabama by President Cleveland.
>
> The appointment was offered to me without any application or seeking on my part. I am a democrat in politics. I consider the Office of Education as non-political, and it may be so regarded by your Excellency, but my desire to leave you perfectly free and unembarrassed in the selection of the executive agents of your administration induces me to write you this letter, to be declined or accepted at your discretion.[34]

President Harrison accepted the resignation, and before the end of the year Dawson was on his way back to Selma to renew his law practice. He expressed his disappointment

---

[34]Dawson to the President [Benjamin Harrison], March 29, 1889, Dawson Papers.

to Herbert Baxter Adams, with whom he had become fairly good friends:

> I tried to make it a non-political office, and resisted all the efforts of political friends to give it that color and direction -- How well I succeeded, I leave my acts to speak -- If I succeeded, I see now that my success was not appreciated, and the office has been included in the general appropriation of the spoils system.[35]

Adams tried to talk Dawson into accepting the presidency of a state university, and Adams probably could have secured such a post for him, but Dawson replied that he would rather return to the practice of law.[36] Perhaps he had had enough of education and educators. At any rate, his only connection with education thereafter was as trustee of the University of Alabama, a position he used to secure for Adams an LL. D. degree.[37] On February 1, 1895, Dawson died in Selma. There was no mention of any educators at his funeral, although the NEA Proceedings and Addresses for that year did note his passing.[38]

The Bureau of Education had done well under Dawson. The staff reorganization, the updating of the annual report, wise conduct of Alaskan education, and the Contributions to American Educational History all spoke well for his

---

[35]Dawson to Adams, August 25, 1889, Adams Papers.

[36]Dawson to Adams, November 22, 1889, Adams Papers.

[37]Dawson to Adams, June 25, 1891, Adams Papers.

[38]"N. H. R. Dawson," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses," XXXIV (1895), 208.

executive ability. Dawson may not have been an educator and he was not an expansive builder like Eaton, but he understood how to organize educational research and he knew how to consolidate what Eaton had built. He knew his own limitations and worked around them to capitalize upon his strengths so that the Bureau functioned smoothly and efficiently under his leadership.

CHAPTER V

THE REIGN OF WILLIAM TORREY HARRIS, 1889-1906

I

With N. H. R. Dawson's resignation in hand, President Harrison sought a replacement who would please educators as well as satisfy political demands. He first offered the job of directing the Bureau of Education to Nicholas Murray Butler, a young New York Republican of some standing who had recently returned from a year of post-doctoral study in Germany. Butler was then in the process of starting Teachers College, Columbia University. He declined the President's offer and suggested as an alternate William Torrey Harris, a man well known in his field as past superintendent of schools in St. Louis, Missouri, and as a prominent lecturer and writer on education and philosophy. To Harrison's objection that he had not heard of the man, Butler replied, "your Secretary of the Interior [John W. Noble] can tell you all about him, for he was a member of the Board of Education in St. Louis while Doctor Harris was Superintendent." Secretary Noble apparently did tell the

President about Harris, as did several others, but Harrison next approached Thomas J. Morgan, principal of the State Normal School at Providence, Rhode Island. Morgan, however, preferred the Indian Bureau, and seconded Butler's suggestion of Harris for Commissioner of Education. The President then asked Harris, who at the time was connected with the Concord School of Philosophy, to come to Washington for an interview.[1]

When the President offered him the job, Harris signified his willingness to accept, but sheepishly confessed to having voted for Cleveland in the last election. To this unexpected revelation President Harrison is said to have responded: "That makes no difference; the educators of the country want you as Commissioner of Education." It apparently did make a difference, for there was a delay of several weeks while Harris' friends conducted a campaign to convince some of the Party stalwarts that Harris was a good Republican at heart and not a Mugwump. He was in fact a Republican by conviction and had apparently voted Democratic only because he disliked the high import tax on works of art advocated by his own party. His support among schoolmen was strong enough to offset his momentary political

---

[1]Nicholas Murray Butler, Across the Busy Years: Recollections and Reflections (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), p. 190; Kurt F. Leidecker, Yankee Teacher: The Life of William Torrey Harris (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1946), pp. 456-62.

liabilities. On September 12, 1889, he moved into his office on the second floor of the Wright Building and inaugurated a seventeen-year term as Commissioner of Education.[2]

Approval of the new Commissioner came from all over the country. Educators hailed the appointment as heartily as they had deplored Dawson's. The press, for the most part, also supported Harris. Democratic papers could claim some sort of victory because of his 1888 presidential vote. All but two major Republican journals forgave him the temporary lapse. Harris quickly returned to the Republican fold by praising President Harrison's "political wisdom,"[3] but in truth he was much less interested in partisan affairs than in the life of the mind. His real loyalty was to dispassionate reason, and he signified it by placing a bust of Plato in the reception room at the Bureau of Education.[4]

II

William Torrey Harris (1835-1909) seemed ideally suited both by temperament and by training to head the country's national education agency.[5] A native of

---

[2]Ibid.

[3]William Torrey Harris, "President Harrison's Political Wisdom," Independent, XLIV (November 1892), 15-16.

[4]Leidecker, loc. cit.

[5]Biographical data are from Leidecker, op. cit., and Ernest Sutherland Bates, "Harris, William Torrey," DAB, VIII, 328-30.

Connecticut, he accepted without question the democratic tradition of public education. He had attended district schools, several academies (including Phillips in Andover Massachusetts), and finally Yale, entering it in 1854 the same year John Eaton graduated from Dartmouth and Henry Barnard started his American Journal of Education. But Harris, in the process of flirting with vegetarianism spiritualism, mesmerism, and phrenology found Yale's curriculum too classical and its atmosphere too confining He left college in the middle of his junior year and, li many dissatisfied young men of the mid-nineteenth century headed for the great American West. He stopped in St. Louis where he soon found himself teaching school for a living. Within a short time he was principal of the School, and by 1866 he had become assistant superintendent of the city's schools. Two years later he moved into the superintendent's chair.

Harris' quick rise to educational leadership along with the normal process of maturation sobered him. He discarded phrenology, having already tried and abandon several other fads, and began studying the Transcendentalists. This interest in turn led him into German literature and philosophy; within a short time he had taught hi self the language and was immersed in Goethe, Kant, Schil Fichte, and Hegel. In the writings of Hegel, Harris foun the answers to his deepest intellectual questions, and he

Connecticut, he accepted without question the democratic tradition of public education. He had attended district schools, several academies (including Phillips in Andover, Massachusetts), and finally Yale, entering it in 1854 (the same year John Eaton graduated from Dartmouth and Henry Barnard started his American Journal of Education). But Harris, in the process of flirting with vegetarianism, spiritualism, mesmerism, and phrenology, found Yale's curriculum too classical and its atmosphere too confining. He left college in the middle of his junior year, and, like many dissatisfied young men of the mid-nineteenth century, headed for the great American West. He stopped in St. Louis where he soon found himself teaching school for a living. Within a short time he was principal of Clay School, and by 1866 he had become assistant superintendent of the city's schools. Two years later he moved into the superintendent's chair.

Harris' quick rise to educational leadership, along with the normal process of maturation, sobered him. He discarded phrenology, having already tried and abandoned several other fads, and began studying the Transcendentalists. This interest in turn led him into German literature and philosophy; within a short time he had taught himself the language and was immersed in Goethe, Kant, Schiller, Fichte, and Hegel. In the writings of Hegel, Harris found the answers to his deepest intellectual questions, and he

spent the rest of his life studying and popularizing a right-wing version of Hegel's thought.

By day, Harris ran the expanding St. Louis school system. By night, he and a group of friends gave force to the intellectual part of the "St. Louis Movement" in meetings where they read, discussed, and wrote about philosophy, literature, art, and science. When national magazines refused an article by Harris criticizing Herbert Spencer's thought, the young superintendent-philosopher started a periodical of his own entitled the Journal of Speculative Philosophy. This journal, which he edited from 1867 to 1893, was the first English language periodical devoted exclusively to philosophy. It played an important part in offering a vehicle of expression for a number of budding American philosophers, including George H. Howison, Charles Sanders Peirce, Josiah Royce, William James, and John Dewey.

While Harris was building a reputation as a philosopher, he was also becoming favorably known in the world of professional education. As superintendent he was relatively successful in solving the baffling social and cultural problems presented by St. Louis' cosmopolitan population. As an able exponent of ideas, with a wealth of philosophic knowledge to draw upon, he found many opportunities to advocate his educational theories. Throughout the decade of the 1870's, he became increasingly active in the rising

National Education Association, and his annual reports became models from which other administrators drew ideas.

By 1880, Harris was probably among the dozen most influential American public schoolmen, but his arduous schedule had worn him out. He resigned from St. Louis to travel and rest. After a trip to Europe for a firsthand look at the geographic sources of the thinkers he admired so much, he settled in Concord, Massachusetts, where he lived in what was for him semi-retirement, although his work schedule was still heavy. His major reason for being in Concord was to be associated with a group of philosophically oriented people under the leadership of A. Bronson Alcott in an adult education venture known as the Concord Summer School of Philosophy. Alcott and Harris were the prime movers of the school, though other notables in the Transcendentalist-Idealist tradition, such as F. B. Sanborn and Thomas Davidson, participated.

The Concord School was not Harris' only activity. He still edited his Journal of Speculative Philosophy and maintained an interest in educational affairs by writing articles on education, participating in the National Education Association, and serving Concord as superintendent of schools. Several institutions of higher learning invited him to presidencies; and though he was tempted by a few, such as the Universities of Texas and California, he turned them down in favor of his Concord work.

After a few years the Concord School declined and with the death of Alcott in 1888 came to an end. Harris at the age of fifty-three, with many years of creative energy still ahead, was without a position suited to his multifarious interests and expansive abilities. President Harrison's offer of the Bureau of Education came therefore at a particularly fortuitous time as far as Harris was concerned. Here was a national platform from which he could write and speak without taking on the demands of a major university presidency.[6]

III

From the first, many of the Bureau of Education's supporters had hoped for an office which would provide national intellectual leadership. While it had fulfilled that role to some extent during its first twenty years, it had fallen far short of many fond hopes. Those who wanted such leadership looked to Harris to give the Bureau more luster in intellectual circles than it had previously enjoyed. He did not disappoint them. Evidence is abundant that during most of his years as Commissioner, more people

---

[6]According to A. E. Winship, whose testimony was not always trustworthy, Harris said upon being told he was being considered: "If I can be United States Commissioner of Education, even for a day, I shall feel like saying, 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.' It is the recognition that I desire." Isaac Miles Wright, "History of the United States Bureau of Education" (unpublished D. Ped. thesis, New York University, 1916), p. 42.

looked to him than to any other as the articulator of all that was best in their field. One reason was that Harris was vitally concerned with all phases of formal education, whereas the majority of prominent educators were connected almost exclusively with higher education. A second, and more important reason, was the impact resulting from the unique combination of Harris' abilities and the national platform provided by the Bureau of Education. In any other position of educational leadership he would have been well known and highly influential, but not preeminent.

Harris' position as titular head of the nation's schools and his acknowledged speaking prowess brought him frequent invitations to appear before educational gatherings of all kinds. Though his writing style was "mechanical and unpregnant," his platform qualities were just the opposite.[7] He was sometimes witty, always interesting, and seemingly profound. Speaking from deep conviction born of long experience and extensive reading, he presented his views with charm and telling force, while displaying great patience and generosity of feeling. The sight of the Commissioner, his remaining hair turning white to match his short, scraggly beard, standing erectly behind a speaker's stand and peering intently at a manuscript through his small, metal-rimmed spectacles, became an increasingly familiar one during the seventeen years after 1889.

---

[7]Bates, loc. cit.

Harris had his greatest influence through domination of the National Education Association. He had already served as president of the group while superintendent in St. Louis and had spoken before most of the annual meetings from 1870 to 1889. After moving to Washington he became an almost constant speaker at NEA functions, addressing the annual meetings 105 times.[8] "He used to control the decisions of the . . . Association year after year," recalled William Lowe Bryan, President of the University of Indiana. "When he said 'thumbs up' on any proposal, it was adopted. When he said 'thumbs down,' that idea was dead. . . . They always thought that he must be right whether they understood what he was saying or not."[9] Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University, Harris' friend and younger contemporary, remembered that "every national meeting was dominated by his personality and his thought," adding that at state meetings "he was the one person to whom every one wished to speak and about whom every one wished to talk."[10] James H. Canfield, writing in the year that Harris resigned from the Bureau of Education, noted that he was "quoted more frequently and with more approval by educational journals

---

[8]Martha Furber Nelson (comp.), Index by Authors, Titles, and Subjects to the Publications of the National Education Association for Its First Fifty Years, 1857-1906 (Winona, Minn.: The Association, 1907), pp. 80-82.

[9]Leidecker, op. cit., pp. 322-23.

[10]Butler, op. cit., p. 191.

and by public-school teachers than any other American--not even excepting Horace Mann."[11]

IV

What educational philosophy did Harris espouse and promote so skillfully? Essentially it was a view of education as a conservative though dynamic process in which the school, state, church, community, and family socialized the young and produced the self-active individual who was free (in the Hegelian sense) because he had assimilated the wisdom of the race. At the heart of this approach was moral and intellectual discipline. The kindergarten taught the child proper behavior. In elementary school, through study of geography, literature and art, mathematics, grammar, and history, the pupil acquired the basic knowledge and tools necessary for a civilized life. The high school and college refined and extended the work of the elementary school by stressing a curriculum of mathematics, languages, and classics. Key concepts for Harris were order, regularity, punctuality, silence, industry, and will power--all attributes needed by a society in transition from the relatively simple and direct existence of the frontier and farm to the complex and disjointed life of city and factory.[12]

---

[11]Quoted in Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators, With New Chapter on the Last Twenty-Five Years (Paterson, New Jersey: Littlefield Adams and Co., 1963), p. 310.

[12]The best short accounts of Harris' educational philosophy are to be found in Curti, op. cit., pp. 310-

In the 1890's, the kind of thought Harris represented so effectively was very much in the vanguard. It dominated both the National Education Association and the Bureau of Education.[13] By the turn of the century, however, there was already an incipient movement away from the earlier formalism to an approach which emphasized spontaneity, freedom, and interest. The naturalists, whose assumptions Harris had long opposed as pernicious, surged ahead under the invigorating leadership of William James, G. Stanley Hall, John Dewey, and other reformers. During the last six years that Harris was commissioner, there was a small but growing exodus from the idealist camp which he represented to the naturalist position typified by Dewey. Although Harris' reputation and influence as the grand old man of American education were still very great, there was increasing disaffection both with his educational philosophy and with his management of the Bureau of Education.

47, and Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1867-1957 (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), pp. 14-20. The most detailed development by Harris himself is Psychologic Foundations of Education; An Attempt to Show the Genesis of the Higher Faculties of the Mind (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1898).

[13]The Bureau of Education under Harris printed and distributed free of charge 30,000 copies of the NEA's Report of the Committee of Ten (1893) and Report of the Committee of Fifteen (1895). Letter from Harris to Senator Francis M. Cockrell, February 28, 1895, RG 12.

V

As a popularizer of an idealistic philosophy of education Harris was without peer, but as an administrator of a government bureau he was less than satisfactory. The realization that he was not ideally suited to administration came as a delayed surprise to nearly everyone concerned. After all, he had had a very successful twelve-year term as superintendent at St. Louis. His contemporaries naturally expected that he would be equally effective in managing the Bureau of Education. For several reasons this was not the case.

To begin with, Harris found the Bureau partially staffed by women who had been hired by John Eaton at President Grant's insistence because they were close relatives of men whose war careers had been, or at least seemed, significant in the Union cause.[14] Some of these clerks may have been as unqualified as Harris thought they were, but Eaton and Dawson had both apparently been able to get satisfactory work from them. Harris openly indicated

---

[14]On April 20, 1882, John Eaton wrote the Secretary of the Interior as follows: "I have the honor to report that of the number of ladies employed in this Bureau, one is a widow of a Colonel of the U. S. Vols.; one is a widow of a Capt. and Bvt. Maj. U.S.A.; one, the widow of a Capt., U. S. Vols.; one, the wife of a Brig. Gen'l., U. S. Vols., and sister of a soldier; one, the sister of a deceased naval officer who was her support; three are sisters of soldiers; one, the daughter of a Paymaster, U. S. Vols.--in all 9 who had relatives in the Union service during the late rebellion." RG 12.

his disgust at the situation by having his daughter learn shorthand to help him do most of his office correspondence at home.[15]

The well-organized office force which Dawson bequeathed to Harris further degenerated because Harris refused to delegate authority in any very consistent fashion. In St. Louis his very efficient private secretary had relieved him of many of the more mundane and technical problems of administration. His private secretary at the Bureau, Henry Ridgley Evans, virtually worshipped him, but was "not a good secretary and not at all sympathetic or acquainted with the problems of the Bureau." Because Harris could not bring himself to trust any judgment but his own, he gave the division chiefs no more authority than their subordinates. All decisions had to be cleared directly with him, and Harris found himself embogged in minutia.[16]

The one striking exception to Harris' reluctance to delegate authority was his virtually turning the Alaska Division over to its chief, Sheldon Jackson. Harris did not visit Alaska once in the seventeen years he was responsible for schools there. Usually he merely seconded whatever Jackson decided. While Jackson was an estimable man in many respects, he was much more a missionary and

---

[15]Wright, op. cit., p. 46.

[16]Ibid., pp. 46-47.

promoter than educator and administrator. He was incessantly at odds with a major segment of Alaska's white population, and he had numerous conflicts with his own personnel. As a result, by the time Harris left office the Alaska Service desperately needed reorganization.[17]

Another deficiency of Harris as Commissioner was his marked aversion to asking Congress for money. This attitude was partially a result of his distrust of politicians and his theory that the less he bothered them the more likely they were to ignore him and his Bureau. But it went deeper than that, for not only did he himself sometimes fail to show up at committee hearings where he was expected, but he interfered with the efforts of others to get increased funds for the Bureau. The truth of the matter was that he wanted no more headaches over the administration of funds or personnel than he already had. He was content with the status quo.[18]

These deficiencies alone cannot fully account for Harris' administrative difficulties. Also at issue was the role he conceived for the Bureau and his own relation to it. In keeping with his Hegelian philosophic presuppositions,

---

[17]See Chap. IX (pp. 176-87) on education in Alaska.

[18]Harris admitted, even while generally opposing increased appropriations, that salaries were so low that he could not expect to "hold in any position in the Bureau a man of enterprise and energy." Letter from Harris to John L. McLaurin, December 5, 1896, "Out-going Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12.

Harris saw the Bureau as a spiritual force in American development and himself as the generating power behind the force. Harris considered the Bureau only a vehicle for his own philosophical quest. He thought of himself as the essence to which everyone pointed, and in his idealistic thought the essence was as much superior to the form as pearls are to sand. He thought that the yardstick of his success was in the letters of praise or criticism which intellectuals (particularly European) sent him. "This," he confided to intimate friends, "is what signifies."[19] Harris believed that his operation of the Bureau was a decided success, but few people shared this opinion. A successful Bureau, they thought, should not be characterized by staff jealousies, mismanagement, and an office "always sort of littered with documents and accumulated dust."[20]

VI

Because the process of deterioration within the Bureau was gradual and because Harris enjoyed great prestige and many personal friends among educators, the causes of the Bureau's difficulties did not become generally known until near the end of his term. By then dissatisfaction

---

[19]A. E. Winship, "Educators as I Have Known Them--United States Commissioners of Education," Journal of Edcuation, LXXXIII (May 18, 1916), 541.

[20]Wright, op. cit., p. 46.

with the Commissioner had come to a head over another specific issue. This was the question of the Bureau's status and its position in the governmental structure.

About 1896, after Harris had restored the Bureau's prestige and before its internal weaknesses had become evident, a number of educators began to hope that it might regain its original eminence as a department. Harris began to get letters asking his reaction to the idea of elevating the Bureau into a department of education, with its commissioner in the President's cabinet. Harris answered each of these inquiries in detail. He initially agreed that the time had come to reexamine the role and status of the Bureau and that a department of education would have several advantages. This much conceded, he then methodically countered all the arguments in favor of change. He concluded by saying that the educators of the country could have a department if they wanted one but that he would have to be replaced if this were done.[21]

Harris' unobtrusive yet thorough opposition blunted the move for a department, but the sentiment for upgrading the Bureau was so widespread that E. E. White of Ohio, who had played such a vital role in establishing the original Department, attempted to introduce a resolution from the

---

[21]Harris to Nicholas M. Butler, April 12, 1900, RG 12. Harris sent essentially the same letter to thirteen other leading educators, asking in each case that the letter be regarded as confidential.

floor at the 1900 NEA convention calling for a committee to study the problem. Harris headed off the move by arranging to be recognized instead of White so that he could introduce his own resolution and be included in the committee. This accomplished, he could be sure that no real impetus to change would come from the NEA. White was deeply offended and swore not to attend any more NEA conventions, but Harris soothed him by writing off the whole episode as a regrettable coincidence.[22]

Harris opposed any change in the Bureau's organization and function for two major reasons, neither having to do with Constitutional scruples. The first objection was a natural outgrowth of his conception of the Bureau's relation to politics. He persisted in believing, or at least in saying, that the Bureau as it was constituted was non-political.[23] If, then, the Commissioner of Education should become a secretary in the President's cabinet, Harris

---

[22]Harris to E. E. White, March 23, 1900, January 15, 1901, "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner," RG 12.

[23]Harris may have publicly stated that the office he headed was non-political, but privately he took no chances. The following letter, dated November 9, 1904, from Harris to Nicholas Murray Butler quickly found its way to the White House, as Harris must have known it would: "It is grand for us friends of Mr. Roosevelt and of his personal methods to read of the 'great landslide' in this morning's paper, for it is not only a victory of the party (the G.O.P.) but especially our endorsement of the man Roosevelt himself and it warms one's heart to discover that the American people are up to seeing and appreciating a great man while he is yet living." Leidecker, op. cit., p. 537.

was sure partisan considerations would play a larger part in his selection. Such political involvement for the office was objectionable to him on two counts. First, he subscribed to the theory that political activities were by definition somewhat debased. Second, and more to the point, he was not eager to give up his job and he thought it unlikely that he would be retained as a secretary of education.

The other reason Harris opposed upgrading the Bureau was his reluctance, cited earlier, to take on any additional administrative duties. Alaskan education baffled and worried him as nothing had in St. Louis, and he never effectively came to grips with the problems surrounding the schools of that distant territory. Talk of adding the schools of Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the Bureau's responsibility caused him concern. Besides, more responsibilities would bring larger budgets, and Harris noted that wherever there was large money to be spent there were those who had schemes for its use. Increased funds meant greater possibilities for scandal and necessitated more defenses to Congress over their management. As it was, the Bureau was small and largely ignored by Congress; it was research oriented; and Harris was relatively free to write and speak. That suited him. He saw more headaches than gains for himself in a change.[24]

---

[24]Harris to Henry Sabine, January 4, 1901, RG 12.

VII

Harris probably should have resigned about 1900. He was then sixty-five and the rigorous schedule was hurting his health. He had had a remarkably fruitful and influential ten years as Commissioner. But dissatisfaction both with his management of the Bureau and with the educational point of view he represented was growing. Probably he would have resigned but he still had to make a living, for despite his great admiration for the American businessman he had never given any attention to making money. Since he had nothing on which to retire and could not foresee anything so congenial to him as the work he was already doing, he stayed with the Bureau longer than was good either for its operations or for his own health.

In May, 1906, the aging Commissioner found a good excuse to resign. In recognition of the distinguished service he had rendered to American education, and to clear the way for change, the newly formed Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching tendered him a retirement allowance of $3,000 a year for life. Harris gratefully accepted.[25] His health, however, was already seriously impaired; and a little more than three years later he died quietly in Providence, Rhode Island. Meanwhile the rising

---

[25]Nicholas Murray Butler, who had first suggested Harris to President Cleveland in 1889, was instrumental in securing the retirement for Harris.

pragmatic philosophy which he had steadfastly opposed had come to the Bureau of Education.

CHAPTER VI

REVITALIZATION OF THE BUREAU, 1906-1911

I

When William Torrey Harris resigned, Theodore Roosevelt, eager to please American educators, turned to Nicholas Murray Bulter for advice in selecting a replacement. Butler, the President's friend, was glad to help. He had first suggested Harris for commissioner in 1889; he had had a leading part in securing the Carnegie allowance so that Harris could retire. It was probably also Butler who suggested the name of Elmer Ellsworth Brown, then professor of education at the University of California, as the fifth U. S. Commissioner of Education. In any case Roosevelt appointed Brown, who on July 1, 1906, took over the disorganized office from Harris.

The change in leadership signaled the beginning of a new era. Brown was the first commissioner of education to have grown to manhood after the Civil War. He was the first to have been formally trained as a professional educator--Barnard and Dawson had studied law; Eaton, theology; and Harris had quit Yale in his junior year.

Brown was also the first commissioner to hold an earned doctor's degree (all of his predecessors had held honorary doctorates and both Barnard and Harris were called "Doctor"). Brown was also the first representative of the new "progressive education" movement to head up the Bureau of Education.[1]

II

Elmer Ellsworth Brown (1861-1934), like all of his predecessors in the Bureau except Dawson, was born in the North and had a strong New England ancestry. Shortly after he was born, his family moved from Kiantone, New York, to Sublette, Illinois, where his father farmed. There Brown grew up and attended public school.

Though Brown did not begin school until he was eight years old, he stood at the head of a list of candidates for teachers' certificates when he took the county examination at thirteen. He was judged too young for teaching, even though technically qualified. He took his first job in 1878, when he was seventeen, as principal of a two-teacher school in Rockport, Illinois. From there he moved to Astoria, Illinois, for one term as an assistant

---

[1]Brown was a relatively mild "progressive." For his philosophy of education see Elmer Ellsworth Brown, "Educational Progress of the Past Fifteen Years," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, LIII (1915), 48-54, and "Present Problems in the Theory of Education," Educational Review, XXIX (January, 1905), 38-61.

in the high school. Then in 1879 he entered Illinois State Normal College for a two-year course of study. Graduating in 1881, he took a job as superintendent of Belvidere County, Illinois, schools. After three years in this position, he left school administration to assist his brother, Isaac Eddy Brown, who was state secretary of the Illinois Young Men's Christian Association. Again after three years he left YMCA work to enter the University of Michigan as a freshman. He was then twenty-six.[2]

In 1889, the year William Torrey Harris became Commissioner of Education, Brown graduated from the University of Michigan, married a cousin (Fanny Eddy), and left for graduate study in Germany. After one year at the University of Halle, he took a Ph. D. on the basis of a thesis comparing church-state relations and the teaching of religion in the schools of Prussia, England, and the United States.[3]

Upon his return from Europe, Brown accepted the principalship of a high school in Jackson, Michigan, but

---

[2]Theodore F. Jones, "Brown, Elmer Ellsworth," DAB, XXI (Supplement One), 124-25; Walter Miller, "Elmer Ellsworth Brown, the New Commissioner of Education," Southern Educational Review, III (November, 1906), 73-78; LeRoy Elwood Kimball, "Introduction: Biographical Sketch," in A Few Remarks by Elmer Ellsworth Brown (New York: The New York University Press, 1933), pp. 6-7.

[3]Elmer Ellsworth Brown, Die Stellung des Staates zur kirche in Bezug auf den Religionsunterricht in der Schule in Preussen, England and den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika (Halle: Druck von E. Karras, 1890).

left after a few months to become assistant professor of the art and science of teaching at his alma mater. In 1892, after teaching a year at the University of Michigan, he moved to the University of California to organize a department of education. He spent the next fourteen years there as teacher, administrator, and writer.[4]

Brown wrote about twenty articles during those years, but it was a book on the development of the American secondary school, appearing in 1903, which won him national acclaim in education circles.[5] Critics hailed The Making of Our Middle Schools as a fine contribution to educational literature. Charles Mills Gayley, writing in The Nation, called the book "seductively constructed," saying that it "actually entices one to whom the word 'pedagogy' is a source of shudders." The same commentator further observed that Brown had the advantage of "many professors of the incipient science of pedagogy in possessing an uncommon sum of common sense, in being a scholar and a man among men as well as among teachers."[6]

---

[4]Jones, loc. cit.; Kimball, loc. cit.

[5]Elmer Ellsworth Brown, The Making of Our Middle Schools; An Account of the Development of Secondary Education in the United States (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1903).

[6]Charles Mills Gayley, "The Commissionership of Education," The Nation, LXXXIII (July 5, 1906), 9-10.

Brown's book brought him to prominence at a good time. The year after it appeared he was elected president of the National Education Association. He was already a member of the NEA's exclusive Council on Education. It was just at this point that Theodore Roosevelt was looking for a new commissioner of education. Brown was the logical choice. He was a scholar of wide repute in his field, he was young and well-trained, he had a wealth of good experience behind him, he was politically sound, and he was acceptable to the rising generation of educators who were oriented to a naturalistic-experimentalist approach to learning.

III

Brown received a cordial welcome both from educational journalists and from the White House staff. Roosevelt personally gave the new Commissioner assurances of strong backing, though the only one of the Bureau's activities which the redoubtable T. R. wanted to discuss was the romantic Alaskan reindeer project.[7] Brown's introduction to his new job was so pleasant in fact that he wondered if the difficulties about which he had been warned were not imagined. He found "none of that immobility of the great governmental machine of which I had heard so much." It

---

[7]Elmer Ellsworth Brown, "Educational Interests at Washington," Science, n.s., XXXIX (February 13, 1914), 240.

began to appear that the only really disagreeable aspect of his job would be Washington's oppressive summer climate. He later recalled that the thermometer in his office registered 95 degrees the day he moved in and that the rest of the summer was steaming hot. He wrote, "It rained on St. Swithin's day and--more or less--for forty days thereafter, and the sticky heat was well-nigh unbearable." Then as the summer heat subsided and Congress assembled, the great immobility of the government machine superseded the weather as a source of frustration.[8]

After Thanksgiving Day when Brown made his first appearance before the House Committee on Appropriations, he began to realize that congressional obtuseness could make the August swelter seem gentle by comparison. "Then I knew," he ruefully recalled a few years later, that "no great advance could be made in the usefulness of the education office without increase of appropriations; and there was evidently in Congress an entrenched tradition that the federal government should not go deeply into expenditures for public education." Brown described the contrast in attitude between the White House and Congress as "not that between white and black but that between light gray and a misty dimness."[9]

---

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

The new Commissioner soon discovered that congressional parsimony would not be his only difficulty. His own immediate superior, Secretary of the Interior Hitchcock, was also opposed to any substantial increase in appropriation for the Bureau of Education.

Ethan Allen Hitchcock was the personification of rugged individualism. As a young man he had made a fortune in Hong Kong working in the commission business of Olyphant and Company. At thirty-nine he moved back to the States, living in St. Louis as a successful man of affairs. In 1897 he accepted an appointment as minister to Russia and the following year returned to become Secretary of the Interior. When Brown came to the Bureau of Education, Hitchcock was seventy-two and had built a reputation for being not only incorruptible but almost literally unapproachable. "He was cold and formal in manner, collected in speech, and utterly impervious to the persuasions and influence of hard-headed men of affairs or of genial politicians," wrote one biographer. "Praise and blame were to him alike superfluous and distasteful."[10]

Brown quickly discovered that Hitchcock's reputation was well deserved. He did secure minor concessions from the reluctant Secretary by enlisting the help of W. B. Acker, one of the Department's highly respected bureaucrats

---

[10]Thomas S. Barclay, "Hitchcock, Ethan Allen," DAB, IX, 74-75.

of long tenure who knew how to salvage something from higher echelon refusals. Through Acker's efforts Brown finally received permission to issue "bulletins" separately from the annual report.[11]

Hitchcock retired in 1907 to be replaced by Rudolph Garfield, the son of James A. Garfield who had worked so diligently to bring the original Department of Education into existence. When Garfield succeeded to the Interior portfolio, one source of Brown's difficulties vanished, but the congressional intractibility remained as forbidding as ever.

Had Brown been satisfied with the size and functions of the Bureau as he found it, Congress would not have presented serious problems; but he was not happy with the status quo. He knew that American society was changing dramatically and that the nation's schools were not meeting new demands adequately. Indeed, they were too often not even meeting the old requirements. To him the basic task of the Bureau of Education was patent: "to make sporadic educational excellences contagious, and make the contagion of educational improvement an epidemic."[12] But the Bureau

---

[11]Brown, "Educational Interests at Washington," Science, loc. cit.

[12]Elmer Ellsworth Brown, "A Message from the United States Bureau of Education," Independent, LXIX (August 4, 1910), 229-33, (quotation from last page).

as it was then constituted did not seem to have enough influence to cause any epidemics.

What Brown wanted was a substantially increased role for the Bureau of Education. Ultimately he hoped to see it transformed into an executive department, but he realized what some of his contemporaries overlooked, that the Bureau would have to become larger and more prominent before any bid for cabinet-level status could command serious attention in Congress. He embarked, therefore, on a threefold program aimed at eventual cabinet representation. The first step was to integrate more fully the Bureau with the rest of the educational enterprise and to reorganize its existing resources for greater efficiency. The second part of the program called for enlarging the Bureau's staff, appropriations, and functions. When these two aims had been realized, then Brown hoped for a successful third step--the push for making the Bureau a department.

IV

The first phase, that of reorganizing the Bureau and putting it in touch with the mainstream of educational development, began immediately after Brown took office. He instituted far-reaching internal changes which continued off and on throughout his term of office.[13] Lewis A.

---

[13]Elmer Ellsworth Brown, "The United States Bureau of Education," Science, n.s., XXX (August 20, 1909), 235-37; "Reorganization in the Bureau of Education," Educational Review, XXXVII (September, 1909), 215-16.

Kalbach, who had started work at the Bureau in 1886, became Brown's lieutenant and served as chief clerk. Lovick Pierce, who had been chief clerk, reorganized the Correspondence Division. Sheldon Jackson, who had been General Agent for Education in Alaska for twenty-three years, retained his title and salary but relinquished all power and duties to Dr. Harlan Updegraff. Two outside specialists came to the Bureau during its early period of reorganization: James E. McClintock, from the University of Maine, to work with land-grant colleges; and W. Dawson Johnston, from the Library of Congress, to put the Bureau's library into shape. Reforms continued throughout Brown's five years as Commissioner, and when he left office, the Bureau was again structured on the basis of seven divisions, the same number Eaton had used twenty-five years earlier.

Brown's efforts at internal reorganization brought gratifying results. Before Johnston left the Bureau in 1909 to be librarian at Columbia University, he had completely rearranged the Bureau library for greater efficiency, binding many of the loose holdings and sending duplicate material to the District Library and the Library of Congress. The Alaska service under Updegraff became much more forceful, with a greater concentration than ever before on the economic needs and health deficiencies of the natives.[14]

---

[14]See Chapter IX, pp. 185-88, on Alaska.

The most noticeable improvement came when Brown changed the Bureau's publication policy.

Since the early part of John Eaton's administration, the Bureau had used three devices for publishing its findings: letters, circulars, and the annual report. The letters served to answer several thousand individual questions which came to the Bureau each year. The circulars, ranging in length from a half dozen to well over a thousand pages, embodied material too specialized for the annual report but of interest to significant groups of educators. (Eaton's 1876 report on libraries is an important example of the use of the circular.) The annual report then encompassed statistical tables, the Commissioner's statement and recommendations, and papers of general interest to American educators.

William Torrey Harris had continued this general pattern, but with an important change in emphasis. Within a short while after taking office, he had shifted to the annual report most of the material and printing allowance which would previously have gone into circulars.[15] The result was that the report grew from its already impressive bulk into a massive work of 2,600 pages. If it had been printed in eleven or twelve-point standard type on a

---

[15]Harris continued to issue some circulars--e.g., the remaining twenty-four volumes of Contributions to American Educational History appeared in that form, as well as a few other papers which he considered highly important.

six-by-nine page with normal margins, it would have filled eight volumes of 500 pages each. By reducing print size and nearly eliminating margins, Harris managed to crowd it all into "two fat, black-garbed volumes." As one writer dryly observed, it was hardly a book to be read on the run. Appearing from one to three years late, the report developed a reputation in the popular press as "one of the dullest books in the world."[16] Actually, it was neither so dull nor so little read as its critics alleged. No doubt many of the twenty to thirty thousand annual copies found an eager audience, but sheer bulk did repel potential readers. The layout of the volumes, moreover, made the statistical tables less useful than they might have been.

In an effort to increase the efficiency of the Bureau's publications, Brown, for the first time since Dawson left office, brought the annual reports out during the same year they covered. To improve the statistical matter, he asked Edward L. Thorndike of Teachers College, Columbia University, to revise this aspect of the report. Thorndike in 1907 and Professor George D. Strayer in 1908 (also of Teachers College) standardized and revised the schedules sent from the Bureau asking for information, and condensed the tables of published results.[17] In a

---

[16]Edward C. Elliott, "The Annual Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1908," Science, n.s., XXX (September 17, 1909), 358-59.

[17]Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, "Summary of Recent Progress," typescript dated May 29, 1908,

move to gain support for these changes, Brown called a conference of Chief State School Officers at Washington.[18] Their endorsement resulted in a much more useful and reliable statistical section, which Brown issued in one volume, leaving the other part of the annual report separate. A writer in Science, commenting on the 1908 tables, remarked that "while yet our educational statistics are not as complete or as intelligible as they need to be, this . . . report exhibits the longest stride of progress yet made."[19] Brown made the annual report still more attractive by increasing type size, reducing the number of pages to about one half that of Harris' day, and exchanging the "funeral black binding" for a more "artistic soft toned olive." Educators welcomed the changes.[20]

The Commissioner reported to the Secretary of the Interior in 1910 that the Bureau finally had good evidence that the annual reports were "actually at the present time being read."[21]

---

in the "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12.

[18]Brown also hoped to strengthen the state departments of education. Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year Ended June 30, 1908 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), I, 9.

[19]Elliott, loc. cit.

[20]Ibid.

[21]U. S., House of Representatives, Hearings Before the Committee on Education, on H.R. 12318, February 2, 8, 15, 23, 1910 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), pp. 9-10.

In an effort to offset the loss of printing space occasioned by revising the annual report, Brown sought permission to issue Bulletins on special topics of interest as the need arose. Congress had granted specific authority for this form of publication in 1896, but Harris had not utilized it because funds for this purpose had to be authorized separately by the Secretary of the Interior. Brown received his superior's reluctant permission and began the series with a study titled The Education Bill of 1906 for England and Wales as It Passed the House of Commons by Anna Toleman Smith, one of the Bureau's long-time employees.[22] The Bulletin became one of the Bureau's most significant vehicles for conveying information and remains so today.

One other development brought about by Brown effected greater long-range efficiency. This was a change in the Bureau's location. In July, 1909, after forty-two years in rented quarters, the Bureau moved to the second floor of the old Post Office Department building.[23] The improvement in facilities and space was very beneficial and some observers saw in the move to a government building an indication that the Bureau was being recognized as a more significant part of the government's machinery. To a small extent this

---

[22]U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 1, 1906 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906).

[23]Brown, "The United States Bureau of Education," Science, loc. cit.

was true, but the change did not signify any major gain in prestige, as some educators hoped it would. Not until 1961 did the Office of Education move into a building all its own.

V

By the year 1909 the Bureau of Education was well along in its program of reorganization. Brown felt the time had come to begin the second phase of his three-part drive, that of expanding the Bureau's scope and increasing its appropriations. The Commissioner's immediate objective was to secure an additional $75,000 per year to be used in adding a "field force" to the Bureau's staff of fifty-one people. The addition would consist of ten experts, one each in the following areas: school construction, school administration, accounting and statistics, industrial education, education for housekeeping, school hygiene, rural schools, agricultural schools, commercial education, and expansion of the school plant's use. Each of these specialists would work in Washington and would have funds available from the $75,000 for travel in the field, where they would give advice, make surveys, and gather information for publications. Though the Bureau specialists would go only where they were invited, Brown was certain the demand would be great enough to keep them fully employed

and that the result would be a general elevation of educational standards.[24]

As the opening round in his frankly admitted propaganda campaign for a larger Bureau, Brown enlisted the help of eighteen educational journals with a combined readership circulation of 100,000. After alerting the educational community through these periodicals that the drive was on, the Commissioner wrote the boards of education in 1,300 of the country's largest cities asking every board and each board member to send supporting letters to congressmen. Superintendents in the same cities were also asked to write letters. The combined effort, however, brought only 177 responses. Reminders to the superintendents helped somewhat, but the total response was still far short of Brown's expectations. Equally weak reactions from civic clubs, state teachers' organizations, and university departments of education revealed less support for strengthening the Bureau than Brown had supposed existed.[25]

A second volley of letters from the Bureau to a much larger audience got better results. Calls upon state

---

[24]Letter from E. E. Brown to Frank B. Dryer (Cincinnati, Ohio, Superintendent of Schools), July 31, 1909, File 100, RG 12.

[25]"Report of the Campaign in Behalf of the United States Bureau of Education," n.d., typescript in File 100, RG 12; File No. 6, Department of the Interior, "Office of the Secretary," Record Group 48 (National Archives, Washington, D. C.) contains hundreds of the letters.

and city superintendents of public instruction, college, university, and normal school presidents, secretaries of boards of trade and commerce, and all the active members of the NEA brought another 1,700 letters to Congress, with promises to Brown that many more would be written.[26]

A year of propagandizing made Congress aware of some sentiment favorable to augmenting the Bureau's appropriation and even resulted in slight gains, but it hardly brought the avalanche of mail needed to increase the appropriations substantially. The House Committee on Education and Labor listened to Brown's appeal and promised to help. The Russell Sage Foundation also lent its support to the campaign and published a small volume entitled The Fight to Save the Bureau of Education (1911). But despite an increased sympathy, both in and out of Congress, for the ends sought by Brown, the Bureau got only about ten per cent of the requested money.[27]

Long-standing fear of possible federal interference in state and local affairs accounted for part of the opposition. The most effective deterrent to increased appropriations, however, was "a fear of the breaking loose of another avalanche of expenditure like that for the

---

[26] Ibid.

[27] For the debate, see U. S., Congressional Record, 61st Cong., 3d Sess., 1911, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 622-38.

agricultural department," as Brown put it.[28] The Department of Agriculture had begun very modestly about the same time as the Bureau (Department) of Education. By 1910 it was spending $13 million per year and the amount was growing rapidly. Congressmen realized that if the Bureau of Education once began really meeting the demands which its exponents were prepared to make, the annual increases would soon be measured in millions rather than thousands.

Because of this realization, Congress granted only two of the ten specialists whom Brown had requested--those in higher education and school administration. Dr. Harlan Updegraff, who had just reorganized the Alaska Division, headed the new Division of School Administration.[29] Dr. Kendrick C. Babcock left the presidency of the University of Arizona to run the Division of Higher Education.[30] Though not among the ten experts asked for in the expansion program, Milo B. Hillegas was appointed to direct the new Editorial Division.[31]

---

[28]Letter from E. E. Brown to Lewis A. Kalbach (Chief Clerk), May 10, 1910, File 100, RG 12.

[29]Letter from E. E. Brown to The Chief Clerk (Lewis A. Kalbach), February 3, 1911, File 100, RG 12.

[31]Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year Ended June 30, 1910 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), I, 4.

VI

When Brown's expansion program ground down in the congressional bog, plans for an educational department in the President's cabinet also came to a standstill. In early 1911 at the same time that Congress was slamming the gates against any significant growth by the Bureau, New York University invited Elmer Ellsworth Brown to succeed Henry Mitchell MacCracken as its chancellor. If there had been any good prospect for realizing his hopes for the Bureau, Brown might have stayed on; but there seemed little doubt that Congress did not intend to approve general aid to education or to grant any substantial increases for the Bureau.[32] In May, 1911, he resigned from his Washington position; and on June 30 of the same year, exactly five years after he took office, he left to preside over New York University.[33]

Brown's decision to quit government service was widely regretted. President Taft apparently accepted his resignation reluctantly, for Brown had made the Bureau more useful in five years than William Torrey Harris had in seventeen; the staff was functioning efficiently and appropriations for the office had increased by sixty-eight

---

[32]The Commissioner's salary was no longer the serious deterrent to staying that it had been. It was raised to $4,500 per year on July 1, 1909, and on July 1, 1910 to $5,000.

[33]"Installation of Chancellor Brown," Outlook, XCIX (November 18, 1911), 644-45.

per cent. As Brown pointed out, this showing would have seemed better "were it not that the total amount was pitifully small as compared with the magnitude of the interests and needs involved."[34] At that, Brown's record as commissioner was an excellent one and entitled him to the praise accorded him by the educational press.

An optimist by nature and a philosopher by training, Brown never gave up a confident expectation that Congress would eventually agree with the main outlines of his conception of the Bureau and the place it should occupy. "For my own part," he observed a few years after leaving Washington, "I have no doubt that when we get any clear vision of the meaning of science and education and the arts in our national life, we shall have liberal appropriations for these objects from the federal government."[35]

In the meantime, the busy Chancellor turned his attention to making New York University a first-rate institution. For twenty-two years he ran the growing metropolitan institution, retiring in 1933 at the age of seventy-one. A few months later he died.[36] His contributions as fifth United States Commissioner were

---

[34]Brown, "Educational Interests at Washington," Science, loc. cit.

[35]Ibid., 243.

[36]"Dr. E. E. Brown Dies--Former NYU Head," The New York Times, November 4, 1934, Col. 3, p. 1.

not forgotten, but they were overshadowed by his long service as a university president.

By the time Brown died, four more men had occupied the office he left in 1911, and a search was underway for the fifth. His prophecy of liberal appropriations for science, education, and the arts was yet unfulfilled. The Office of Education which he had helped develop was still a small, relatively inconsequential agency without a clear sense of direction.

CHAPTER VII

EXPANSION OF THE BUREAU, 1911-1921

I

The appointment of a successor to Elmer Ellsworth Brown came about through informal contacts within formal channels. Walter W. Fisher had just become Secretary of the Interior. His father, while at a McCormick Theological Seminary board meeting in Chicago, asked fellow member Charles W. Daubney to name a good man for commissioner of education so that he could pass the information on to his son. Daubney, who had just left the presidency of the University of Tennessee to head the University of Cincinnati, immediately suggested Philander P. Claxton, with whom he had worked for nearly ten years at Tennessee. Claxton had been head of the University of Tennessee's Department of Education since its inception in 1902 and had also been the chief architect of the highly successful Summer School of the South, which the university had operated for teachers. In May, 1911, Daubney wrote Claxton of his recommendation:

"I suppose I have done no harm, even if I have not done any good."[1]

Fisher was not chatting idly with Daubney. A few days after the Chicago meeting President Taft was in Cincinnati for a speaking engagement and approached Daubney for more information about Claxton, saying he wanted a Southern educator with a national reputation who would not mix in politics. Daubney assured him that Claxton was without doubt the man who best fulfilled those requirements. Several weeks later Claxton received a telegram from the Secretary of the Interior inviting him to Washington for an interview.

Claxton accepted the invitation to Washington, and after a talk Fisher offered him the job. Claxton replied he would consider it "if some 'bite' can be put into the work, and if we could get sufficient appropriations to enable us to do the work in a worthwhile way." Before making a final decision, Claxton talked to President Taft and to Speaker of the House Champ Clark, both of whom promised strong support. Early in July, Claxton was sworn in as the sixth U. S. Commissioner of Education.[2]

---

[1]Charles Lee Lewis, Philander Priestley Claxton: Crusader for Public Education (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1948), p. 169.

[2]Ibid., pp. 170-71.

II

Philander Priestley Claxton (1862-1957) was in many ways the best prepared commissioner of education yet to hold office. He was born during the early part of the Civil War in Bedford County, Tennessee, of English, Welsh, Dutch, and German ancestors who had moved there from North Carolina in 1817. A one-room log cabin was his first home, and experiences of the war constituted his earliest recollections. His father, finding the rewards of clearing virgin land more appealing than education, quit school after three months, but he became prosperous enough as a farmer to offer his son more advantages than he had enjoyed.[3]

"Philie" Claxton started school when he was four in one of the schools under General John Eaton's care. By the end of the first three-month term, he had learned, with the help of a good headstart given by his mother, to spell the first 6,800 words in Webster's "blue back" speller. After attending a succession of district schools, he entered Turrentine Academy, a public secondary school built by the cooperative efforts of his father and neighbors. Three and one-half years later he entered the University of Tennessee with seven deficiencies and no money. On the basis of loans, scholarships, and hard work, he graduated in two and one-half years at the age of nineteen.[4]

---

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 3-8.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 8-30.

Claxton intended to go to Vanderbilt University to study law, but an offer of $50 a month to teach in Goldsboro, North Carolina's, new graded school proved too tempting. There he came under the influence of Edward Pearson Moses, the Goldsboro superintendent. Moses was full of enthusiasm for educational innovation, entertaining ambitions of being an American Pestalozzi. Although he never achieved anything like the fame of the Swiss he admired, his dynamic approach inspired in his co-workers, including Claxton, a new vision of how effective teaching could and should be.

After three years at Goldsboro, Claxton went to Kinston, North Carolina, as superintendent. There he followed Moses' example so successfully that the board asked him to stay, but he had not yet determined to spend his life in the public school business. At the end of the first year he resigned to do graduate study at Johns Hopkins.[5]

When Claxton entered Hopkins in September, 1884, he intended to study hydro-electrical engineering but soon changed to Teutonic languages. Even this field failed to satisfy him fully. Public school work was too much in his blood. G. Stanley Hall's lectures on education were the ones that Claxton found "most inspiring and informational."[6]

---

[5] Ibid., pp. 31-41.

[6] Ibid., pp. 42-49.

After his first year of graduate study, Claxton decided to leave Baltimore temporarily to study in Germany. Then he intended to return and finish the Ph. D. In December, 1885, he married a North Carolina girl and set out for Leipzig, planning to spend two years studying German literature and language. Within six months he and his bride had run out of money and were back home. Failing to secure a teaching job to enable him to continue his work at John Hopkins (this apparently because the Baltimore schools were part of the local political spoils system), he had to give up his plans for finishing the doctorate. His graduate study, however, was not wasted. On the basis of it, and a thesis on Goethe's Faust, the University of Tennessee awarded him a master's degree in 1887. More significant than degrees, the lectures by Hall and his own study of German schools afforded an excellent foundation for further practical school work.[7]

Upon Claxton's return from Europe, he took a position as superintendent in Ashville, North Carolina. Under his leadership the schools there developed a reputation for being the best in the state. But when his first wife died in 1891, he left Ashville for Greensboro to become Professor of Pedagogy and German in the newly founded Normal and Industrial School (later the Woman's College of

---

[7]Ibid., pp. 50-60.

the University of North Carolina). This institution had come into being in the first place largely as a result of his and others' propagandizing.[8]

During the ten years Claxton worked at the Normal School, he was also carrying on a campaign for better schools throughout the state. Through summer institutes and the North Carolina Journal of Education which he edited, he preached public education.[9] In the words of a contemporary, "he was one of a group of dynamic educators who . . . changed the attitude of North Carolina toward public education"--one of a group of "conspirators against complacency."[10]

Always keenly interested in educational reform, Claxton took time out from duties in 1896 for another quick trip to Europe, this time to study the thought of Johann Friedrich Herbart, whose writings were inspiring a new way of looking at education. His pilgrimage took him to the University of Jena, where the acknowledged authority on Herbart, Professor Wilhelm H. Rein, was giving lectures. Though Claxton was repelled by the rigidity and authoritarianism which he saw practiced in Germany, he drew much inspiration from Herbartian theory. Its humanitarian

---

[8] Ibid., pp. 61-87.

[9] Claxton later changed the name of the periodical to the Atlantic Educational Journal.

[10] Lewis, op. cit., p. 87; pp. 98-111, 150-168.

dimensions especially stayed with him throughout his career, as did the German practice of viewing education as an organic whole.[11]

Claxton stayed at Greensboro until 1902, leaving then to take charge of the Bureau of Investigation and Information of the Southern Education Board. The following year he became head of the newly formed Department of Education at the University of Tennessee, where he spent nearly ten years in a variety of activities related to education in the South. The most prominent of these was the so-called Summer School of the South, which brought more than 2,000 teachers every summer to Knoxville to hear speeches from and share ideas with some of America's leading educators and thinkers. Claxton had several attractive offers to leave Knoxville, including the presidencies of George Peabody College for Teachers and the University of Vermont, but he was not tempted until the Washington offer came in 1911. Being commissioner of education did appeal to him because, as he put it, of the chance for a personal education.[12]

III

When Claxton reached Washington in August, 1911, he wrote several close friends to ask their advice on how to run the Bureau, saying, "I am convinced that there is

---

[11] Ibid., pp. 88-97.

[12] Ibid., pp. 112-149; 171.

an opportunity to do something and a great need of some kind of reconstruction." The most interesting response came from Walter Hines Page:

> Make a plan to do some active work. . . . For instance, select two or three regions where the best public schools, are. . . . Help them and report them. Work towards the creation of a perfect country school. Then you'll have something to make a report about--a report that will be read all around the world. . . . Then you'll have a plan, too, to make a comprehensive program to find a way whereby your Bureau can be of direct help in planting or developing such schools everywhere. You can take this great movement, organize it, report it, direct it--manage it.
>
> Then if you ask for $10,000 to do this particular job with--showing precisely how you'll use the money--you'll get it; then you'll get $20,000; then $100,000--then any sum you want.
>
> With no plan nobody cares for the Bureau. If it does something, then everybody'll care.[13]

Claxton did not follow Page's advice mainly because it violated his conception of the organic nature of education to single out one area for special attention and because there would have been no resources for the job even if he had tried it. Nor did he effect any major "reconstruction" of the Bureau. He decided instead to continue the kinds of operations already underway and to expand the Bureau as much and as rapidly as possible.[14]

Claxton's plans called for at least a 200 per cent increase in appropriations, but this was not forthcoming despite earlier promises by political leaders.[15]

---

[13] Ibid., p. 171-72.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Report of the Commissioner of Education for the

Limited by inadequate resources, he sought to build a broader base of support for the Bureau's work. First he hired as part-time workers a number of prominent American educators at a salary of one dollar per year each.[16] Then as Congress would permit, or as he could find outside support from special interest groups, he continued the practice started by his predecessor of adding specialists to the staff. Between 1911 and 1919 he hired experts in seventeen different fields.[17] In addition to these specialists and "dollar-a-year men," Claxton found another way of making the Bureau a more integral part of American education. This was by traveling and speaking himself. During the first few years he was commissioner, he spent two-thirds of his time on the road, often averaging a speech every other day for an entire year.[18] Both he and the Bureau became well known

---

Year Ended June 30, 1911 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912), I, xvi-xviii; U.S., House of Representatives, The Bureau of Education. Hearings Before the Committee on Education, June 11, 1912 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912), 18 p.

[16]Richard Wayne Lykes, "A History of the Division of Higher Education, United States Office of Education, from Its Creation in 1911 until the Establishment of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1953" (microfilmed Ph. D. dissertation, American University, 1960), pp. 103-105.

[17]James Carl Messersmith, "The United States Office of Education: Its Administrative Status in the Federal Hierarchy" (microfilmed Ed. D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1956), pp. 75-79.

[18]Lewis, op. cit., p. 231-32.

and generally approved of in education circles throughout the country. There were, however, three distinct barrages of criticism aimed at him and the Bureau.

IV

The first involved the touchy area of academic standards in higher education. Many college and university presidents, especially from the long-established institutions, had been suspicious of the Bureau of Education from its beginning and were sometimes openly hostile to it. A few months after Claxton took office, the Bureau became embroiled with a number of universities in a politically dangerous controversy over a report comparing academic standing which the Bureau proposed to publish.[19]

The problem was as innocent in origin as it was violent when it broke. Just before Elmer Ellsworth Brown left office in 1911, he hired the president of the University of Arizona, Kendrick Babcock, to head the newly formed Division of Higher Education. Babcock's first job, undertaken at the request of several graduate school deans whose institutions belonged to the Association of American Universities, was to compile an objective list of member colleges and universities classified according to the length of time usually required for their graduates to secure an

---

[19]This controversy is treated in detail by Lykes, op. cit., pp. 75-87. The text of the suppressed "Report" is in ibid., pp. 357-80.

M. A. in the graduate schools. After ten months of work, Babcock prepared a preliminary list of 344 institutions ranked in four "classes," ranging from Class I (whose graduates could expect to complete a master's degree in one year) to Class IV (whose graduates would require three years for the same degree). When someone leaked the confidential list to the press, incensed deans and presidents around the country--particularly those in Class II--blistered the Bureau and Babcock for presuming to judge their work. Claxton defended and explained the report, and dispassionate critics generally agreed that the rankings were accurate. But neither President Taft, who was about to leave office, nor Woodrow Wilson, who succeeded him, felt he could afford to allow the report to appear under the Government's imprimature. Babcock resigned, criticism subsided, and the "suppressed" report was circulated by private groups and the press so that it accomplished its purpose anyway. The Bureau of Education, however, avoided similar performances by adopting the policy of reporting only whether institutions were accredited by state and regional agencies. There was never another attempt to act even as an informal accrediting agency itself.

A few months after the Babcock affair, Claxton again found himself the subject of controversy and attack, this time of a more personal nature. The Bureau of Education had been distributing to schools throughout the

country the publications of the American School Peace League. These pamphlets fitted well with America's official policy of neutrality at the time, but their lack of nationalism irritated the Sons of the American Revolution and other militant groups. In July, 1915, these patriots began calling for Claxton's dismissal. To bolster their case, the Sons dredged up an address which he had made at Boston University in 1910. Entitled "The Larger Patriotism and What the Schools May Do to Bring It About," the speech advocated replacing nationalism with a more international point of view. Now, five years later, the SAR cited this speech as evidence that Claxton was a dangerous man. The Army and Navy Journal joined in the fray, declaring that his removal was necessary to crush the "sinister movement to undermine the manhood of the country."[20]

After a brief public furor, the patriotism incident passed as suddenly as it had started. Claxton remained Commissioner of Education and continued his activities in behalf of peace, serving on the American Peace Society's executive committee and making a series of twenty addresses for the Carnegie Peace Foundation.

After the United States entered the war, Claxton once again became the target of public criticism, as controversy raged over the teaching of German in American

---

[20]Lewis, op. cit., pp. 190-200.

schools. In March, 1918, University of South Dakota President Robert L. Slagle asked Claxton's advice on dropping German from the curriculum. Claxton replied that the United States was not at war with the German language, adding "let us hope that we may finish this task for the establishment of freedom and the safety of democracy without learning to chant any hymn of hate." The chant had already started, however, and Claxton was powerless to stop it. During the remaining months of war, there were a number of virulent attacks upon him for his alleged pro-German sympathies, but the war ended before any large-scale move to oust him could be mounted.[21]

V

Though Claxton hated war, it was ironically war that brought about the Bureau's increase in size and importance, for which he had vainly worked earlier. In 1914, the year the war started in Europe, Congress increased the Bureau's appropriations more than thirty per cent. Three years later, when the United States entered the fighting, there was another boost, this time of nearly fifty per cent. The following year saw the appropriation jump from $190,000 to $544,000. Just after the war ended, the Bureau had 235 people in its Washington office, the

---

[21]Ibid., pp. 204-209. Box B, RG 12, contains a file documenting Claxton's role in the German controversy.

highest number it had ever had or would have again until after World War Two.[22]

Friends of the Bureau were pleased at the sudden usefulness which the agency had found in the eyes of Congress. A. E. Winship, vocal editor of the Journal of Education, wrote:

> My dear Claxton:-
> No one rejoices more than I do in the great opportunity that has come to you for noble leadership through the war. It is an opportunity which you are particularly fitted to meet in every respect. It gives you money which you have always needed. It gives you the chance to put all your ability and capability at the service of the country as never before.
> The attitude of the men at Atlantic City was so different from what it has been before. Everyone is behind you and beside you, as they are in the case of President Wilson.
> In this I greatly rejoice.[23]

Because of the war, the Bureau took on a number of additional responsibilities, among them the Americanization of recent immigrants. In 1913 when the Bureau first became involved in this concern, the main justification given by Claxton was that immigrants needed help in realizing their full potentials. By 1919, when the Bureau of Education reluctantly left the field to the Bureau of Naturalization and to private groups, Claxton was talking more about

---

[22]"Specific Appropriations for the Bureau of Education [1867-1933]," Author's copy of a typescript from the Federal Records Center, Alexandria, Virginia; Lykes, op. cit., p. 131; School Life, III (July 1, 1919), p. 9.

[23]A. E. Winship to Philander Priestley Claxton, March 22, 1918, Box 13, RG 12.

building support for American war policies and for checking radicalism than he was about helping the immigrants. Even he could not stay completely clear of the chauvinistic overtones then so prominent in American thought.[24]

The war permeated virtually everything the Bureau did, from the Students' Army Training Corps, in which more than 500 colleges participated, to the School Garden Army. The latter was one of Claxton's favorite projects. He had made a small beginning in encouraging school gardens as early as 1913, but it was not until the war stimulated demands for increased agricultural production that School Gardens became a phenomenon of major proportions. Even the venerable Boston Common was plowed up for a demonstration school garden. Shortly after the war's end, the Bureau reported three million children, both in cities and the country, enrolled in some type of gardening program. In 1919 the country's school gardens reported a profit of $48,000,000.[25]

Commissioner Claxton was always ready to point out the economic value of the gardens, but it was their pedagogical function that really interested him:

---

[24]Edward George Hartman, The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant, Number 545 of the Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), pp. 88-133, 213-73.

[25]Lykes, op. cit., p. 132; "Three Million in School Garden Armies," School Life, II (May 1, 1919), 1; (May 16, 1919), 16; "Garden Army Plans for 1920 Underway," School Life, IV (February 1, 1920), 1.

> Unlike many other occupations in which children engage, it is good for them physically. Children should not be overworked in mills, factories and mines, but it is good for them to work with their feet in the soil, their heads in the sun and their lungs filled with good fresh air--to work until they become hungry, tired and sleepy, and can eat and digest and sleep. It is good morally in that it gives them experience in the first principle of morality, that each person should contribute to his own support. Children like to do work of this kind I think very largely for this reason, if it is not postponed until they have learned habits of idleness and have become accustomed to being supported without giving anything in return. It teaches patience and perseverance, as many other things do not. It also gives a first hand knowledge of nature and the laws of nature, of soils and plants and animal life, and of weather conditions, which constitute a large part of the raw material of all knowledge, and which boys and girls in urban communities will hardly get without some such experience as this.
>
> I believe there is no other form of school work in which the returns are so large for the investment made.[26]

Despite the potential values of gardening for education, it dropped from view almost overnight after 1920. One reason was its close identification with the war. Probably an equally significant factor was the agricultural surplus which became apparent soon after the war and which has plagued the country since. While it lasted, school gardening was one of the most interesting educational experiments sponsored by the Bureau of Education during the first century of its existence. If it

---

[26]Letter from Philander P. Claxton to May Harden, Director of Gardening, Atlanta, Georgia, January 14, 1919, Box 35, File "A" (Special Collections, The University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville). Cited hereafter as Claxton Papers.

had been retained and improved, American education would have been enriched.

VI

Though Claxton had hoped to make wartime expansion permanent, the "return to normalcy" push made this impossible. The number of the Bureau's functions and employees dropped rapidly, as did the size of its appropriations.[27] In 1921, Congress discharged all the dollar-a-year men after conservatives charged that they had been "writing, circulating as Government documents and under a Government frank, various types of propaganda literature, approved and even instigated by the Rockefeller Foundation."[28]

Post-war contraction was not Claxton's only problem, for the Bureau was never really free of criticism from the end of the war until Claxton left in 1921. Ironically, the most continuous source of disparagement came from friends of the Bureau. Bathed in Wilsonian idealism and shocked by revelations of illiteracy on armed forces' tests, many educators led by Teachers College professor George Strayer proposed a department of education in the cabinet and a $100 million a year appropriation for upgrading education

---

[27]Appropriations dropped from $544,000 in 1919 to $236,000 in 1920, and then to $181,000 in 1921. "Specific Appropriations for the Bureau of Education [1867-1931]," loc. cit.

[28]"Chamberlain in Clash with Lane," Portland Oregonian, April 18, 1918, clipping in Box 13, RG 12.

at home and abroad. In their efforts to justify a department, the most outspoken advocates often portrayed the Bureau as an ineffectual agency without any real power. The move for a department failed, but debate lasted for several years, both in and out of Congress, and the Bureau derived little benefit from it.[29]

In 1918 the Bureau started a monthly journal entitled School Life. This publication brought Claxton and the Bureau under political fire on two different occasions. One occurred on October 12, 1920, when the State Democratic Committee Secretary in Michigan sent the following telegram to the Commissioner:

> OFFICIAL ORGAN CATHOLIC CHURCH DETROIT AND EASTERN MICHIGAN IS CARRYING ON INTENSIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST COX AND OUR ENTIRE TICKET AND BASING IT UPON ALLEGED QUOTATIONS FROM SCHOOL LIFE. . . . THEY QUOTE SCHOOL LIFE AS FOLLOWS QUOTE CONDITIONS REVEALED DURING THE WAR HAVE INTENSIFIED THE OPPOSITION TO PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS END QUOTE STOP WE ARE VOTING UPON PAROCHIAL SCHOOL AMENDMENT TO STATE CONSTITUTION AND UNLESS WE CAN SQUARE THIS STATEMENT THERE IS GRAVE DANGER OF AN ALMOST SOLID CATHOLIC VOTE AGAINST US STOP WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY[30]

Claxton replied that the quotation was a condensation from a Michigan statement about educational conditions there. Privately he admitted it should never have slipped by the

---

[29]Julia E. Johnsen (comp.), Federal Department of Education, Series II, Volume 2 of The Handbook Series (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1927), pp. xxxv-lxviii.

[30]A. R. Canfield to W. J. Cochrane, October 12, 1920, Box 13, RG 12.

editor's pencil.[31] Michigan Democrats, who failed to carry a single county in the 1920 presidential elections, gave School Life part of the blame.

The second occasion resulted from an editorial stating the education views of James M. Cox, the Democratic nominee for the Presidency, without a parallel statement by the Republican contender, Senator Warren G. Harding. Claxton's explanation that this had happened "through an oversight on the part of an employee in the Bureau" hardly satisfied Republicans. Nor did the hasty printing of Harding's views erase the slip.[32]

A few months after Harding's inauguration, he requested Claxton's resignation. The reason for this dismissal is not apparent. It may have been the School Life fracus or Claxton's opposition to the move to create a department of education and welfare, which Harding favored. It may have been simply because of Republican pressure for more places to fill. Probably all three were factors.[33]

---

[31]Philander P. Claxton to Joseph P. Tumulty (Secretary to the President), October 25, 1920, Box 13, RG 12.

[32]Philander P. Claxton to The Editor, Boston Transcript, October 4, 1920, Box 13, RG 12.

[33]Lewis, op. cit., pp. 231-32; Joseph Newton Rodeheaver, Jr., "The Relation of the Federal Government to Civic Education: A Study of Certain Aspects of the Growth and Development of the United States Office of Education with Special Reference to Civic Education" (unpublished Ed. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1951), p. 130.

Claxton was disappointed by his removal, calling it "another illustration, of the kind of which we have had many thousands in the United States, that education ought to be separated wholly from the fortunes of partisan politics."[34] The educational press attacked Harding: "Out of a clear sky" comes the announcement of Dr. Claxton's dismissal, said the NEA Journal. "This action is certainly to be construed as having been determined by political motives and in total disregard of the growing demand for the elevation of the Nation's chief educational office."[35] Educators around the country regarded the change as a "sacrifice on the altar of politics."[36] It was a refrain they would sing again.

Claxton had a long educational career after leaving Washington. He was provost of the University of Alabama, the superintendent of schools in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and finally president of Austin Peay College in Clarksville,

---

[34]Philander P. Claxton to John A. Thackston (Dean, University of Tennessee), May 20, 1921, Claxton Papers. A Bureau of Education employee wrote the following in a confidential letter two months before Harding's inauguration: "It is very probable that he [Claxton] will not be in office at the time of the [Pan-Pacific] Congress, owing to changes which the new administration will in all probability make." [F. F. Bunker] to Alexander Hume Ford (personal), January 19, 1921, 903 File, RG 12.

[35]NEA Journal, X (June, 1921), 108.

[36]George F. Zook to Philander P. Claxton, May 16, 1921, Box 37, File "A," Claxton Papers.

Tennessee. He retired in 1945 and died in 1957 at the age of ninety-four.[37]

Claxton's ten years as Commissioner had spanned the turbulent period from the years of Progressive reform before the war to those of cynicism and retraction after it. During that time, the Bureau undertook more projects, grew larger, and triggered more criticism than at any other time since its first few years of existence. Despite the difficulties caused by the Babcock report, Claxton's pacifist leanings, indiscretions in School Life, and post-war reaction, the Bureau made a number of quiet contributions to the development of American education. Perhaps the most significant of these came in the gradual upgrading brought about by the many school surveys the Bureau conducted. When Claxton took office, the survey movement had just begun; by the time he left, an estimated 120 surveys of school systems at all levels had been completed. These recommended improvements and changes, many of which were adopted.[38] In summing up his work, Claxton told his predecessor, Elmer Ellsworth Brown," I have done what I could under the circumstances. You know better than any other how large is the work to be done and how small the means we have had

---

[37]Lykes, op. cit., p. 142.

[38]Ibid., p. 102.

with which to do it. I hope something has been done of some value."[39]

---

[39]Philander P. Claxton to Elmer Ellsworth Brown, May 16, 1921, Box 37, File "A," Claxton Papers.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BUREAU DURING POST-WAR NORMALCY, 1921-1933

I

President Harding's decision to replace Philander P. Claxton received wide notice and much criticism in education circles. The ostensible reason for Claxton's removal was that he had attacked the administration's plan for a department of education before a congressional committee. But since Claxton flatly denied even having appeared before a committee, much less attacking the proposed department, most educators did not find the President's explanation credible.[1] "It is believed here," reported the New York Evening Post, "that the belated charge against Dr. Claxton was intended by persons close to the administration as a defense of the President's action removing him."[2]

---

[1]Claxton had, however, expressed his disapproval of the proposed department to the Presidential messenger who had asked him to draw up a bill for it. Charles Lee Lewis, Philander Priestley Claxton: Crusader for Public Education (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1948), pp. 229-30.

[2]Reprinted as "Retirement of Commissioner Claxton," School and Society, XIV (July 2, 1921), 10-11.

With educators believing Claxton had been unjustly dismissed, it was not surprising that the new Commissioner, John J. Tigert, received a cold reception. "I very much fear that it is a political appointment, pure and simple, and is due to the influence of the influential member of the National Republican Committee from . . . Kentucky," wrote Dean W. P. Burris of the University of Cincinnati's College for Teachers.[3] Another observer seconded Burris' impression, saying that the Harding administration gave the commissionership of education to Kentucky because Republicans in that state were disappointed when their candidate failed to be appointed to the cabinet.[4] A Claxton sympathizer wrote: "There is only one point of view from which I can take satisfaction in this appointment. It will arouse indignation and hasten the day of the coming of the things which you and I believe in in the field of educational administration."[5]

The only exception to the general cry of the pernicious effects of politics upon education came from the School Review, which observed that "critical talk about

---

[3]Letter from W. P. Burris to Philander P. Claxton, May 16, 1921, Box 37, File "A," Philander Priestley Claxton Papers (Special Collections Library, University of Tennessee, Knoxville). Cited hereafter as Claxton Papers.

[4]Arthur W. McMahon and John D. Millett, Federal Administrators (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p. 134.

[5]Burris to Claxton, loc. cit.

the interference of politics in the appointment approaches the humorous when one hears the tales of the scramble on the part of a number of our 'leading' educational politicians for the office."[6] Schoolmen were merely following the well-established American precedent of deploring the influence of politics while avidly maneuvering for political advantage.

II

John James Tigert (1882-1965), whose presence as seventh U. S. Commissioner of Education disturbed so many educators, may not have been well known to school people, but he was much better qualified for his new role than critics realized. As the New York Evening Post pointed out to skeptics, "At least he has youth and the right kind of training to his credit."[7]

Tigert was born into a family with strong educational commitments. His grandfather, Bishop Holland Nimmons McTyeire, was one of the founders of Vanderbilt University and had served as its first president, in addition to being president of the board. His father, also a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had a long association with the university, and Tigert

---

[6]School Review, XXIX (September, 1921), 484.

[7]Reprinted as "Federal Commissioner of Education," School and Society, XIII (May 21, 1921), 601.

himself was born on its campus. It was natural that he should take his undergraduate training there.[8]

In 1900 when he was eighteen, Tigert entered Vanderbilt and graduated four years later with a Phi Beta Kappa key and the distinction of being Tennessee's first Rhodes Scholar. Beginning in 1904 he spent three years studying in Pembroke College, Oxford University, and traveling throughout Europe. In 1907 he received an honors B. A. in jurisprudence from Oxford and a few years later the same institution awarded him an M. A.[9]

His pleasant stay in Europe finished, Tigert went to Central College in Fayette, Missouri, as professor of philosophy and psychology. After two years there, he accepted the presidency of Kentucky Wesleyan College in Winchester, Kentucky. From there he moved in 1911 to the chair of philosophy and psychology at the University of Kentucky. In 1916 he took a year out for further graduate study at the University of Michigan. Two years later he went to France, where he worked first with the YMCA and then as an extension lecturer for the American Expeditionary Forces at the University of Beaune. After the war, during which he advanced to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel

---

[8]"John J. Tigert, 82, Educator, Is Dead," New York Times, January 23, 1965, p. 44.

[9]John J. Tigert, "Oxford University in the View of an American Rhodes Scholar," School Life, X (March, 1925), 132-35.

in the Special Reserves, U. S. Army, he returned to his teaching at Kentucky. In May, 1921, President Harding named the thirty-nine-year-old professor of psychology to the Bureau of Education. Tigert's political connections and his acceptability to the American Legion, at a time when Legion approval was virtually imperative, won for him a place which many of his better-known colleagues would have liked.[10]

III

The skepticism with which educators met Tigert's appointment soon crumbled before his urbane and energetic personality. "The doubts of anyone who has come into close contact with the new commissioner since his appointment have been allayed by the good judgment and vigor which he has displayed in dealing with the problems of the Bureau of Education," commented one observer.[11] "Vigor" was certainly the word for it. During the first year, Tigert wrote twenty-two articles, held more than 600 conferences in Washington, conducted six national conferences on education,

---

[10]"Tigert, John James," Who Was Who In America (Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Company, 1950), II, 533; Joseph Newton Rodeheaver, Jr., "The Relationship of the Federal Government to Civic Education: A Study of Certain Aspects of the Growth and Development of the United States Office of Education" (unpublished Ed. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1951), pp. 133-35.

[11]"John J. Tigert, Commissioner of Education," School Review, XXIX (September, 1921), 483-85.

addressed an aggregate of 120,000 people on 244 occasions, spent nearly 200 days in the field, and traveled more than 75,000 miles.[12]

The new Commissioner reorganized the office almost as soon as he took over, reducing its seventeen administrative units to two. The routine administrative aspects were handled in seven divisions under Chief Clerk Lewis Kalbach: editorial, library, statistics, Alaskan affairs, stenographic, mail and files, messenger. Technical activities were covered in four divisions under Assistant to the Commissioner William T. Bawden: higher education, rural schools, city schools, and services--legislation, home economics, industrial education, commercial education, and foreign education. By 1927, however, the organizational structure had drifted back to nine separate units.[13]

Despite the extensive reorganization, there was little shift in emphasis under Tigert. Rural education, Americanization, and Alaskan education continued to occupy the Bureau's attention. Tigert accompanied President Harding's party to Alaska in 1923 and inspected a few

---

[12]John J. Tigert, "Activities of the United States Bureau of Education," School and Society, XVI (August 12, 1922), 169-75.

[13]W. T. Bawden, "Reorganization of the Bureau of Education," Manual Training Magazine, XXIII (October, 1921), 131-33; James Carl Messersmith, "The United States Office of Education: Its Administrative Status in the Federal Hierarchy" (microfilmed Ed. D. dissertation, American University, 1956), pp. 79-83.

schools there, but there were no significant changes in the Bureau's Alaskan policies. School surveys continued the momentum they had gained under Claxton and formed perhaps the most important single aspect of the Bureau's efforts to raise educational standards.[14]

IV

In the constant fight to improve the quality of American education, one of the most vexing problems facing the Bureau of Education was what to do about individuals and institutions which were selling degrees, particularly at the graduate level. The problem dated back to at least as early as 1835. But with the exception of John Eaton, who had vigorously pressed the fight against fraudulent institutions and had helped to eliminate several of them, the commissioners of education had largely ignored their existence.[15] Then about 1917 the operations of a corporation known as Oriental University reached such objectionable proportions that it became an international scandal seriously embarrassing the United States.

---

[14]"Nation's Office of Education," American School Board Journal, LXXXII (March, 1931), 40; John J. Tigert, "Educational Surveys as a Bureau Function," School Life, XIII (June, 1928), 190-91; "Curriculum of Rural Schools: New Service in Division of Rural Education," School and Society, XXVII (May 5, 1928), 533.

[15]John Eaton's efforts are detailed in Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1880 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882), pp. cxli-cxlv.

Oriental University was incorporated in 1908 in Alexandria, Virginia, as both a correspondence and residence school by Helmuth P. Holler and his wife, Louise "Lio" M. Holler. Three years later the couple secured a Washington, D. C., charter as well and moved their headquarters to 1702 Oregon Avenue, N. W. in the nation's capital. Holler, an occultist and self-styled "bishop" in the Universal Theomonistic Association which he had founded, operated quietly for a time, giving few degrees; but as early as 1912 the Seventh Annual Report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching called for government action to stop his activities in education. The government ignored the call, although a newspaper, the Washington Times, undertook a campaign to drive Holler from the field. "Bishop" Holler silenced this attack in a successful court suit. Taking heart from his victory and claiming a close association with Harvard University (despite Harvard's alleged failure to measure up to Oriental's standards in all respects), Holler forged ahead. By 1920 the school had granted by its own estimates 572 degrees, most of which were doctorates of one kind or another, and had received in fees more than $40,000.[16]

---

[16] James O. Wynn, Jr., "Oriental University, Inc.," Original typescript of report dated April 4, 1921, in File marked "Commissioner's Office, Case of Oriental University," Box 17, RG 12.

The U. S. government took official notice of Oriental University as early as 1917 because of Holler's alleged pro-German sentiments. An investigation, however, failed to yield any damaging evidence except that Holler had publicly criticized American entry into the war and had supported Eugene V. Debs for President.

While the Justice Department investigated Holler for possible subversion, the Bureau of Education was looking into his educational practices in response to a growing body of protest from overseas funneled through the Department of State. By the early 1920's, individuals and governments from a score of countries scattered across four continents had raised objections, and at least four different departments of the American government had compiled bulky dossiers on Oriental University and its president.[17] But the sale of degrees continued unabated. Indeed, the adverse publicity, while it no doubt scared away some prospective "graduates," seemed merely to stimulate the demand for quick diplomas. At the height of the scandal in 1921, Holler wrote incoming President Harding to ask for the commissionership of education, saying: "I have closely observed the inefficiency of the Bureau of Education and also as a spiritualist, I am in touch with the former commissioner

---

[17]The departments were: Justice, Post Office, State, and Interior (Bureau of Education).

of education, Dr. Harris, the greatest educator ever filling that position."[18]

The difference in Holler and similar charlatans was that he took himself seriously enough not to fold up quietly and move on in the face of opposition. With two charters as a legal base, and with temporary membership first in the Association of American Colleges (1915-16) and then in the American Association of Collegiate Registrars (until 1924), Oriental University was virtually invulnerable. Claxton and Tigert each devoted nearly five years in attempts to curtail Holler's unethical activities.[19]

Finally in 1925 the Post Office Department issued a restraining order stopping Holler's use of the mails; the Justice Department took Holler to court for misusing his District of Columbia charter; and Virginia finally revoked its charter. Holler spent two years in a federal penitentiary (1926-28) for defrauding the public through the United States mail. What he did upon leaving prison is not known. At least the Oriental University case was closed and the Bureau of Education never heard of him again.[20]

---

[18]File marked "Commissioner's Office, Case of Oriental University," Box 17, RG 12.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Robert H. Reid, American Degree Mills: A Study of Their Operations and of Existing and Potential Ways to Control Them (Washington: The American Council on Education, 1959), pp. 39-40; Records of the Secretary of the Interior, Central Classified Files, 1907-1936, "Bureau of

The significance of the case lies not so much in the extent of the fraud, though that fraud was considerable since Holler probably sold more than 1,000 doctors degrees. Nor does it lie in the loss of prestige which American higher education suffered in Germany, Switzerland, India, and other countries where Oriental University agents were most active. The real import of the case was that it showed how frustratingly ineffectual the U. S. Bureau of Education was in putting out of business a degree factory which any European ministry of education would probably have suppressed within a month. It took Bureau officials nearly ten years, even with the aid of voluminous damning testimony, to persuade one state, in this case, Virginia, to revoke the charter of a fraudulent institution of learning. If a European court (in Zurich, Switzerland) had not outlawed the use of Oriental University degrees, and the United States government had not suppressed the District of Columbia charter and sentenced Holler to prison, there is no indication that the attorney general of Virginia would have acted at all. The Bureau of Education lacked even moral persuasion in getting a sovereign state to improve its educational affairs.

Education: Oriental University," RG 48 (National Archives, Washington, D. C.); Letter from Nugent Dodds (U. S. Assistant Attorney General) to Leo A. Rover, November 7, 1932, Department of Justice Mail and Files Division, File No. 212077, RG 60 (National Archives, Washington, D. C.).

V

Since the Harding-Coolidge emphasis was on keeping down government expansion, the Bureau of Education under Tigert was largely a holding operation. With a few exceptions such as exploring the possibilities of radio for education, Tigert merely continued the activities which he inherited from Claxton. Administration of schools in Alaska, rural education, and the school surveys remained the Bureau's chief functions under him.[21]

In spite of Tigert's failure to secure adequate appropriations from Congress for expansion of the Bureau, he did manage to get employees' salaries raised, a much needed change. Virtually all of his predecessors had complained of the serious disparity between what competent people received in the Bureau and what they could make outside the government service. With strong support from the new Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work, Tigert secured a forty per cent increase in salaries in 1925.[22]

The only serious criticism of Tigert's management of the Bureau came in connection with American Education Week, an observance which the Bureau of Education, the

---

[21]Tigert's failure to expand the Bureau's services was due to congressional parsimoniousness rather than to the Commissioner. "New Federal Commissioner of Education Asks Larger Appropriations," School and Society, XIV (December 17, 1921), 572-73.

[22]Rodeheaver, op. cit., p. 140.

American Legion, and the NEA cooperated in starting in 1923. Peace groups thought the programs excessively militaristic, especially in view of the Legion's participation, and demanded that the Bureau disassociate itself from the movement. The resulting dispute grew so heated and widespread that Tigert did withdraw the Bureau in 1925, leaving the NEA and the Legion to carry on the program.[23]

VI

In early August, 1928, Tigert suddenly resigned from the Bureau of Education to become president of the University of Florida at Gainesville. He gave no explanation except that he had been considering resigning since Florida offered him the job on July 9, and there was no speculation as to why he left.[24] The frustration of trying to run the office without congressional sympathy probably led him to step down. The printing budget had been cut in half from 1921 to 1924 and further reduced after 1926. He may have been influenced by the possibility of being replaced after the 1928 presidential election. The New York Times editorially despaired because leading educators held the office of commissioner in such low

---

[23]A large number of letters and newspaper clippings documenting this controversy are in Box 18, RG 12.

[24]"Tigert Quits Post for College Work," New York Times, August 2, 1928, p. 12; "Dr. Tigert's Resignation," School and Society, XXVIII (August 11, 1928), 179-80.

esteem that no one of stature was willing to administer the Bureau for very long.[25]

Whatever Tigert's reason for resigning, it was not because someone else had been named for the job. Six months passed without a replacement. In the interim, long-time employee and chief clerk Lewis Kalbach acted as commissioner. Then Herbert Hoover defeated Al Smith for the Presidency, and the NEA found a candidate to support for the Bureau of Education. This was State Superintendent William John Cooper of California. One outside observer of the Bureau said: "I think that the N.E.A. officials would like to have a man from California in hopes that he would win Mr. Hoover in behalf of a National Department of Education when he comes in as President."[26] Two months before Hoover's inauguration, Coolidge officially named Cooper to the Bureau. On February 11, 1929, Cooper took office.

VII

William John Cooper (1882-1935) was born in Sacramento, California, the son of William James Cooper, who came to California from Sydney, Australia, and Belle Stanley (Leary) Cooper of San Francisco. Cooper attended

---

[25]"Dr. Tigert's Resignation," New York Times, August 3, 1928, p. 16.

[26]J. L. McBrien to Philander P. Claxton, January 7, 1929, Box 55, File "C," Claxton Papers.

local schools, a preparatory school at Red Bluff, and the University of California, where he majored in Latin and history. In 1906 he graduated from the University with a Phi Beta Kappa key. Two years later he married Edna Curtis of Sacramento.[27]

For four years following his graduation, Cooper taught high school Latin and history in Stockton, California. From 1910 to 1915 he was head of the history program in the Berkeley secondary schools. Then for three years he was supervisor of social studies in the Oakland public schools. In 1917 he received an M. A. in history and education from the University of California, and in 1918 went to Washington, D. C., where he worked for eight months in the War Department. Following this, he turned to school administration in his home state, first at Piedmont (1918-21), then at Fresno (1921-26), and finally at San Diego (1926-27). In 1927 he accepted Governor Young's offer of the California state superintendency of public instruction, and it was from this position that Coolidge named him commissioner of education.[28]

Cooper represented a broad cross-section of the educational thought of his time. He supported the junior

---

[27]Thomas Woody, "Cooper, William John," DAB, XXI (Supplement One), 199-200.

[28]Ibid.; "Cooper, William John," Who's Who in America, XVI (Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Company), 576.

college movement in California, favored more centralization of educational control at the state level, and thought more federal involvement a long-range necessity. Philosophically, he was a mild progressive, believing that the schools should teach students how, not what, to think. Personally, he was genial, honest, intelligent, ambitious, and diligent. Bureau personnel found him a good man to work for.[29]

VIII

Cooper's chief interest was in directing research. Because of this, there was a major shift in the Bureau's emphasis under him. Immediately after taking office, he visited Alaska. He came back convinced that he did not wish to direct the schools there and talked the Secretary of the Interior into relieving the Bureau of all responsibility in Alaska. The only administrative duty remaining in the Bureau then was the supervision of a comparatively small annual appropriation to land grant colleges under terms of the second Morrill Act of 1890.[30]

In line with his drive to make the Bureau research-oriented, Cooper also reorganized it, reclassified several positions, added the post of assistant commissioner, and

---

[29]Woody, loc. cit.

[30]"Nation's Office of Education," loc. cit.

laxton,

er,

got the commissioner's salary increased.[31] At the same time he tried to eliminate several "special interest" functions, such as rural, industrial, and physical education, and school hygiene, which Commissioners Brown, Claxton, and Tigert had favored and promoted. Cooper regarded many of the Bureau specialists as propagandists for their own particular fields and squeezed them out in the reorganization.[32]

One of the most interesting changes Cooper made was in the name of the agency he headed. Founded originally as an independent department, and listed in 1869 as an "office" in the Interior Department, it had been called a bureau from 1870 to 1929. At Cooper's request the Secretary of the Interior noted in 1929 that "its present dissociation from administrative burdens will be marked by a change of name. Henceforth, it will be known as the Office of Education."[33] This name was still used in 1967.

Cooper signified the research emphasis of the new "Office" by three national surveys, all of which were

---

[31] "United States Office of Education; Administrative Changes," School Life, XV (December, 1929), 70. The new post of assistant commissioner was filled by Dr. Bess Goodykoontz, who served the Office in various capacities for more than thirty years. "Assistant Commissioner of Education," School Life, XV (October, 1929), 30.

[32] Rodeheaver, op. cit., p. 151.

[33] Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Year Ended June 30, 1929 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1929), p. 4.

conceived by Tigert: one in secondary education, one on the education of teachers, and one on school finance. The last-named study was cut short by congressional economics induced by the Great Depression.

The Depression hit the Office rather hard. Cooper submitted a 1933 budget request of $459,000; Congress appropriated $354,000. This cut eliminated several jobs in the Office and forced some employees on part-time furloughs. Salaries dropped, and printing allowances were so reduced that much of the printing planned never went to press.[34]

In March, 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt became the thirty-second President of the United States. Many people expected a new commissioner of education to accompany the change of administrations. In April a writer for the Nation's Schools reported that "although no vacancy exists, there are already more than half a dozen open candidates for the United States commissionership of education, and at least as many others are seeking the post through a more circuitous route."[35] In July, Cooper

---

[34]Bess Goodykoontz, "Office of Education in the Present Emergency," NEA Addresses and Proceedings, (1932), LXXX (Washington: The National Education Association, 1932), 160-62; "Appropriations for the United States Office of Education," School and Society, XXXV (April 16, 1932), 528; "Specific Appropriations for the Bureau of Education [1867-1933]," author's copy of a typescript from the Federal Records Center, Alexandria, Virginia.

[35]Frank Pierrepont Graves, "Professional Anachronism," Nation's Schools, XI (April, 1933), 64-65.

resigned to take a professorship of educational administration at George Washington University in the capital. He had already suffered two heart attacks and had been out of the Office for five months on one of these occasions. Two years later, while enroute from Washington to California, he had a paralytic stroke and died in Kearney, Nebraska.[36]

Roosevelt named George Zook as Cooper's successor, and the Office quickly moved away from its brief "research only" course to a more diversified program, including a new duty--that of administering the Federal Board for Vocational Education. But one major historic function was gone for good. There was no attempt to take back educational affairs in Alaska.[37]

---

[36]"William J. Cooper, Educator, Is Dead," New York Times, September 20, 1935, p. 21.

[37]Eunice Barnard, "The Nation Inducts Education Chief," New York Times, July 16, 1933, Sec. IV, p. 7.

CHAPTER IX

THE WORK OF THE BUREAU OF EDUCATION FOR THE NATIVES OF ALASKA, 1884-1931

I

Perhaps the most unlikely assignment undertaken by the Bureau of Education during its first sixty years of existence was the administration of education in Alaska. From 1884 to 1931 the Bureau built schools, provided medical care, founded cooperative stores, ran a boat, and herded reindeer for the natives there. By the time the Bureau transferred its Alaska responsibilities to other agencies, the annual appropriation for the Alaska Division was larger than that for all the rest of the Bureau's functions combined.

The United States acquired Alaska by purchase from Russia in 1867. At that time a number of schools were provided by the Eastern Orthodox Church and by Russian trading companies. One by one these closed as the Russians withdrew, but Americans did little to replace them. The United States government virtually ignored the remote region except to tax the seal, whale, and fur catches, and

the only Americans with whom the natives came in contact were soldiers, whalers, and traders--all of them adventurers and none of them noted for moral rectitude. "The Russians gave them government, schools and the Greek religion," noted one missionary. "The only thing the United States has done for them has been to introduce whiskey."[1]

John Eaton took an interest in Alaska as soon as he became Commissioner of Education in 1870. In his annual report for 1872 he noted that although Alaska was "an integral part of the boasted most progressive nation in the world," it was "yet without the least possible provision to save its children from growing up in the grossest ignorance and barbarism."[2] Every year he repeated the indictment; every year Congress ignored it, until he was joined by an ambitious Presbyterian missionary named Sheldon Jackson. Jackson was not to be ignored.

II

Sheldon Jackson (1834-1909) was born in a profoundly religious New York home in which he was consecrated to missionary service at an early age. After attending a succession of district schools and academies, he graduated

---

[1]Charles P. Poole, "Two Centuries of Education in Alaska" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1947), p. 29.

[2]Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1872 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1873), p. 134.

from Union College, Schenectady, New York (1855), and then from Princeton Theological Seminary (1858). From Princeton the newly ordained Presbyterian minister went to teach in a Choctaw boys' school in Indian Territory. For the next twenty years he drove himself relentlessly in various missionary undertakings in the western United States. Always on the lookout for new fields to conquer, he traveled to Alaska in 1877 and established a beachhead for the Presbyterian Church, but he returned convinced that his denomination could not take civilization to the natives without help.[3]

Commissioner John Eaton was the avenue through which the needed assistance was to come. For seven years Jackson and "Brother" Eaton carried on a joint campaign aimed at taking law, religion, and education to Alaska.[4] In 1884 they were finally successful. Congress passed an act setting up civil government and directing the Secretary of the Interior to "make needful and proper provision for the education of children of school age . . . without reference to race."[5] The Secretary in turn assigned the task to John

---

[3]Robert Laird Stewart, Sheldon Jackson: Pathfinder and Prospector of the Missionary Vanguard in the Rocky Mountains and Alaska (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908); Robert Joseph Diven, "Jackson, Sheldon," DAB, IX, 555.

[4]Theodore Charles Hinckley, Jr., "The Alaska Labors of Sheldon Jackson, 1877-1890" (microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, University of Indiana, 1961), pp. 103-104, 110, 114-15.

[5]U. S., Statutes at Large, XXIII, Chap. 53, p. 27.

Eaton, who appointed Sheldon Jackson General Agent for Education in Alaska.

During the first five years of Jackson's incumbency, his position was so tenuous that he spent most of his time in a series of power struggles. The territorial governor and a district judge, both Democrats, sought to oust Jackson, whom they regarded as meddlesome, intractable, and visionary. They appealed to fellow Democrat N. H. R. Dawson, who had replaced Eaton as commissioner soon after Jackson took office. Dawson, however, was in such a weak position himself with the educational community that he dared not dismiss the popular Presbyterian Republican. When the Democrats gave up the White House in 1889 and William Torrey Harris replaced Dawson, Jackson quickly consolidated virtually all the Bureau of Education's power in Alaska under his own control. In 1881 John Eaton introduced him as "the Napoleon of the Presbyterian Church in the west." From 1889 to 1907 he was the Napoleon of the United States Government in all matters cultural and educational in Alaska.[6]

III

The first schools which the General Agent established were operated by Christian missionaries in cooperation with

---

[6]Stewart, op. cit., pp. 354-62; Hinckley, op. cit., pp. 204-206. Many letters between Jackson and Eaton and between Jackson and N. H. R. Dawson in the "Outgoing

the Bureau of Education. Since the Bureau had severely limited funds ($25,000-$50,000 annually), the most practical approach seemed to be that of having the various Christian denominations provide teachers and buildings while the government furnished supplies and paid all or part of the teachers' salaries. This arrangement worked reasonably well for a number of years, but interdenominational bickering, as well as fear of merging church and state, led the government to discontinue the practice in the mid-1890's.[7]

The underlying rationale of the Bureau's activities in Alaska was essentially that of Kipling's "White Man's Burden." Sheldon Jackson described it as "the gradual uplifting of the whole man," and of course this included Christianizing every man.[8] For Harris, it was civilizing the barbarous. "We have no higher calling in the world," he told Julia Ward Howe, "than to be missionaries of our idea to those people who have not yet reached the Anglo-Saxon frame of mind."[9]

Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12, also document this controversy.

[7]The Presbyterian Church continued to pay part of Jackson's salary until 1907. Stewart, op. cit., p 263.

[8]Poole, op. cit., p. 29.

[9]Letter from William Torrey Harris to Mrs. Julia Ward Howe (Confidential), January 22, 1901, "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12.

Both Jackson and Harris believed that the best way to elevate the natives of Alaska was to make them economically indispensable to the white man:

> If the natives of Alaska could be taught the English language, be brought under Christian influences by the missionaries and trained into forms of industry suitable for the territory, it seems to follow as a necessary result that the white population of Alaska, composed of immigrants from the States, would be able to employ them in their pursuits, using their labor to assist in mining, transportation, and the producting of food.[10]

"When the native has thus become useful to the white man, . . . he has become a permanent stay and prop to civilization, and his future is provided for."[11] Such altruism was not hard to sell.

Talking about teaching the natives English and "industry suitable for the territory" was one thing; actually teaching these things was something else. Always short of funds, the Bureau could rarely afford to do more than offer rudimentary instruction in any subject. During the early years, instruction in the English language took precedence over everything else because this was deemed basic. Teaching English was very difficult since the

---

[10] Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1896-97 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), I, p. xliv.

[11] Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903: Report of the Commissioner of Education (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), p. lxvii.

teachers and the pupils could not understand each other and there were no suitable textbooks to help. To overcome this difficulty, Commissioner Harris ordered all teachers to "take with them such books of literature as portray in the most powerful form the ideas and convictions of the people of England and the United States." The works of Shakespeare, Dickens, Walter Scott and their like, he added, "furnish exactly the material to inspire the teacher and to arouse and kindle the sluggish minds of the natives of Alaska with sentiments and motives of action which lead our civilization."[12] This plan was obviously unworkable, but so were most of the others tried. Throughout the period when the Bureau of Education operated schools in Alaska, many of the texts were either borrowed from normal American schools or from Indian reservation schools. Neither variety bore much resemblance to life or experience in Alaska and their use contributed little more than rote exercises. Though teachers complained repeatedly, the Bureau never fully solved the textbook difficulties.[13]

---

[12]William Torrey Harris, "Memorandum on Alaskan Text Books," Typescript in a folder marked "Commissioner Harris, 1889-June, 1906," RG 12.

[13]H. Dewey Anderson and Walter Crosby Eells, Alaska Natives: A Survey of Their Sociological and Educational Status (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1935), p. 440; Jessie Ash Arndt, "Alaskans Help Melt the Igloo Image," Christian Science Monitor, January 7, 1967, p. 9: "Their Elementary-school books show a horse and a chicken the same size."

The problem of securing and holding adequate teachers was a continuing one for the Bureau. In the early years most teachers were missionaries and had the virtues as well as the limitations of their calling. Nearly all the early missionary-teachers worked conscientiously for the good of the natives within the limits of their often excessively sectarian understanding of that good. Several of these pioneers became less sectarian with time and even developed profound respect for the native culture.[14] Some even exchanged their church sponsorship for Bureau of Education employment and formed the backbone of the field force. But the problem remained of finding teachers for the steadily growing number of schools. Many of the applicants for jobs in Alaska were not even competent teachers in the states and were pursuing the illusion that they would be more successful somewhere else. Others, who were adequate teachers, lacked the needed characteristics to be able to live in isolated villages and act as sanitation officer, physician, judge, counselor, and social worker, as well as teacher. Of the women who applied, most wanted either to "see Alaska first" or to shop for a husband "where men are proportionately plentiful."[15] Turnover was high among both

---

[14]Ted C. Hinckley, "Sheldon Jackson as Preserver of Alaska's Native Culture," Pacific Historical Review, XXXIII (November, 1964), 411-24.

[15]C. E. Hagie, "Alaska and Her Schools," NEA Journal, XV (June, 1926), 165-67.

sexes. Salaries were low and the risks, both physical and psychological, were great. Several teachers died in Alaska either of accidents, disease, or at the hands of irate natives. Others returned emotionally broken. "Every year individuals come back from the Arctic regions insane who went there sane," lamented William Torrey Harris.[16] In view of the circumstances, it is surprising that the Alaska Service was as good as it was. With little screening and no specific job training, most of the Bureau of Education teachers in Alaska rendered far better service than anyone had a right to expect.

IV

Without any doubt the most romantic, most controversial, and in the long run least effective of the Bureau's undertakings in Alaska was the introduction of domesticated reindeer. Sheldon Jackson first came upon the idea in 1890 while on a cruise in the Bering Sea. He thought that the natives along the Bering coast were starving and they could be saved by bringing reindeer from Siberia, where there were many large herds. Failing to convince a skeptical Congress, the General Agent appealed for private funds and started his venture in reindeer buying in 1892 during his annual summer cruise. Congress then supplied small annual appropriations to continue the project. Commissioner of

---

[16]Harris, "Memorandum on Alaskan Text Books," loc. cit.

Education William Torrey Harris was an ardent supporter of the reindeer scheme because he saw it as a way of raising the Eskimo one step on the "ladder of civilization"--e.g., from a hunting and fishing economy to a pastoral one.[17] Nearly every year from 1892 to 1902, the Bureau bought reindeer in Siberia and took them to the other side of the Bering Strait.[18]

In 1906, after the operation had been going for fourteen years, there were fewer than 100 Eskimos owning reindeer.[19] Many Eskimos still had not tasted the meat. But the twenty-five per cent annual increase in the number of deer in the government herds had by then made it possible to expand the industry rather quickly. When Elmer Ellsworth Brown replaced William Torrey Harris in 1906, the Bureau of Education adopted a policy of distributing the reindeer to native Alaskans as rapidly as possible. By the end of June, 1913, nearly 800 natives owned deer.[20] Two decades

---

[17]Kurt F. Leidecker, Yankee Teacher: The Life of William Torrey Harris (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 484.

[18]Dorothy Jean Ray, "Sheldon Jackson and the Reindeer Industry of Alaska," Journal of Presbyterian History, XLIII (June, 1965), 71-99; Karl Ward, "A Study of the Introduction of Reindeer into Alaska," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXIII (December, 1955), 229-37; Part II in Vol. XXXIV (December, 1956), 245-55.

[19]Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1906 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), I, 251.

[20]Report on the Work of the Bureau of Education for the Natives of Alaska, 1912-13, Bulletin, 1914, Number 31 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1914), p. 17.

later, an estimated 13,000 natives derived all or part of their livings from reindeer, the number of which had grown to about 600,000.[21] While this estimate is probably too generous, it does indicate that the reindeer industry had become a significant feature of the native economy.

For many years local teachers were expected to be the chief advisers on reindeer matters, along with their many other duties. Though most of them tried, and some successfully, to manage their part of the business, many lacked both the time and the necessary knowledge to be of much help. During the 1920's several agricultural specialists were added to the force, but they could not surmount the many problems which beset the industry.[22]

For several reasons the reindeer experiment never went as well as Jackson and Harris expected it to go. In the first place, most of the Siberian herders would not sell; the Bureau managed to acquire in any given year only a fraction of the deer needed to get an industry started. Also, most Alaskan natives did not wish to exchange the freedom of hunting and fishing for the lonely and confining life of herding. This was perhaps just as well, since there were not enough deer to go around even for the few

---

[21]Katherine M. Cook, Public Education in Alaska, Office of Education, Bulletin 1936, Number 12 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936), p. 7.

[22]Ray, loc. cit.

who wanted to herd. There were also many difficulties arising from the general ignorance of proper herding procedures on the part of nearly everyone involved. The importation of Laplanders eased this problem, but created a new one because the Laps ended up owning many of the deer. Finally, there was much opposition to the scheme and public criticism of it on the part of white Alaskans, many of whom regarded Jackson as a visionary at best, or at worst a boondoggling junketer.[23]

Sheldon Jackson had envisioned a reindeer industry with millions of animals scattered all over northern and western Alaska, with reindeer products sold throughout the United States. His dream was never realized. In 1929 when the Bureau of Education transferred all responsibility for the reindeer service to the office of the territorial governor, it was already in trouble. Overgrazing and inadequate herding were problems. And a fight had developed between the government and the white Alaskans who sought to take over part of the reindeer operation. The government had long tried to keep the industry completely under the control of natives, but in 1914 some of the Laplanders whom Jackson had imported and two of the mission stations to whom he had loaned deer sold reindeer to Lomen and Company, which was white-owned and controlled. The Lomen brothers did

---

[23] *Ibid.*

several helpful things, including developing markets for reindeer meat in the states. But feuds between them and the government over grazing rights and ownership of deer, along with a number of other factors, led to a gradual decline of the reindeer business.[24] From a peak of 300,000 to 600,000 in the mid-thirties, the number of reindeer fell to 25,000 in 1950. Recently the number has grown but is still under 50,000.[25] The Bureau of Indian Affairs is now in the process of trying to rejuvenate the industry in Alaska, though the degree to which it will be successful is not yet evident.[26]

V

At first the Bureau of Education was responsible for the education of all children in Alaska, though Congress never granted enough funds to make schools for all children possible. In the 1890's, whites from the states came pouring into Alaska in a mad scramble for gold. The rapid population growth increased the demands for schools far

---

[24]Carl J. Lomen, Fifty Years in Alaska (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1954); Interview with Eugene Barrett, Branch of Land Operations Extension, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C., June 28, 1966.

[25]J. Sonnenfeld, "An Arctic Reindeer Industry: Growth and Decline," Geographical Review, XLIX (January, 1959), 761-94.

[26]An Evaluation of the Feasibility of Native Industry in Northwestern Alaska. A Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, United States Department of the Interior by Arthur D. Little, Inc., September, 1963 (multilithed, n.p.), pp. 1-44.

more quickly than Congress increased appropriations for the purpose. This was one of the reasons so many whites in Alaska vilified Sheldon Jackson. They wanted the money for the education of their children that Jackson was using to promote reindeer. Around the turn of the century, the territorial government acquired, along with local areas, the control over schools for most of the white population. The Bureau of Education was left with the education of the native population only.[27]

From 1906 to 1910 the Alaska Division underwent a thorough reorganization under the direction of Harlan Updegraff, who replaced Sheldon Jackson when Elmer Ellsworth Brown became Commissioner.[28] The change was overdue, for Jackson, while devoted to Alaska, was growing old and was not keeping pace with the rapid change occurring in Alaska. Jackson had laid the groundwork, but he was much better at promotion than at detailed administration. As William Torrey Harris delicately put it: "A lack of a little technical knowledge here or there (a kind of knowledge which is not placed by common consent among the qualifications of a missionary) may lead to the wasting of

---

[27]Lester Dale Henderson, "The Development of Education in Alaska, 1867 to 1931" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1935), pp. 140-155; Poole, op. cit., pp. 73-82; U. S., Statutes at Large, XXXI, Chap. 786, pp. 321-552; XXXII, Part 1, p. 946; XXXIII, Part 1, pp. 616-20.

[28]cf. p. 119.

money."[29] Congress showed its approval of the change by granting increased support for the Alaska work.

While there were many changes in administrative procedure, the overall aim of the Bureau was not altered drastically from the days of Jackson and Harris, except that the Bureau became more openly protective in its attitude toward the natives. In essence its job was to preside over the collision of two cultures and try to keep the natives from being completely crushed in the process. It was not an easy task, and there were many failures.

One of the problems of cultural conflict occurred in the field of public health. The natives had contracted the white man's diseases--especially venereal diseases and tuberculosis--without also acquiring a resistance to them or any knowledge of sanitation. The Bureau gradually extended badly needed medical aid, but at first, teachers were the only agents available for imparting medical attention and they usually knew no more than they could learn from reading the handbook which they had been given. Later, physicians and nurses took over the medical practice, but teachers still attended to many emergency situations.[30]

Of all the difficulties faced by the Bureau in Alaska, that of making the natives immune to the economic

---

[29]Letter from William Torrey Harris to Henry Sabine, March 23, 1900, "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," RG 12.

[30]Henderson, op. cit., pp. 211-22.

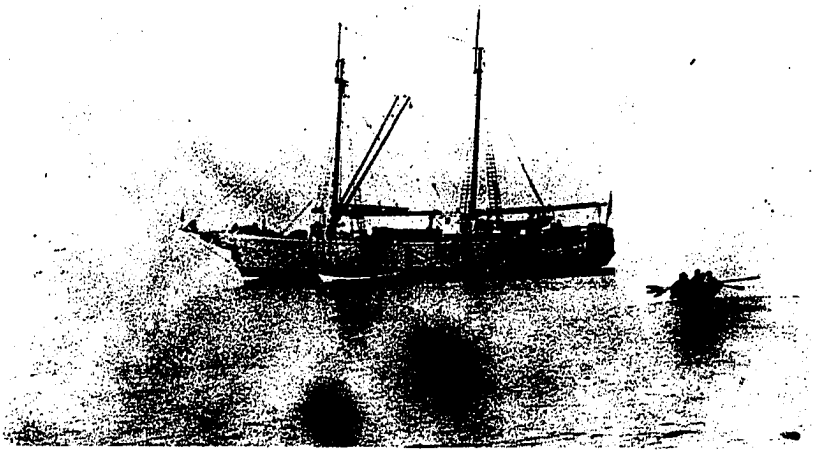
depredations of advancing white civilization seemed the most pressing and the hardest to solve. Jackson's reindeer scheme was aimed at this problem, but it provided relief only to a small part of the Eskimo population. An attack on several fronts finally provided a partial solution. In the larger villages, the Bureau started cooperative stores so that the natives could buy supplies at wholesale cost instead of at the enormously inflated prices of traders. This worked well in some areas, but many of the stores had to be supervised closely by the local teacher. The native culture was foreign to the concepts of Adam Smith and John Calvin. For the smaller, more remote villages, the Bureau operated a boat, the Boxer, which took supplies to the villages and also transported furs and other saleable items to Seattle, Washington, where the proceeds were put in a special fund for the use of the natives. This, too, worked well, but reached only a small part of the population.[31]

In all of their operations, officials of the Bureau admitted frankly that they were acting in loco parentis for the natives. This meant that the Bureau often found itself in opposition both to the whites in Alaska who wished to exploit the natives and to some of the natives who wished to

---

[31]Cook, op. cit., p. 45; Report on the Work of the Bureau of Education for the Natives of Alaska, 1911-12, Bulletin 1913, Number 36 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936), pp. 31-32. See also Tray 475, "William Hamilton Reference File," Record Group 74 (National Archives, Washington, D. C.). Cited hereafter as RG 75.

Sheldon Jackson, General Agent
for Education in Alaska, 1885-1908



The Bureau of Education's boat
U.S.S. Boxer

be exploited. It implied a degree of paternalism and control which was not healthy in the long run, but it was probably necessary at first.[32]

The Bureau's protective stance caused many conflicts, the most notable occurring in the Annette Islands, where "Father" William Duncan (1831-1918) was in self-appointed charge of a large group of Tsimshean Indians. Duncan came as an Anglican lay minister to the Canadian northwest in the 1850's, where he built up a model colony at Metlakatla, British Columbia. As a result of being forced to share power in his colony with Anglican church officials, he left the island in 1887 and moved, with the unofficial blessing of United States officials including the President, to the Annette Islands in American territory.[33] There he started a New Metlakatla, using funds which he raised on a trip to the United States. Commissioner of Education N. H. R. Dawson visited the new settlement, giving it his blessing, and came away much impressed by Duncan and the work he

---

[32] A Federal University for the People (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), p. 6; Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year Ended June 30, 1908 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1909), II, 1033; "Thus on the one side have been the white men with practically little restraint upon their actions, and upon the other the ignorant child-like natives. . . . The missionaries and the school teachers have done nobly in a personal way, but the result has necessarily been a bitter disappointment to all persons of . . . humanitarian instincts."

[33] John W. Arctander, The Apostle of Alaska: The Story of William Duncan of Metlakahtla (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1909).

was doing.[34] For the next several years the Bureau of Education supplied money to Duncan for use in maintaining a school but suspended this in 1895 when the contract schools stopped.

All went well for a time in Duncan's City of God. The colony prospered, so much so that Duncan returned the money which had been given to help build a cannery and a saw mill. He assumed absolute control of everything on the island, but as his personal bank account passed the $100,000 mark, trouble began to develop. Nearby canneries paid far better wages than he did, yet the "Father" would not allow "his" Indians to leave the island to work. Moreover, the island was usually without a school, as none of the government's teachers could get along with Duncan. The Indians complained, the Bureau of Education investigated, and a fight ensued. Duncan "is now . . . forsaken by a generation who know not their Joseph," lamented a journalist.[35]

For ten years the Bureau squabbled with Duncan. There was not much doubt that he, by then in his eighties, was psycopathic. At one moment he was a benevolent dictator, at the next, a vindictive and frightened tyrant. The

---

[34] Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1887 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), IV, 33-37.

[35] Harold French, "Duncan of Metlakahtla Deserted," Overland Monthly, LXII (October, 1913), 327-35.

best interests of the Tsimshean Indians would have been served by his removal, but he was determined to retain absolute power at all costs. And he had become by then such a positive reference symbol for missionary groups both in England and in America that any attempt to remove him would have brought down the wrath of many well-meaning Christians upon the Bureau of Education. Finally in 1918, Duncan died. But even then the Bureau had to move with extreme care because the three executors of his considerable estate had enlisted in the fight against the government. Improvements gradually came, but as late as 1933, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which had taken over the Bureau of Education's work in Alaska, dared not tear down some of the old buildings on the island for fear of the public outcry Duncan's executors would have raised.[36]

VI

In view of the enormous responsibilities, the vast distances involved, and the often insoluble problems attached, it is not surprising that commissioners of education found their responsibilities in Alaska more demanding than any other single aspect of the Bureau's work. Nor is it surprising that William John Cooper sought to rid the Bureau of education in Alaska. His predecessor, John Tigert, had also

---

[36]This fight is voluminously documented in Trays 305, 311, 321-28, RG 75.

recommended the removal of Alaskan affairs from the Bureau. It was Cooper's good fortune to work for a Secretary of the Interior who was willing to make the change. In 1929, the year Cooper took office, the Reindeer Service was transferred to the territorial governor's office. Two years later, the Bureau turned over the rest of its Alaska work to the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Whether the natives of Alaska were any better off or were worse off because of the change is not easy to say. For the most part, the Indian Bureau carried on the work begun by the Bureau of Education with little change and daily life went on as before. The natives continued to be caught in a vise not of their own making and from which they were powerless to escape. Many years later, in the mid-1950's, a visiting author met an old Eskimo named Segevan at Point Barrow. Segevan had been the first native to enter school at Barrow and had owned an extensive reindeer herd before these disappeared. The writer asked what had been the most valuable things white men had brought to the North. Segevan looked at his questioner a long time without smiling. "The best things are coffee and cigarettes," he finally replied. "There are sorrows too great for consolation, but the small pleasures help us to bear them."[37] Perhaps the Bureau of Education had helped a little, too. At least perhaps it helped more than it hurt.

---

[37]Sally Carrighar, Moonlight at Midday (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), p. 222.

CHAPTER X

THE EFFECTS OF DEPRESSION AND WAR, 1933-1948

I

By the summer of 1933, the country had been in the grip of the Great Depression for nearly four years. Yet the government's chief education agency had hardly noticed the hard times in its publications. Had it not been for the Office's budget cuts, Commissioner William John Cooper apparently would have ignored the Depression.[1] When Cooper resigned, President Franklin D. Roosevelt looked for a man who would integrate the Office of Education with the rest of the new administration's pragmatic approach to solving the worst problems of the Depression. He found such a man, at least temporarily, in Dr. George Zook, president of the University of Akron, Ohio.

II

George Frederick Zook (1885-1951) was born in Fort Scott, Kansas, where he grew up and attended public

---

[1]Bess Goodykoontz, "The Office of Education in the Present Emergency," NEA Addresses and Proceedings, (1932), LXX (Washington: National Education Association, 1932), 160-62.

schools.[2] After taking his B. A. (1906) and M. A. (1907) at the University of Kansas, Zook served as an assistant in European history at Cornell University from 1907 to 1909. Then for two years he was instructor in modern European history at Pennsylvania State College. In 1911 he married Susie Grant and was awarded a traveling fellowship by Cornell which enabled him to study European history abroad. Two years later, Cornell granted him a Ph. D. degree, and he returned to teaching at Pennsylvania State College.[2]

Zook remained at Pennsylvania State until 1920, working his way up to full professor by 1916; but he also spent some time during and after the war in Washington, D. C. In 1918 he was a staff member of the Committee on Public Information, an organization which promoted public acceptance of and support for America's part in the war. Zook gave a series of illustrated lectures which the Committee published under the title America at War. The following year he served as associate director of the Treasury Department's Savings Division, and published his first book, The Company of Royal Adventurers Trading into Africa, which was an account of the English Royal African Company's part in the slave trade.[3]

---

[2]"Zook, George Frederick," Current Biography: Who's News and Why, 1946, Edited by Anna Rothe (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1947), pp. 678-81.

[3](Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Press of the New Era Printing Company, 1919). Zook's Ph. D. dissertation at Cornell constituted the basis for this book.

In 1920, Zook gave up his professorship of history to accept Commissioner Claxton's invitation to head the Division of Higher Education. He stayed with the Office (Bureau) of Education for five years, during which time he became a recognized expert on higher education. Zook and the Division conducted several college and university surveys and brought the worrisome Oriental University case to a successful conclusion.[4]

In 1925, Zook left the Office of Education to become president of the University of Akron, where he spent the next eight years. While administering Akron's municipal university, he continued his survey activities and served on two significant commissions: secretary of the Commission on Higher Institutions of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (1926-31); and a member of the National Advisory Committee on Education (1929-31), appointed by President Hoover to study the federal government's educational activities and policies.[5]

Service on the latter Commission probably played a part in Zook's being invited to replace William John Cooper in 1933. President Roosevelt asked Acting Commissioner

---

[4]Richard Wayne Lykes, "A History of the Division of Higher Education, United States Office of Education, from Its Creation in 1911 until the Establishment of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1953. (microfilmed Ph. D. dissertation, American University, 1960), pp. 135-41.

[5]Eunice Barnard, "The Nation Inducts Education Chief," New York Times, July 16, 1933, Sec. IV, p. 7.

Bess Goodykoontz to suggest a man to head the Office. She submitted two names: Albert Barrett Merideth, past commissioner of education in Connecticut, then head of the Department of School Administration at New York University; and George F. Zook. Merideth turned down the offer, which then went to Zook, who accepted.[6] Though a life-long Republican, Zook had been critical of the Harding Administration and was known to favor federal aid to education.

III

The new Commissioner immediately set to work exploring the educational possibilities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and other relief agencies. Through a series of conferences which he called, he helped formulate the educational provisions for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the college-student-aid program of the FERA. The Office of Education administered the CCC educational program and loaned a director to the FERA for the student-aid program.[7]

For the most part, however, the Office of Education remained outside the major New Deal activities. This was so in large measure because education itself was not given

---

[6]Interview with Bess Goodykoontz, November 4, 1965.

[7]Lykes, op. cit., pp. 180-83; George F. Zook, "Educational Program for Relief and Reconstruction," School and Society, XXXVIII (December 23, 1933), 813-18. Zook held conferences in Washington on special education and on youth problems.

a prominent part in New Deal programs. Commissioner Zook supported the temporary relief measures which went into effect but was much more interested in seeking long-range general federal aid to the hard-pressed school systems of the country.[8] Despite Zook's advocacy, Roosevelt remained lukewarm; and Harry Hopkins, FERA Administrator and one of the New Deal's chief architects, was openly opposed to general federal aid.[9]

At odds with the administration over educational policy, Zook resigned less than a year after taking office. Perhaps he would have resigned in any case, for he was offered the directorship (later changed to presidency) of the American Council on Education. A few days after his resignation, he criticized the Roosevelt Administration before the NEA's annual convention for failure to meet what he deemed a clear responsibility to provide aid to the public schools.[10]

Zook remained at the head of the American Council for seventeen years, making speeches, conducting research,

---

[8]Zook spelled out the kind of federal aid he hoped to see in the Inglis Lecture at Harvard University in 1945. George F. Zook, The Role of the Federal Government in Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945).

[9]Harry Zeitlin, "Federal Relations in American Education, 1933-1943: A Study of New Deal Efforts and Innovations" (microfilmed Ph. D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1958), p. 257.

[10]Ibid.; George F. Zook, "Federal Aid to Education," NEA Addresses and Proceedings, (1934), LXXII (Washington: National Education Association, 1934), 37-43.

and writing on such diverse issues as accreditation, youth problems, the potential of motion pictures for education, and perhaps most important, an international agency to deal with education. He played a part in the San Francisco meeting which wrote the United Nations charter and devoted much of the last six years of his life to various activities connected with the United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization. His friends claimed that his death in 1951 at the age of sixty-six was hastened by his having overworked himself for Unesco.[11] It is an interesting commentary upon the nation's highest educational office that Zook apparently thought he would have more influence as president of the American Council on Education than as U. S. Commissioner of Education.

When Zook became Commissioner of Education in 1933, a writer for the New York Times observed that never had prospects "been brighter for the dignifying, the clarifying and the extending of the work of the Office." A number of educators thought the "long-sought goal of a Federal Department of Education, with a secretary in the President's Cabinet, may be a reality in the not too remote future. All agree that we seem to be on the verge of

---

[11]"George F. Zook," Higher Education, VIII (September 15, 1951), 22-23; "Zook, George Frederick," Current Biography, loc. cit.

acquiring a consistent national policy toward education."[12] This optimism was short-lived. Zook himself, though he had served on Hoover's National Advisory Committee, which had recommended a secretary of education in the cabinet, was opposed to making the Office of Education an executive department. It would have made no practical difference even if he had approved such a plan. The Roosevelt administration was not prepared to strengthen the federal education office or to support "a consistent national policy toward education."[13]

There was an important shift in emphasis in the Office of Education under Zook. William John Cooper had conceived of the Office as an impartial research organization; Zook stressed its "promotional nature." Cooper had ignored the Depression; Zook centered most of his attention about the economic hardships which the economic collapse brought to the schools. Cooper had sought to rid the Office of all administrative responsibility; Zook took on a major administrative chore in 1934 when the Office acquired supervision of the Federal Board for Vocational Education, which had begun in 1917 under provisions of the Smith-Hughes Act.[14]

---

[12]Barnard, loc. cit.

[13]Zeitlin, op. cit., pp. 246-87.

[14]"Federal Education Forces United Under One Office," American School Board Journal, LXXXVII (December, 1933), 28. The Federal Board for Vocational Education nearly doubled the Office of Education budget and work force.

Except for this changed orientation, however, Zook left the Office much as he had found it--largely a statistics gathering agency with little power to help solve the pressing difficulties in American education which the Depression had made obvious.

A few weeks before George Zook left the Office, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes telephoned John W. Studebaker, Superintendent of Schools in Des Moines, Iowa, to ask if he would come to Washington to be interviewed for the position of Commissioner of Education. "Certainly not," Studebaker remembers having replied. But a few days later, when Studebaker was in the capital for the annual meeting of the American Association of Adult Education, he stopped by to see Ickes. A round of interviews followed, and Studebaker became the tenth U. S. Commissioner of Education.[15]

---

[15]How Studebaker came to be nominated in the first place is not clear. According to one story, his friend and fellow Iowan, Henry Wallace, suggested him. Before President Roosevelt had appointed Wallace Secretary of Agriculture in 1933, Wallace had worked for Studebaker in Des Moines as a leader in a series of public forums sponsored by the Des Moines public schools under Superintendent Studebaker. However, Studebaker insists that Wallace knew nothing about the invitation to Washington for an interview until after it had occurred. Studebaker believes his name was suggested to Ickes by Dr. Arnold Bennett Hall, then of the Brookings Institution but formerly Chancellor of Higher Education in Oregon. Hall knew of Studebaker's work in Des Moines because of a survey of Iowa's state governmental structure which he had conducted earlier. Interview with John Ward Studebaker, February 16, 1967; interview with Bess Goodykoontz, November 4, 1965.

IV

John Ward Studebaker (1887-) spent most of his first forty-seven years in his native midwestern state of Iowa. He was born in McGregor, Iowa, in the summer of 1887 to Thomas Henderson and Mary (Dorcas) Studebaker. He displayed a strong interest in athletics, both in high school and later at Leander Clark College in Toledo, Iowa, where he also was a member of the debate team, president of his class, and president of a literary society. Working his way through Clark College as a union bricklayer, he graduated in 1910. A few months before graduation, he married Eleanor Regina Winberg.[16]

Studebaker's first academic position, which he took immediately upon leaving college, was as high school principal and coach at Guthrie Center, Iowa. The following year he was appointed principal of the elementary and junior high school in Mason City, Iowa, and in 1914 moved to Des Moines as assistant superintendent of schools. In 1917 he received an M. A. degree from Columbia University.[17]

During the First World War, Studebaker took a leave of absence to become national director of the American Junior Red Cross, and for a few months following the war he spent time in Europe in the interest of school children

---

[16]"Studebaker, John W(ard)," Current Biography: Who's News and Why, 1942, Edited by Maxine Block (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1942), pp. 810-11.

[17]Ibid.

in war-devastated areas. One of the projects for which he was responsible was the international correspondence exchange, which became a major activity of the Junior Red Cross. After the war, Studebaker returned to Des Moines and in 1920 became superintendent of schools there.[18]

During his fourteen years as superintendent, Studebaker was responsible for a number of projects and improvements. He instituted a comprehensive school health program, established separate classes for slow learners, and initiated special education for crippled children. He also obtained equal pay for equal training for his teachers without respect to the grade level at which they taught, and directed an extensive school building program. But it was another project, that of civic forums, which gained for him educational prominence.[19]

Studebaker, like a number of other educators in the 1920's, was interested in improving and extending democratic processes. When the stock market crash in October, 1929, heralded partial economic collapse, this concern became acute. Lengthening soup lines, expanding Hoovervilles, growing unemployment, and widespread social unrest made violent change toward some form of totalitarianism appear to many Americans as a realistic, perhaps necessary, alternative. Fearing public bewilderment and the growing

---

[18] *Ibid*.

[19] *Ibid*.

disposition to let others make socially significant decisions, Studebaker proposed a program of public forums where ordinary citizens would discuss issues of importance to them. An experiment, sponsored by the American Association of Adult Education, funded by the Carnegie Corporation, and directed by Studebaker, started in Des Moines in 1932-33. The board of education furnished twenty-eight school buildings in which 316 meetings were held over a period of twenty weeks. The series was well planned and successfully executed, despite some irritation of conservative sensibilities by people in the "less pretentious districts" who insisted upon talking about unemployment relief, money inflation, and the distribution of wealth. This forum idea, Studebaker believed, was the chief reason his name was suggested for the commissionership.[20]

The Des Moines forums had been underway for only a few months when Studebaker received the invitation to Washington, and they were not continued when he left. But the new Commissioner took the forum idea with him to Washington. During his fourteen years there, he subordinated other activities in the Office of Education to his continuing, and mostly unsuccessful, plans for a system of nationwide forums under the sponsorship of the Office. "For the annual outlay required to keep one battleship

---

[20]John W. Studebaker, "Des Moines Forum Experiment," School Life, XVIII (May, 1933), 175.

afloat for national defense, we could make a good beginning on a nationwide program of adult civic education to keep democracy afloat in the angry seas of world confusion and economic chaos," he declared in 1936.[21] The President's office did finally approve some emergency funds which Studebaker used to set up demonstration forums in ten scattered cities in the fall of 1936. The next year he added nine more. But Congress never really liked the idea, and with the approach of World War II the forums ceased to exist.[22]

V

For Studebaker, the demonstration forum was a dynamic tactic for refurbishing democracy. But to the New Dealers, who reluctantly granted funds for the project, it was merely a sop to Studebaker to keep him away from the rest of the relief money. Throughout the Depression there was an undeclared war between the Roosevelt administration and educational administrators over who would control federal funds intended for education. The

---

[21] John W. Studebaker, "Public Forums: Democracy's Citadels," Christian Science Monitor Weekly Magazine Section, August 5, 1936, p. 6.

[22] Joseph Newton Rodeheaver, Jr., "The Relation of the Federal Government to Civic Education: A Study of Certain Aspects of the Growth and Development of the United States Office of Education with Special Reference to Civic Education" (unpublished Ed. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1951), pp. 161-91.

fight started just after the First World War with the NEA-backed proposal for $100 million a year in federal aid to be administered through a cabinet-level department of education, which sponsors of the measure expected would be staffed by men from their own ranks. This move failed, but agitation for federal aid did not cease.

With the advent of the Depression, federal assistance appeared increasingly imperative; but educators, who expected the reform-minded Roosevelt to espouse their cause, soon found they had miscalculated. To begin with, neither Roosevelt nor his chief advisors were much interested in granting general federal aid to education. Too many other needs had priority. Moreover, the Administration wished to bypass long-established administrative channels with whatever aid did go to education. This meant that neither the Office of Education, which educators regarded as "theirs," nor state departments of education, nor local school districts were to be the recipients of the money. Indeed, most of the new funds expended for education during the 1930's came through specially created federal agencies such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Works Progress Administration, and National Youth Administration.[23] The Commissioner of Education tried very hard to get control of these funds for

---

[23]Zeitlin, loc. cit.

his Office. "With regard to Studebaker," Aubrey Williams wrote to his fellow New Deal architect Harry Hopkins in 1935, "I don't think anything is finally going to satisfy him short of having administrative control of all educational activities of the Youth Administration, the FERA, and the WPA."[24] But Studebaker settled for less--far less--because he could not do anything about it. Educators grumbled, but Commissioner Studebaker bowed to the President's wishes, taking such appropriations as he could get, and went on his way promoting forums and a few other small relief projects.[25]

The approach of World War II brought Studebaker another opportunity to expand the Office of Education by participating in a number of defense-related activities. This time he was considerably more successful than he had been during the Depression. In June, 1940, Congress

---

[24]Confidential memorandum from Aubrey Williams to Harry Hopkins, June 18, 1940, in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers (Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York). Cited hereafter as Roosevelt Papers.

[25]Forums, though Studebaker's chief interest, were only one of several programs which the Office supported out of emergency funds. Beginning in 1936, the Office assumed responsibility for seeing that 3,400 unemployed "white collar" workers were given jobs under one of five different programs. The forums were one of these. Others included a university research project, out of which the present-day cooperative research program grew; a study of vocational education and guidance for Negroes; an expanded educational radio project; and the granting of funds to five selected state departments of education to be used in gathering educational data. "Office of Education Designated to Direct Five Projects Financed with Emergency Funds," Business Education World, XVI (March, 1936), 591.

appropriated $15,000,000 for emergency training of defense workers. In November of the same year Studebaker reported to the President: "Backing you to the limit in your drive for total defense are 1053 public trade schools which cost a billion dollars, 15,000 competent workmen who are also trained instructors, and a thousand state and local supervisors. . . . They will run to full capacity as you direct."[26] By 1943, the Office of Education was handling more than $156 million per year for defense.[27]

The Second World War gave the seventy-five-year-old Office of Education control for the first time of relatively large amounts of money. Except for land grant college funds, which totaled between two and five million dollars per year, the Office had never administered more than a few hundred thousand dollars in any one year. During the war the Office spent more than half a billion dollars on defense projects.[28] "Victory must be complete _this time_," said Studebaker.[29] The Office began biweekly publication of _Education for Victory_ (in place of _School Life_) and reinstituted the School Garden Armies of World War I.[30]

---

[26]Letter from John Studebaker to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 18, 1940, Roosevelt Papers.

[27]Lykes, _op. cit._, pp. 210-11.

[28]_Ibid._

[29]_Education for Victory_, I (March 3, 1942), 1.

[30]"Victory Gardens and the Schools in 1945," _Education for Victory_, III (January 20, 1945), 13.

Studebaker also named a U. S. Office of Education War Time Commission to advise the Office on coordination of defense activities. Not since World War I had the Office of Education been such a vital part of the governmental machinery.

The end of the War brought a sharp cutback in Office appropriations, and as this happened, Studebaker stepped forward with a new plan to expand the Office. What the Commissioner proposed was a complete restructuring of the Office along with a six-fold staff expansion. At the war's end the Office had just over 200 staff members, half of whom were clerical only. Studebaker called for a rapid increase to 1353 employees, though he hastened to add that only "time-honored" functions of the Office would be expanded. Even if all the new employees were added, observed one writer, the U. S. Office of Education would still have a smaller staff than the New York State Department of Education.[31]

Studebaker's proposal received wide support outside of Congress. President Roosevelt endorsed it, as did Studebaker's immediate boss, Watson B. Miller. Several key education organizations, including the NEA and the National Council of State School Officers, and some educational journals, including the School Executive and the American

---

[31]James Carl Messersmith, "The United States Office of Education: Its Administrative Status in the Federal Hierarchy" (microfilmed Ed. D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1956), pp. 88-102.

School Board Journal, approved the change. But five years later, less than ten per cent of the new positions had been funded. Studebaker's bold reorganization plan had been effected on paper, but the Office's responsibilities remained essentially as they had been.[32] Its chief functions, in the words of a Time magazine writer, were to compile "bales of statistics," and to avoid controversy by treading warily between the issues.[33]

VI

Failure to secure Office expansion was only part of Studebaker's post-war problems. Accompanying his largely unsuccessful drive for a more significant Office of Education was the old fight over who would control the federal government's education programs. Studebaker intended to make the position of Commissioner of Education the government's most important educational office. But he soon met opposition in this.

From 1870 to 1939 the Office (Bureau) of Education was part of the Department of the Interior. In 1939, however, Congress transferred it to the newly created Federal Security Agency. The FSA was essentially a holding company for those federal agencies which seemed out of place in other departments but which were not large enough to justify

---

[32] Ibid.

[33] "No Future," Time, LII (July 12, 1948), 37.

separate departmental or independent status. The man who headed the new Agency was called simply an Administrator. For the first few years, the Office of Education continued its semi-autonomous existence, though during the Second World War all matters affecting national security were cleared through the Administrator's office. But soon after the war, President Truman appointed Oscar Ewing as Administrator with the understanding that Ewing would begin the job of making an executive department of the FSA. This involved integrating the Office of Education with the Social Security Administration, the Public Health Service, and other FSA functions, which in turn meant that the Commissioner of Education would lose some of his autonomy. Studebaker had no intention of allowing that to happen.

VII

Oscar Ross Ewing (1889-), Indiana born and Harvard educated (LL. B., 1913), started in politics at an early age. When only sixteen he was secretary of the Democratic committee in his county. Ewing gained publicity during the Second World War as the successful prosecutor of Silver Shirt leader William Dudley Pelley on a sedition charge. During and just after the war, he also served successively as assistant chairman, vice-chairman, and finally acting chairman of the Democratic National Committee. He resigned his post in 1947 to become assistant to the U. S. Attorney General in the successful prosecution

of Douglas Chandler and Robert Best, two Americans who had broadcast for the Nazis. Just after the conclusion of the Douglas-Best trial, President Truman named Ewing Federal Security Administrator.[34]

Ewing, with specific instructions to "revitalize" the FSA in preparation for elevating it to the cabinet, made many enemies. His proposed national health insurance plan raised the ire of the American Medical Association. His internal reorganization of the FSA was opposed by Studebaker. Some of the changes involving the Office of Education were merely inconvenient, but they all signified one thing--the FSA Administrator was taking charge of all the constituent parts of his Agency: The United States Office of Education became the Federal Security Office of Education. Ewing merged the Office library with the FSA library, centralized all transportation in the Agency motor pool, and transferred seventeen Office of Education staff members to his office. All these changes irritated Studebaker and he protested them, but the final irritant came over the Office of Education's newly inaugurated "Zeal for American Democracy" program.

The "Zeal for Democracy" project was an outgrowth of Studebaker's anxiety over the drift of events after the

---

[34]"Ewing, Oscar R(oss)," Current Biography: Who's News and Why, 1948, Edited by Anna Rothe (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1948), pp. 193-96.

war. Before the war he had promoted forums at which controversial issues were discussed and left open. "The most important thing the teachers of America can do is create and keep alive an open mind," he had said in 1935.[35] Ten years later he was more interested in awakening Americans to the dangers of Russian Communism than in creating open minds. In the uncertain early days of the cold war, Studebaker talked Congress out of $150,000 to inaugurate an ill-defined program whose nebulous aim was to assist schools in pointing out the advantages of the American way of life and conversely the dangers of Russian Communism. This was zeal for American democracy.[36]

Studebaker never really got the "Zeal" activities off the ground. In the first place it was not at all clear what the U. S. Office of Education could do to help the classroom teacher explain Communism. What the Office ended up offering was a few pamphlets from the Attorney General's office and a series of speeches by Studebaker and a few other people employed in the "Zeal" program. It was over the speeches that trouble developed.

---

[35]John W. Studebaker, "Editorial," School Life, XXIV (February, 1939), 129.

[36]The genesis of the "Zeal" program is well documented in U. S., Senate, Operations of the United States Office of Education. Hearings before the Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments, pursuant to S. Res. 189. 80th Cong., 2d Sess., September 27-28, 1948 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948), Part IV, 781-998. Cited hereafter as Hearings on S. Res. 189.

In the summer of 1947, Studebaker wrote the first draft of a speech entitled "Communism's Challenge to American Education." Because the proposed address impinged upon American foreign policy, he sent it to the Department of State for clearance. Months dragged by before the State Department finally returned it, apparently with reluctant approval. In September, 1947, Studebaker used part of the speech in San Diego, California, to a teachers' group. In November he gave the entire address in St. Louis to the National Council for the Social Studies; a few days later he repeated it for the Chief State School Officers meeting in Los Angeles, California. About the same time, Congressman Frank B. Keefe of Wisconsin had the speech printed in the Congressional Record and furnished Studebaker with thousands of free copies for distribution.[37] But throughout this whole period, Studebaker later claimed, the FSA Administrator's office sought to frustrate his "Zeal" program by asking him to "tone down" the speeches and by holding up distribution of the printed copies.[38]

The argument between Studebaker and Ewing's office continued through the spring of 1948. The chief contentions of the Administrator's office seemed to be (1) that the

---

[37] U.S., Congressional Record, 80th Cong., 2d Sess., 1948, Vol. 94, Part X (Appendix), A2205-A2209.

[38] Hearings on S. Res. 189; "Asserts Censors Aid School Reds," New York Times, August 2, 1948, p. 8.

entire "Zeal" program consisted of nothing more positive than very general speeches by the Commissioner extolling such undefined phrases as "the American way of life," (2) that Studebaker's dire warnings about fifth columnists and subversives unnecessarily added to the growing hysteria already afoot that was producing a "witch-hunt" atmosphere, and (3) that Studebaker's frequent attacks upon the Soviet Union constituted potential difficulties for the Department of State. Studebaker, on the other hand, thought that his "Zeal" program filled a vital--even crucial--need and that it was being interfered with by Ewing, whom he saw as a meddlesome, power-hungry politician bent upon destroying the independence which the Commissioner had long enjoyed.

The upshot of the controversy was that Studebaker left the Office on June 29, 1948, to become vice-president and chairman of the editorial board of Scholastic Magazines, a position which he still held in 1967. As a writer for Time magazine put it, "Hard working, colorless John Studebaker quit his $10,000 a year job." The reason: He could no longer afford the financial sacrifice.[39] President Truman "regretfully" accepted the resignation and praised Studebaker for his fourteen years as Commissioner.[40]

---

[39]"No Future," Time, loc. cit.

[40]"J. W. Studebaker Resigns as Head of U. S. Education for Editor's Post," New York Times, June 30, 1948, p. 27; "Loss to the Public Service," New York Times, July 1, 1948, p. 22.

Ewing, no doubt, congratulated himself upon having gotten rid of an irritant. But the matter was not settled.

A month after leaving Washington, Studebaker wrote Ewing a long letter charging that Ewing had stopped him from "exposing the tactics, and dangers of Communism" to school children and that Ewing was attempting to centralize all control of the Office of Education.[41] Ewing was conveniently "on vacation" and could not be reached for a comment, but Studebaker sent copies of the letter to congressmen and to the press. By August 3, newspapers all over the country carried the story. Allegations were soon rife that Ewing was shielding Communists, either in the schools or in the Federal Security Agency--perhaps in both. In self-defense, Ewing asked for a congressional hearing to answer the charges.[42]

For two days in September, 1948, Senators Homer Ferguson and Herbert R. O'Conner, acting as a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, heard testimony from Studebaker, Ewing and other lesser officials on both sides. Studebaker's chief argument was that Ewing was corrupting the long and

---

[41] Hearings on S. Res. 189; U. S., Congressional Record, 80th Cong., 2d Sess., 1948, Vol. 94, Part VIII, 9591-93.

[42] "Asserts Censors Aid School Reds," New York Times, loc. cit.; Bess Furman, "Anti-Red Teaching Held 'Toned Down,'" New York Times, September 28, 1948, p. 1.

honorable history of American education by injecting politics into it. He had not meant to suggest that Ewing was disloyal or that any employees of the Federal Security Agency were Communists. Ewing rebutted by saying that he had acted within his legal rights as FSA Administrator and that Studebaker was merely piqued because he knew that Ewing was going to ask for his resignation.[43]

The only tangible result of the hearing was an FBI investigation of alleged Communist activities in the Federal Security Agency. Administrator Ewing took a "get tough" attitude toward those people whom the FBI would not give clearance to, with the result that several dozen people lost their jobs--mostly by resigning--though it was not proved that any of them were Communists or were threats to national security.[44]

This was the official end of the Studebaker-Ewing dispute, but it was not the last the public heard about it. Studebaker, who had long prided himself on being "non-political," wrote several widely circulated articles warning the American people, as well as educators, that party politicians were about to invade the schools. If party politicians succeeded in taking over the U. S. Office, he cautioned, state school boards would go

---

[43] Hearings on S. Res. 189.

[44] Bess Furman, "Red Sympathizers Discharged by FSA," New York Times, September 29, 1948, p. 18.

political. Then "watch out for what will happen to the independent school board in your town." His proposed remedy was the establishment of an independent Office of Education administered by a national bi-partisan board whose members would be selected for long, overlapping terms. The board would in turn select the Commissioner of Education, who would serve a term of seven to nine years and would be responsible only to the National Board. This, said Studebaker, would take politics out of education at the national level.[45]

Educators and educational groups generally came to Studebaker's support and backed the idea of a national board. But Ewing went on with his plan for making the Federal Security Agency a cabinet department; and in 1953, under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, it became the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Gradually the national board idea dropped from favor and, as later commissioners of education supported a separate cabinet-level department of education, educators swung back to that approach. In recent years most of the public comment on this question has seemed to favor a cabinet post for education rather than a national board.[46]

---

[45] John W. Studebaker, "Shall Party Politicians Run Our Schools," American School Board Journal, CXXII (February, 1951), 28-30.

[46] Glenn Smith, "A Cabinet Post for Education: History and Prospect," Southwestern Philosophy of Education Society Proceedings, XVII (Norman: College of Education, University of Oklahoma, 1967), 30-37.

VIII

Whether Studebaker was right or not in criticizing the national political involvement in education, he was not entirely consistent. He was partially blind in two areas and his form of myopia is often shared by educators. In the first place, he was mistaken in thinking that he himself could remain above political commitment. Through most of his adult life, he maintained that educators should not take a public stand on political questions. While, of course, they should vote and have whatever private political attachments their consciences force upon them, they must maintain a stance of public objectivity by keeping these things unknown. As of 1967 Studebaker prided himself because no one knew his political party affiliation.[47] But during eleven of the fourteen years he was Commissioner of Education--and during this time he always claimed to be nonpartisan--he frequently reassured President Franklin D. Roosevelt of his personal loyalty and commitment to the Administration's programs. "Depend upon us [in the Office of Education] to give you the last ounce of devotion," he wrote the President in 1941.[48] "I think God for the victory which has come to you and all you stand for. . . . Your leadership is the great hope of suffering multitudes

---

[47]Interview with Studebaker, February 16, 1967.

[48]Letter from John Studebaker to Franklin D. Roosevelt, May 27, 1941, Roosevelt Papers.

everywhere in the world," he added after the 1944 election.[49] In the long-run he took as much pains to stay politically acceptable as any other commissioner of education has ever done (and more than some), but he did not realize that political commitments, even though secret, are still political.

Studebaker's other partial blindness was in thinking that a national board, as opposed to the Office as it is, or to a cabinet-level department of education, would remove education in the national government from the vicissitudes of politics. Such a change would, perhaps, force new avenues of political influence, but so long as the federal government spends large sums of public money appropriated by politicians in Congress, some kind of political control will be exercised over the funds. One may argue over forms of organization and one may make a good case on several grounds for a national board of education. But the virtue of a national board is not that it will divorce education from politics.

When John Studebaker left Washington for New York in July, 1948, the U. S. Office of Education had been in existence for more than eighty years. The American federal government had expanded dramatically; education, too, was

---

[49]Letter from John Studebaker to Franklin D. Roosevelt (Personal), November 17, 1944, Roosevelt Papers.

a growing, multi-billion dollar enterprise. But the Office of Education was still a small, relatively powerless agency, and Congress had shown no inclination to give it power. Both Zook and Studebaker had tried to make the Office a more integral part of the American education. Both advocated general federal aid to education to be administered through the Office, and while the Office grew somewhat under both men, it was still smaller than many state departments of education and had fewer staff members than did the central offices of many city school systems throughout the country. Indeed, the Office was so weak that Congress completely bypassed it in 1952, four years after Studebaker resigned, and created the National Science Foundation to administer federal funds for science education. The Office was certainly a long way from being the "pure fountain" of inspiration which one of its original architects had hoped it would be.[50] And its fortunes did not improve under Studebaker's able successor.

---

[50] U. S., Congressional Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, Part IV, 3044.

CHAPTER XI

GROWTH AND CHANGE DURING THE COLD WAR, 1948-1960

I

President Truman and Federal Security Agency Administrator Oscar Ewing took their time in appointing a successor to John W. Studebaker. In the eight-month interim, Rall I. Grigsby, of the regular Office of Education staff, was acting Commissioner; and Office activities went on as usual.[1] Then on February 17, 1949, Ewing announced the appointment of a "lively, outspoken thinker with positive ideas" as the eleventh U. S. Commissioner of Education. He was, in the words of a Newsweek writer, "the dapper, and brilliant Dr. Earl James McGrath, 46-year-old professor of education at the University of Chicago."[2] McGrath, frankly admitting his preference for administration over teaching ("I like to make the wheels go 'round"), took office on March 16, 1949. He called his appointment "a

---

[1]"Studebaker Resigns: Grigsby Acting Commissioner," Higher Education, V (September 1, 1948), 1-3.

[2]"Commissioner McGrath," Newsweek, XXXIII (March 14, 1949), 84.

great opportunity for leadership," and added, "I'll have an interesting life."[3]

II

Earl James McGrath (1902-) was born of Irish and Saxon parentage in Buffalo, New York, where he and a brother and a sister attended public schools. By the time Earl had graduated from Buffalo Technical High School in 1920, he had acquired a life-long interest in music. But when he entered the University of Buffalo, it was to major in German. After serving as president of both his class and fraternity and as managing editor of the campus newspaper, he graduated in 1928 with a Phi Beta Kappa key. While working for an M. A. degree in psychology (granted in 1930), he served as assistant director of personnel research and began a five-year period of lecturing in psychology. In 1929 he became assistant dean of the evening division of the University of Buffalo and a year later became dean of administration and assistant to Chancellor Samuel P. Capen, who had been director of the Division of Higher Education, U. S. Office of Education, before going to Buffalo.[4]

McGrath interrupted his administrative work at the University of Buffalo for graduate work at the University

---

[3]"Willing and Able," Time, LIII (February 28, 1949), 69-70.

[4]"McGrath, Earl James," Current Biography: Who's News and Why, 1949, Edited by Anna Rothe (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1950), pp. 376-78.

of Chicago (1933-35), where he was awarded a Ph. D. degree in 1936. He left Buffalo again for a two-year period (1938-1940) to serve the American Council on Education as a specialist in higher education. Then in 1942 he left a third time to serve as special educational advisor to the Chief of Naval Personnel and also to the National Roster of Scientific Personnel, both located in Washington, D. C. From 1942 to 1944 he was in charge of the navy's Bureau of Personnel training division with the rank of lieutenant commander. In this position he supervised the education of 300,000 students, many of whom were able to finish high school through the navy. He also directed the education of American forces on occupied Pacific islands.[5]

In November, 1944, McGrath left the navy and a few months later became dean of liberal arts at the University of Iowa, Iowa City. After three years there, he moved to the University of Chicago as professor of higher education. He had been in this position only a few months when Ewing invited him to become Commissioner of Education.[6]

McGrath seemed ideally suited to head the nation's education office. He was young, handsome, well trained, and had a wealth of administrative experience. Moreover, he was a "dyed in the wool Democrat," as his predecessor

---

[5]Ibid.; "Earl James McGrath--11th Commissioner of Education," School Life, XXXI (May, 1949), 1-3.

[6]Current Biography, loc. cit.

put it; and he was in sympathy with the Truman-Ewing move to integrate the Office of Education with the Federal Security Agency in preparation for creating the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.[7] McGrath was not afraid to approach educational problems through political avenues.

III

Even though McGrath was highly qualified and a full member of the educational fraternity, his appointment was not well received in the educational press. The chief reason for this was the ill feeling and mistrust engendered by Studebaker's resignation and public criticism of Ewing. The appointment of McGrath looked to many educators like a move intended to placate them while politicians in Washington continued to exercise real authority over federal education programs.[8] Consequently, a number of professional education groups, especially the American Association of School Administrators and the National Council of Chief State School Officers, repeatedly criticized Ewing, and indirectly McGrath; and all the most important and influential associations supported Studebaker's plan for an independent Office of Education under the direction of a national board.

---

[7]Interview with John W. Studebaker, February 16, 1967; "McGrath Stresses School Aid Need," New York Times, March 19, 1949, p. 13.

[8]Benjamin Fine, "Rule Over Schools Charged to Ewing: Educators Demand Freeing of Their Federal Office from 'Political Patronage,'" New York Times, February 22, 1951.

It was in this kind of climate that McGrath had to operate.[9]

With educators already upset over the drift of events, anything which the new Commissioner did out of the ordinary was likely to arouse suspicion. When he decided, soon after taking office, to reduce the number of administrative divisions from eight to six, he received a barrage of criticism. Representatives of the American Association of School Administrators charged that the Commissioner had acted too hastily and from political motivations. McGrath countered by having a survey team from the Public Administration Service of Chicago, under the direction of University of Chicago Professor Francis S. Chase, come to the Office for a study.[10] Their report, which he sent to 5,000 key educators around the country, criticized the Office for dissipating its resources on many problems which were "comparatively minor in terms of the fundamental problems of American education," and called for a reorganization with only three divisions. The report suggested that

---

[9]Benjamin Fine, "Political Freedom Asked for Schools," New York Times, February 26, 1950, p. 57; Benjamin Fine, "Education in Review: School Administrators Discuss the Attacks of 'Organized Enemies' and Political Foes," New York Times, February 25, 1950, Sec. IV, p. 9.

[10]Bess Furman, "Education Office Explains Charges," New York Times, March 8, 1951, p. 33; "Reorganization," School and Society, LXXIII (March 24, 1951), 187; H. G. Richey, "Streamlining the Office of Education," Elementary School Journal, LI (April, 1951), 419-22.

the day was over when the Office should hire people with narrow specialties and then turn them loose to follow their own interests. "The emphasis . . . has shifted from research to consultative and advisory services."[11] The Chicago study did not end all opposition, but McGrath carried out his reorganization with much less grumbling from outside critics than he would have had without it.[12]

Once the major reorganization was over, the Office settled down to routine operations, which still included a number of defense-related activities. In addition to the "impacted areas" aid for school districts whose resources were strained by sudden influx of the children of federally connected people, and loans for college housing, the Office found itself in charge of determining building priorities because of the critical shortage of steel and other materials brought about by the Korean War.[13] This responsibility ended in 1953, but the annual budget of the Office had

---

[11][Francis S. Chase], A Report on an Administrative Survey of the U.S. Office of Education of the Federal Security Agency (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1950), p. 61.

[12]There was, however, dissatisfaction within the Office: Said one source, "Nobody, but nobody, in Washington was happy about the reorganization of the U.S. Office of Education. Tempers were hot. Feelings were ruffled." See "Tangled Office of Education," Nation's Schools, XLVII (April, 1951), 86, 88.

[13]Herbert L. Barber, "The Development and Operation of the Civilian Education Requirements Program of the United States Office of Education and Its Effects on the Educational Institutions of the Nation, September, 1950-July, 1952" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1953).

swelled by then from about thirty-four million dollars to over ninety million. McGrath proposed in 1953 a budget of $94,400,000, of which about eighty per cent was for "impacted areas" aid made necessary largely by the burgeoning defense industry.

Part of the $94 million was for several new programs not related to defense. One was a plan for educating about 500,000 children of migrant laborers. Another aimed at helping five million handicapped children to learn. Still another was for the ten million Americans considered functionally illiterate--i.e., with less than four years of schooling. McGrath also hoped to improve school libraries, help ninth grade dropouts, and provide a check on illegal schools which had sprung up to siphon off money from the G. I. Bill of Rights. But the inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower in March, 1953, brought a ten per cent budget cut, apparently intended to force McGrath to resign. The reduction caused most of these programs to be dropped temporarily.[14]

President Eisenhower appointed Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby to head the Federal Security Agency when he took office. In early April, 1953, he signed a bill creating the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Mrs. Hobby became the new Secretary and made it clear that she

---

[14]"Education Budget Cut, McGrath Quits," New York Times, April 23, 1953, p. 18. McGrath said the cut in funds would force the Office to fire seventy-one employees.

wanted to name her own Commissioner of Education. Two prominent Republican senators, John W. Bricker and Robert A. Taft, both of Ohio, suggested in the press that Kenneth C. Ray, a Republican in good standing and a former director of education from their state, should be commissioner.[15] When McGrath failed to step aside, the Administration eliminated from the budget funds for several programs which he had personally backed. McGrath, who was "fighting mad" according to one account, waited until about an hour before he was due to appear at the Senate Appropriations Committee and sent a pointed letter of protest and resignation to the President, "in order not to have to undergo the embarrassment of trying to defend . . . a budget which I consider indefensible," he said.[16] Secretary Hobby denied any intention to force his resignation through the cuts, but the President had the original budget restored a few days after the new Commissioner, Lee M. Thurston, a Michigan Republican, assumed office.[17]

---

[15] "Backed for Education Post," New York Times, April 15, 1953, p. 20.

[16] "Exit McGrath," Newsweek, XLI (May 4, 1953), 87-88; "Dr. Earl J. McGrath's Letter of Resignation," School and Society, LXXVII (May 30, 1953), 346-47.

[17] Bess Furman, "Mrs. Hobby Rates Defense as No. 1 Job," New York Times, April 28, 1953, p. 30; "U.S. Education Aid Continued in Full," New York Times, August 14, 1953, p. 7.

Upon leaving Washington, McGrath became president of the University of Kansas City. Later he accepted a position with Teachers College, Columbia University, where he was still working in 1967.

IV

Lee Mohrmann Thurston (1895-1953) was born in Central Lake, Michigan, the son of a newspaperman and merchant, George Lee Thurston. After attending public schools, he entered the University of Michigan, graduating in 1918. Following a stint in the Marine Corps in 1918-19, Thurston entered public school work, spending six years in his native state as a high school teacher and then nine years as a school administrator in Perry and Ann Arbor, Michigan. In the meantime he had acquired an M. A. degree (1929) and a Ph. D. degree (1935) from the University of Michigan.[18]

Upon taking his doctorate, Thurston became assistant superintendent of public instruction in Michigan. In 1938 he moved to the University of Pittsburg as professor of education, but returned to his job in the state department of education in 1944. Four years later the governor appointed him state superintendent of public instruction, and he won reelection to that office as a Republican. He had just accepted an offer to become dean of the school of education at Michigan State College (now Michigan State University) when he received the Washington call.[19]

---

[18]"Education Chief for U. S. Named," New York Times, June 19, 1953, p. 15.

[19]"Lee M. Thurston, Commissioner of Education," Higher Education, X (September, 1953), 1-2; "New U. S. Commissioner," NEA Journal, XLII (September, 1953), 351.

Thurston first came to the attention of Secretary Hobby in early 1953 when he went to Washington to lobby for an independent Office of Education under a national board. He soon gave up the national board drive in favor of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. His Republican affiliation and mild leanings toward states' rights in education made him seem ideal to the bland Eisenhower Administration, and his appointment soon followed.[20]

A Newsweek reporter in analyzing the new Commissioner of Education characterized him as "short and personable," a man who had "fought with almost military bluntness for better education."[21] But a writer for the New York Times said he had a middle of the road attitude on educational questions; and a professional colleague, who preferred to remain unnamed, said Thurston's desire to remain in office in Michigan had caused him to go easy on needed reforms--especially such matters as school consolidation--because he dared not risk offending anyone.[22]

As the twelfth U. S. Commissioner of Education, Thurston had little opportunity either to offend or please, for less than two months after he took office he suffered a coronary thrombosis and a few days later (September 4,

---

[20]"Commissioner Thurston," Newsweek, XLI (June 29, 1953), 62.

[21]Ibid.

[22]"Education Chief for U. S. Named," New York Times, loc. cit.

1953) died in a Georgetown hospital. President Eisenhower and Secretary Hobby both made appropriate comments of regret and began an immediate search for his successor.[23]

The names of four prominent educators were frequently mentioned during the two months following Thurston's death. One likely candidate was Dr. Milton Eisenhower, president of Pennsylvania State College and the President's brother.[24] Another was Dean M. Schweickhard, Minnesota's state commissioner of education and a past president of the American Association of School Administrators. A third was Texas-born Kenneth Oberholtzer, a graduate of Columbia University and superintendent of schools in Denver, Colorado. The fourth man was Samuel M. Brownell, then state superintendent of public instruction in Connecticut and the brother of Attorney General Herbert Brownell.[25] The nomination finally went to Samuel Brownell, after prominent Republican leaders in Connecticut gave their official sanction and support.[26]

---

[23]"Dr. Thurston Dies; Led U. S. Education," New York Times, September 5, 1953, p. 16. For Thurston's ideas about the Office of Education before he became commissioner, see Lee M. Thurston, "What of the Future for the U.S. Office of Education," Nation's Schools, XLIX (January, 1952), 42-43.

[24]"Post Urged for Dr. Eisenhower," New York Times, September 24, 1953, p. 35.

[25]"U.S. Post Is Likely for 2d Brownell," New York Times, September 18, 1953, p. 11.

[26]"Party Heads Back Dr. Brownell," New York Times, September 19, 1953, p. 28; "Dr. Samuel Miller Brownell Is Named Federal Commissioner of Education," New York Times, October 15, 1953, p. 35; Benjamin Fine, "Brownells Agree on a Partnership," New York Times, October 19, 1953, p. 23.

V

Samuel Miller Brownell (1900-) was born in Peru, Nebraska, to Herbert and May A. (Miller) Brownell. Samuel attended high school in Lincoln, Nebraska, where he and his younger brother Herbert delivered milk and newspapers to augment the family's income. Upon graduation from high school in 1917, he entered the University of Nebraska, in which his father was a professor of science. After a year out in 1918 to serve in the army, he graduated in 1921 and took a position as principal of the demonstration high school at the Peru State Teachers College in his home town. Then in 1923 he entered Yale, where he received both his M. A. (1924) and Ph. D. (1926) degrees.[27]

Upon leaving Yale, Brownell spent one year as assistant professor of education at the New York State College for Teachers in Albany. From there he moved to Grosse Pointe, Michigan, as superintendent of schools, where he spent eleven years building up an exemplary school system. In 1938 he returned to the Yale Graduate School, this time as professor of educational administration. While there he conducted many school surveys throughout the country and lectured in the summers at the University of Southern California, University of Michigan, Harvard University, and Cornell University. In 1947 he added to his

---

[27]"Samuel Miller Brownell, New Commissioner of Education," School Life, XXXVI (November, 1953), 17-18.

teaching duties the presidency of the New Haven State Teachers College. When President Eisenhower asked him to head the Office of Education, he resigned his executive position at the New Haven State Teachers College and took a leave of absence from Yale.[28]

VI

There were no radical changes in the Office of Education under Brownell. He was an efficient administrator, a hard worker, a good speaker and writer, a man who always completed what he had promised to do. Quiet and constructive, he was well liked by the Office staff and respected by educational colleagues. But he had no big program to push; and since the Eisenhower Administration was basically committed to maintaining traditional patterns of support in education, his term of office was not especially notable.[29] As Commissioner, he did support two controversial movements--i.e., desegregation and federal aid--but his positions on both were mild. The Office of Education did not yet have power to withhold funds (or many funds to withhold) from segregated school systems. And his calls for federal aid were offset by his more frequent pronouncements in favor of state and local support.[30]

---

[28]"Brownell, Samuel Miller," Current Biography Yearbook 1954, Edited by Marjorie Dent Candee (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1954), pp. 122-25.

[29]Interview with Bess Goodykoontz, November 4, 1965.

[30]Benjamin Fine, "Education in Review: Brownell, New U. S. Commissioner, Emphasizes Local Responsibility for

The annual operating budget of the Office of Education (i.e., funds for actually running the Office) did grow under Brownell, though the staff did not increase much in size. When he took office, the appropriation stood at approximately three million dollars. When he left in 1956, it had increased slightly to $3.24 million, and Congress had approved two million more for the following year.[31] Some of the increase went for studies of construction needs in federally impacted areas. Some of it was for the education of the mentally retarded, and part of it went for a new program of cooperative research which the Office inaugurated under Brownell. This research, which started with institutions of higher education and spread to state departments of education, public and private school systems, and even industrial concerns, grew into one of the most important parts of the Office of Education's activities.[32] But this development came under Brownell's successors.

On June 15, 1956, Brownell suddenly announced that he was leaving the Office of Education to become

---

the Schools," New York Times, October 25, 1953, Sec. IV, p. 9.

[31]"Appropriations for the United States Office of Education, 1934-1955," Chart prepared by the Bureau of the Budget, Copy in author's possession.

[32]"Education and Research: A Ten-point Program of Cooperative Research for 1956-57," School Life, XXXVIII (February, 1956), pp. 6-7; A. V. Y. Scates, "Office of Education Launches New Program of Cooperative Research," Higher Education, XIII (January, 1957), 86-89.

superintendent of schools in Detroit, Michigan, at a salary more than twice the $14,800 he was receiving in Washington. "When you get an offer like this, . . . you can't just laugh it off," he told a newspaper reporter.[33] President Eisenhower accepted the resignation effective September 4 and thanked him for doing a good job.

Salary was perhaps the main reason for Brownell's decision to resign when he did, but it was not the only consideration. In March, 1956, Congress had slashed $1.25 million off the Office of Education budget. The new cooperative research program and a proposed follow-up evaluation of the 1955 White House Conference on Education were the hardest hit programs.[34]

To compound this budgetary discouragement, Brownell had friction with HEW Secretary Hobby. Mrs. Hobby's office, in an effort to play down the need for federal aid, directed the Office of Education to revise the findings of a study it had conducted on educational facilities. The Office had estimated that 720,000 new classrooms would be required to close the widening gap between available facilities and projected needs. At the direction of the Secretary's office,

---

[33]"Education Chief for U.S. Resigns," New York Times, June, 1956, p. 1; "Commissioner Brownell Resigns," Higher Education, XIII (September, 1956), 1-2.

[34]Bess Furman, "Secretary Folsom Fights to Bar Fund Cut Endangering Research," New York Times, March 19, 1956, p. 33.

this estimate dropped to 600,000, then to 407,000, and finally to 176,000. "If we give Mrs. Hobby a couple more weeks," observed Jordan L. Larsen, president of the American Association of School Administrators, "we may have a surplus of classrooms." Larsen went on to say that Brownell enjoyed no real authority and that he could not call his soul his own. Educators, he added, were rapidly losing faith in the Office. With this kind of talk at the annual meeting of the nation's most influential organization of educational administrators, it was little wonder that Brownell found the Detroit offer, which made him the highest paid public official in Michigan, so attractive.[35]

Prospects for the Office of Education improved somewhat about the time Brownell was resigning. Marion B. Folsom replaced Mrs. Hobby as Secretary of HEW; the Commissioner's salary was raised to $17,000; and Congress restored some of the budget cuts. Even so, it took more than five months to find a replacement for Brownell.[36] In late November, 1956, Secretary Folsom announced that Lawrence G. Derthick, superintendent of schools in Chattanooga, Tennessee, would be the fourteenth Commissioner of Education.[37]

---

[35]Benjamin Fine, "Education Office Called Political," New York Times, April 2, 1955, p. 19.

[36]Leonard Beder, "2 Changes Sought in Education Post," New York Times, November 18, 1956, p. 66.

[37]"President Picks Education Chief," New York Times, November 29, 1956, pp. 1, 29.

VII

Lawrence Gridley Derthick (1905-), like fellow Tennessean Philander P. Claxton before him, received an invitation to become Commissioner of Education partly because he was from the South. Derthick was born to Henry J. and Pearl S. Derthick in a school dormitory at Hazel Green, Kentucky, where his parents conducted a Christian Church mission school. When he was twelve, the family moved to Milligan, Tennessee, where his father was president and his mother was dean of women in a small denominational college. Derthick helped put himself through Milligan College by driving a produce truck.[38]

When he graduated in 1927, Derthick took a job in Greene County, Tennessee, as teacher and principal of the consolidated elementary and high schools. In 1930 he received his M. A. degree from the University of Tennessee and became principal of the high school in Clarksville, Tennessee. Five years later he took a position as professor of education at East Tennessee State College in Johnson City and at the same time became state high school visitor for East Tennessee. He pursued graduate studies both at George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee, and at Teachers College, Columbia University, but never finished

---

[38]"Derthick, L(awrence) G(ridley)," Current Biography Yearbook, 1957, Edited by Marjorie Dent Candee (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1957), pp. 140-42.

a doctorate. In 1939 he became assistant superintendent for instruction in Nashville and in 1942 accepted the superintendency in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where he remained until his Washington appointment, except for fifteen months in 1948-49 when he served as chief of the education branch, Office of Military Government, Bavaria, Germany.[39]

Derthick achieved prominence in educational circles in 1953 when he was elected president of the American Association of School Administrators. After his term expired, he served the AASA as chairman of its Committee for the Advancement of School Administrators. In both of these positions he traveled all over the country, speaking to many local, state, regional, and national meetings. He was in continuing contact with influential school people.[40]

Two factors recommended Derthick as a candidate for Commissioner of Education in the turbulent early days of school desegregation. One was his educational prominence; the other, his geographic location. His position as superintendent of a Southern city school system which officially supported the Supreme Court's desegregation ruling while it pursued a very gradual approach to school integration gave him stature with moderate Southerners. He was especially

---

[39] Ibid.; "People of the Week," U. S. News and World Report, XLI (December 7, 1956), 20.

[40] "A Product of Education: Lawrence Gridley Derthick," New York Times, November 29, 1956, p. 29; "14th Commissioner of Education," School Life, XXXIX (January, 1957), 5.

attractive because of the aura of moderation which surrounded him. His amiability, melodious drawl, and cautious statements made him seem both wise and safe. "He is said to believe," observed a New York Times writer approvingly, "that the Supreme Court ruling against segregation must be upheld as the law of the land, but that enforcement must be left to local communities."[41]

Derthick accepted the commissionership reluctantly, initially agreeing to stay for only one year but remaining for a four-year term which was marked by less controversy and internal strife than that of any other commissioner since the end of World War II. His chief contribution, other than keeping the Office operating smoothly along traditional lines, was the early administration of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Staff members in the Office helped write the legislation. Indeed, the Office had been pressing for federal aid since Barnard took office in 1867. Derthick had not worked any harder for it than had many of his predecessors and not as hard as some. Passage of NDEA came chiefly because of the fright which Russia's 1957 launching of Sputnik I gave the American people. Derthick's job was to find suitable staff to administer the program and, perhaps more important, to calm those who feared federal control. "Leadership without

---

[41]"U. S. Educators," New York Times, December 2, 1956, Sec. IV, p. 2.

domination and assistance without interference," was the catch-phrase which he developed to ease the tensions.[42] Whatever it meant, it sounded reassuring.

VIII

In January, 1958, the United States concluded an agreement with the Soviet Union, authorizing cultural, scientific, and technical exchange visits between the two countries. Four months later, Commissioner Derthick led the first group of visitors from the United States. The eleven-man team of educators--six from the Office of Education, five from outside it--spent from May 8 until June 6 in the U. S. S. R. looking at Soviet education.[43] Traveling 7,000 miles in a chartered plane, "from Belorussia to the Urals, from the Chinese border to the Black and Baltic Seas," the group visited about 100 educational institutions in eight major cities and returned feeling they had caught a glimpse of what was really going on educationally in Russia.[44]

---

[42]Interview with Lawrence G. Derthick, June 18, 1966.

[43]The eleven were: Lawrence G. Derthick, Lane C. Ash, John R. Ludington, Helen K. MacKintosh, John B. Whitelaw, Olner J. Caldwell, all of the U. S. Office of Education; George Z. F. Bereday, Teachers College, Columbia University; Henry Chauncey, Educational Testing Service; A. John Holden, Jr., Vermont State Commissioner of Education; Herold C. Hunt, Harvard University; and Harry C. Kelly, National Science Foundation.

[44]Soviet Commitment to Education: Report of the First Official U. S. Education Mission to the U.S.S.R., with an Analysis of Recent Educational Reforms, Bulletin 1959, No. 16 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1959) p. 1.

The delegation returned with feelings of warmth for many of the people they had met and with a strong impression of the Soviet commitment to education as an instrument for winning the cold-war race for technological supremacy. They told the American people about these impressions in a 135-page report issued by the U. S. Office of Education in 1959.[45] This account of the Soviet Commitment to Education, coming as it did when millions of Americans were distraught over the apparent failure of this country to keep up in the space race, afforded very effective ammunition to those who wanted federal funds to brace up scientific and technical education. And despite warnings by the American delegation that their report should not be read out of context, many people seized upon it to try to prove that American education had failed and that the time had come to discard the semi-equalitarian approach to education which had evolved here in favor of more selectivity and more rigorous content. American educators responded defensively that we could be both equal and excellent. To prove their point, they sent American school children home to do longer assignments in math, science, and language books.

The Derthick team's visit to and report on the Soviet Union is important for two reasons: (1) It marked the rise to national prominence of the still unresolved dilemma of promoting both equality and excellence, and

---

[45] Ibid.

(2) It signified the coming to prominence of comparative and international dimensions of education in the Office of Education. The latter was not a new concern. The Office had been issuing comparative studies since Henry Barnard's first annual report. But it was not until after World War II that comparative and international education began to seem vital. By the time Derthick resigned, these two areas were clearly among the most important in the Office of Education.[46]

IX

In November, 1960, a few days after John F. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon for the Presidency, Republican-appointed Lawrence Derthick resigned. He had never liked the pressure or the grueling seven-day-a-week schedule which he felt compelled to keep in order to meet his commitments.[47] But the timing of his resignation suggested more than a mere desire to change jobs. Neither Derthick nor the National Education Association for whom he went to work as assistant executive secretary had any comment about

---

[46]A committee appointed by Commissioner Derthick to study the Office's organizational needs reported in 1961 that International Education should be one of four major administrative divisions in the Office. A Federal Education Agency for the Future: Report of the Committee on Mission and Reorganization of the U.S. Office of Education, OE-10010 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 21.

[47]Interview with Lawrence G. Derthick, June 18, 1966.

the job change, but the national political shift was almost certainly a factor in precipitating it.[48]

The twelve post-war years covered by the leadership of McGrath, Thurston, Brownell, and Derthick saw many changes in the Office of Education. The number of staff members in the Office doubled. International education became an increasingly significant feature of Office work. The amount of federal money which the Office had to administer greatly increased, especially in the area of funds for school construction. Indeed, the most striking change was the dramatic growth of the amount of money controlled by the Office. From under fifty million dollars when McGrath took office, it grew by 1000 per cent to more than $500 million a year in 1960.[49]

Despite the growth and change, the role of the Office and the direction of its future remained very much in doubt. By 1960 the Office was finally in a position to make a difference in a number of areas, but it was by no means certain that it could offer effective leadership. The only major educational movement of the period which it

---

[48]"Derthick Resigning," New York Times, November 30, 1960, p. 21. Derthick was still with NEA in 1967.

[49]Homer D. Babbidge, "New Role for the U.S. Office of Education?" Nation's Schools, LXVIII (September, 1961), 53; Albert R. Munse and Edna D. Boocher, Federal Funds for Education, 1956-57 and 1957-58, Bulletin 1959, No. 2 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 33.

had backed was the "Life Adjustment" curriculum. Started under John Studebaker, this was a program sponsored by the Vocational Education Division of the Office designed to help the non-college-bound high school student "adjust" to the world which he would face as an adult worker. By the time Brownell was commissioner, the program was under such heavy attack from opponents of "progressive" education and from those who thought the world should be changed rather than adjusted to, that it could no longer be continued.[50] Thus the Office's only major effort after the war to control the direction of educational change, though effective for a time, ended in loss of prestige. The problem for President-elect John F. Kennedy was to find a man for commissioner who could interpret the uncertain educational temper of the period and then use federal funds administered by the U. S. Office of Education to bring ordered change.

---

[50]For a discussion of the Commission on Life Adjustment, see Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1867-1957 (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), pp. 333-38.

CHAPTER XII

THE RISE OF THE OFFICE TO PROMINENCE, 1961-1967

I

In November, 1960, Lawrence Derthick announced his intended resignation from government service, and the incoming Kennedy Administration began a search for his successor. But a week before the January, 1961, inauguration, when "the appointments had worked down to the lower echelons of most government departments and agencies," the nation's top education position was still unfilled. "At the Office of Education, queries met only other queries and even rumors were hard to come by," said one observer.[1] Several prominent educators reportedly turned down the commissionership. When Abraham A. Ribicoff, President Kennedy's new Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, called New York State Commissioner of Education James E. Allen, Jr., he got a flat refusal. Allen, whose salary was $16,000 a year higher than the $20,000 paid the U. S. Commissioner of

---

[1]Dorsey Baynham, "Sterling M. McMurrin, New U. S. Commissioner of Education," Saturday Review, XLIV (February 18, 1961), 66-67, 74.

Education, said he could not afford the change. Even if the salary were better, he added, he would prefer to stay where he was because he would have more power to effect educational policy.[2]

Secretary Ribicoff finally found his man outside the circle of professional educators from which most commissioners of education had come. He was forty-seven-year-old Sterling McMurrin, professor of philosophy and academic vice-president of the University of Utah. McMurrin was only the fifth commissioner in the history of the Office without any experience as a teacher or administrator in the public schools.[3]

II

Sterling Moss McMurrin (1914-) was born to Joseph W. and Gertrude McMurrin near Salt Lake City, Utah. He attended the Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles, California, graduating in 1931, and enrolled in the University of California, Los Angeles, but changed to the University of Utah, from which he was graduated with a B. A.

---

[2]"Dr. Allen Rejects U. S. Education Post," New York Times, January 11, 1961, p. 14.

[3]The other four were N. H. R. Dawson (1886-89), John James Tigert (1921-28), George F. Zook (1933-34), and Earl James McGrath (1948-53).

degree and a Phi Beta Kappa key in 1936. A year later he took an M. A. degree from the same institution.[4]

McMurrin, a Morman, worked for eight years beginning in 1937 in the department of education of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. From 1943 to 1945 he was director of his denomination's Institute of Religion at the University of Arizona. Though he later dubbed himself a "maverick Morman," he continued his interest in religion, delivering lectures at several universities in 1957-58 on the philosophical foundations of Morman theology.[5]

In 1946, McMurrin completed a Ph. D. degree in philosophy at the University of Southern California. During the year 1952-53 he did post-doctoral work at Columbia University and at Union Theological Seminary, and in 1953 was a Ford Fellow in Philosophy at Princeton University. From 1955 until his Washington appointment, he was lecturer and seminar moderator for the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in Aspen, Colorado.[6]

McMurrin's academic teaching career began in 1946 when he became an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California. During the summer of

---

[4]"McMurrin, Sterling M(oss)," Current Biography Yearbook, 1961, Edited by Charles Moritz (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1961), pp. 289-91.

[5]Ibid.

[6]"New Administrators for the Office of Education," School Life, XLIII (January, 1961), 17.

1947 he taught at Brigham Young University, then moved in 1948 to the University of Utah as professor of philosophy. Articulate and handsome, he was a popular professor. In 1954 he became dean of the College of Letters and Science at the University of Utah. Six months before he accepted the call to Washington, he moved up to the position of academic vice-president of the university.[7]

III

When McMurrin reached Washington in April, 1961, to be sworn in as U. S. Commissioner of Education, he knew, by his own admission, next to nothing about the Office he was to head--an Office which, according to one critic, was "underrated, understaffed, and underpowered." Nevertheless, he plunged into the job, which observers said he would find "complex, difficult, and frustrating."[8]

Within an hour after he was sworn in, the new Commissioner had embroiled himself in a fight with the educational community by holding a press conference at which he reportedly charged that "we have been lax and flabby at points." McMurrin later denied using those words, but admitted he had said that all too often education is easy and soft and that what was needed was more "rigor." He even had kind words for arch-critic of American public

---

[7]Current Biography, loc. cit.

[8]Baynham, loc. cit.

education Vice-Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, whom schoolmen regarded as an anathema.[9]

Reaction to McMurrin's opening blast was immediate and rather widespread. Many conservative critics who blamed the schools for what they considered weaknesses in American society hailed the Utah Commissioner as the best man in years to head the Office of Education. Mortimer Smith, director of the conservative Council for Basic Education, praised him for his emphasis upon "essentials." Even the ubiquitous Barry Goldwater admitted that "McMurrin is no Communist."[10] The response in what McMurrin and fellow critics referred to as the Educational Establishment--i.e., the National Education Association, school administrators, and deans and professors of education--was less favorable. "To many people in the NEA, my appointment was nothing short of a disaster," McMurrin said later. "It wasn't so much what I was saying but the fact that I was saying it publicly."[11]

What McMurrin was saying was essentially the same thing that ex-Harvard president James Bryant Conant was

---

[9]David Halberstam, "U. S. Aide Demands Teacher Pay Raise," New York Times, April 5, 1961, p. 40; Sterling M. McMurrin, "Statement of the U.S. Commissioner of Education," Higher Education XVII (April, 1961), 3-4; Sterling McMurrin, "The Real Weakness in American Schools," U. S. News and World Report, LI (August 28, 1961), 58-60.

[10]"Doers or Dodos?" Newsweek, LIX (May 7, 1962), 86-88.

[11]Ibid.

saying: that the phrases "education for democratic living" and "education for life adjustment" had been excuses for perpetuating mediocrity in the schools; that there were too many people teaching in American schools who drifted there because the training was not demanding; and that the United States would be unable to face the Russian cold-war challenge in education without formulating some "national goals" and putting the best students to work in a "rigorous" curriculum of academic subjects.[12]

Many educators felt that the critics on the academic right, such as McMurrin and Conant, did not understand the real problems of conducting public elementary and secondary schools since few of them had had any experience at it, and that the public school system was on the verge of being sacrificed to academic elitism in the name of national survival and security. McMurrin did not settle the debate. Indeed, he lost the first battle, but his successors in the Office of Education retained his outlook while avoiding his problems.

IV

McMurrin did not accomplish many of the things he had hoped he would. The Kennedy Administration's federal aid to education program bogged down in the House Rules

---

[12]McMurrin, "The Real Weakness in American Schools," U. S. News and World Report, loc. cit.

Committee. An aid to higher education measure in which McMurrin was very much interested was wrecked over the church-state issue. The NEA leadership blamed the Administration in general and the Commissioner of Education specifically for congressional failure to pass aid to education bills. McMurrin lashed out at the NEA for being uninterested in higher education, "cool to private schools, and . . . pathologically opposed to parochial schools."[13] The intractability of public education leadership and their divided opinions, he said, were partly to blame for congressional failures in education. This mutual faulting did nothing to improve McMurrin's relationship with the NEA.

Though much of McMurrin's congressional program failed, he did change the Office of Education itself appreciably. In 1961 it moved to a new seven-story glass and marble office building just down Maryland Avenue from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. "Obviously," said one writer, "the U. S. Office of Education has risen in status."[14] Along with the move came a reorientation designed to play down the "service" aspect of the Office and play up its role as educational leader. Said one

---

[13]Wallace Turner, "M'Murrin Insists He Quit to Teach," New York Times, October 20, 1962, p. 52; Sterling McMurrin, "The U. S. Office of Education: An Inside View," Saturday Review, XLVI (February 16, 1963), 78-81.

[14]Theodore Schuchat, "Moving Day for the U. S. Office," Overview, II (August, 1961), 28-29.

Washington correspondent in 1961, "Six out of ten USOE employees execute federal policies affecting education."[15]

McMurrin wanted the Office not only to execute policy but to formulate it as well. Toward this end he reorganized the Office in 1962, following the controversial proposals in Homer D. Babbidge's A Federal Education Agency for the Future. Along with the reorganization, the Commissioner called for more non-education employees in the Office--i.e., more psychologists, economists, anthropologists, mathematical statisticians, and public administrators. Office personnel in the future were to spend more time administering funds and deciding upon the feasibility of grants, and less time upon their own research, publication, and speaking.[16]

Part of McMurrin's new leadership role for the Office was to come in the area of curriculum development. Spurred on by the example of reform in high school science texts and teacher training by academic representatives of physics, chemistry, and biology, he decided to use the cooperative research program to encourage curriculum change in English and social studies. By making direct grants to universities and to academic professors to develop new

---

[15] Ibid.

[16] Elaine Exton, "How Should Our Federal Office of Education Be Staffed?" American School Board Journal, CXLIII (September, 1961), 38-39.

curriculum material, by setting up demonstration centers actually to implement the changes, and by bringing teachers to summer institutes to study the new material, McMurrin hoped to upgrade the content of public school classes. If it worked in English and social studies, then the Office could branch out into other fields.[17]

The response to all of this was less enthusiastic than McMurrin had hoped. Political and social conservatives, like Newsweek writer Raymond Moley and radio commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr., feared the Office reorganization was aimed at federal take-over of the schools. The May 25 Republican Congressional Committee Newsletter said McMurrin was on his way to becoming "a kind of educational czar."[18] Many service-oriented Office employees resented the implied criticism. And professional education people in general saw a direct threat to their own influence and control in the proposal for bringing academicians rather than educators into the Office. Ironically, the NEA, which for more than half a century had been decrying the lack of real status

---

[17]"Notes on the Notable: Federal Programs and Activities," School Life, XLV (November, 1962), 4-8; J. N. Hook, "Project English--A Midyear Progress Report," School Life, XLIV (May, 1962), 8-10; "National Teacher Education Project Planned," Art Education, XVI (January, 1963), 22.

[18]Elaine Exton, "U. S. Education Office--Its Future," American School Board Journal, CXLIII (August, 1961), 34-36.

and leadership in the Office, yearned for the days when the Office followed more than it led.[19]

V

In the midst of the unsettled questions, McMurrin left Washington to resume his teaching duties at the University of Utah.[20] Basically a family man and a scholar and teacher, he had never made a secret of his dislike for the demanding position as Commissioner which left him little time for his first interests. "I am perfectly willing to do the job," he told a reporter in May, 1962, "but I don't think I should be required to enjoy it."[21]

McMurrin's controversial service as Commissioner, his mildly critical comments upon leaving, and the search for his successor thrust the Office of Education into national focus as never before. The favorite word for describing the Office itself seemed to be "burgeoning."

---

[19]"Administrators Three to Two Against U. S. O. E. Leadership in Curriculum Development," Nation's Schools, LXX (October, 1962), 65.

[20]Turner, loc. cit.; Marjorie Hunter, "Education Chief for U.S. Resigns," New York Times, July 28, 1962, p. 6.

[21]"Doers or Dodos?" Newsweek, loc. cit.

The appellations applied to the job of commissioner were "toughest" and "fastest growing in Washington."[22]

The reported difficulty of the Kennedy Administration in finding a new commissioner led many people to believe that the Office was in such a mess that no leading educator would head it. "Few of its 1,153 employees are first rate, and none are high-paid," reported one popular magazine.[23] "The question must be asked whether any able educator can find the commissionership satisfying for long," said another.[24] A New Republic writer reported that nearly every prominent educator in the country had, at one time or another, turned down an invitation to be Commissioner.[25] When the White House announced that Harvard's Dean of Education, Francis Keppel, had agreed to take the position, eyebrows went up all over the country.

VI

Francis Keppel's (1916-)background gave him many of the same attitudes which McMurrin had brought to

---

[22]Edgar Fuller, "New U.S.O.E. Commissioner Keppel Inherits Chaos in Education at the Federal Level," Nation's Schools, LXXI (January, 1963), 121-22; "New Education Chief: Harvard's Keppel Takes Over," U.S. News and World Report, LIII (December 24, 1962), 13.

[23]"Another Harvardman," Time, LXXX (November 30, 1962), 66.

[24]"Dr. McMurrin and Education," New York Times, July 31, 1962, p. 26.

[25]"Office of Education," New Republic, CXLVII (December 8, 1962), 6-7.

the Office. Born in New York City, educated at Groton and Harvard (B. A., 1938), he studied sculpturing for one year at the American Academy in Rome, Italy, but gave that up and returned to Harvard in 1939 as assistant dean of freshmen. Two years later he went to Washington as secretary of the Joint Army-Navy Committee on Welfare and Recreation. From 1944 to 1946 he served in the army, rising from private to first lieutenant.[26]

After the war Keppel became assistant to the provost at Harvard and in 1948, without a graduate degree, accepted the invitation of Harvard President James Bryant Conant to be dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Education. During his fourteen years as dean, Keppel quadrupled the staff size and enrolment, doubled the endowment, and raised the prestige of the Graduate School of Education by bringing in academic specialists. The Master of Arts in Teaching program which he developed did "more than anything else in the past generation to make school teaching academically respectable," said a writer for the New Republic.[27]

Keppel's chief concern was with quality and how to enhance it. This had been his father's concern, too. As dean of Columbia College and as president of the Carnegie

---

[26]"Keppel, Francis," Current Biography Yearbook, 1963, Edited by Charles Moritz (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1963), pp. 220-22.

[27]"Office of Education," New Republic, loc. cit.

Corporation of New York, the elder Keppel had funneled money into projects he thought likely to improve educational quality.[28] This had also been McMurrin's chief concern and lay behind many of his critical remarks. But Francis Keppel, unlike McMurrin, was able to put into effect programs which McMurrin only talked about.

There were several reasons for Keppel's success. For one thing, he had the support of the NEA and other professional education groups. This was true despite the fact that he was friendly to private education and that all of his experience had been in higher education. In attitudes and in his lack of public school experience he resembled McMurrin, but his long association with educators caused them to consider him a member of the group. He was also more acceptable because he was less blunt than McMurrin. He made the same criticisms but did so more obliquely so that few people took his remarks personally. Too, Keppel understood the political process better than did McMurrin, or at least operated more effectively within it. His relationship with the White House was less formal under both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations than McMurrin's had been, and his effectiveness as a lobbiest was far greater. During the 88th Congress he made seventeen trips

---

[28]Franklin Parker, "Francis Keppel of Harvard: Pied Piper of American Education," School and Society, XCI (March 9, 1963), 126-28.

to Capitol Hill to testify before committees and got fourteen major education bills passed. Finally, the emotional idealism which swept the country following President Kennedy's death helped create a more favorable climate for national education legislation, and the plan worked out by the Johnson Administration and Keppel for appeasing parochial school interests with some of the federal money brought education bills through Congress which had been suggested in one form or another for decades.[29]

If educators, who welcomed Keppel's appointment, hoped he would reverse the trends of his predecessor's administration, they were disappointed. The program of using research funds to speed curriculum changes was intensified by increased appropriations for research and by the inauguration of Regional Educational Laboratories to put the ideas thus generated to work.[30] The practice of bringing in non-educators increased. In 1965 the Office of Education underwent a jolting reorganization, which not only brought in more non-educators, but further minimized the role of educational specialists who had traditionally

---

[29]"Going Up Fast," Time, LXXXV (January 15, 1965), 50; "The Head of the Class," Time, LXXXVI (October 15, 1965), 60-62, 67-68.

[30]Francis A. J. Ianni and Barbara D. McNeill, "Organizing for Continuing Change," Saturday Review, XLVIII (June 19, 1965), 55-56, 71.

rendered "service."[31] The trend after the 1965 reorganization was clear: the U. S. Office of Education, with an annual budget of one and a half billion dollars (and rising) was going to have a part in deciding the direction of change in American education. And in the foreseeable future, at least, people with training in specialties other than education were going to have a significant voice in the decisions.

By the end of 1965, Francis Keppel had accomplished most of what he had come to Washington to do. The biggest spate of education bills in the nation's history had gone through Congress. After ninety years of effort, general federal aid was a fait accompli.[32] The Office of Education, whose staff size had nearly doubled since he came to the Office, had a 1966 budget approved at $3.42 billion--nearly six times its 1962 level. It was no longer known as "that little Bureau"; it had become by then the hinge on which President Johnson's Great Society swung.[33]

---

[31]Josephine Ripley, "U. S. Educational Unit Taps Noneducators," Christian Science Monitor, February 14, 1966, p. 5.

[32]Peter Schrag, "The New Pedagogy," Reporter, XXXV (September 22, 1966), 58-59.

[33]"New Education Chief: Harold Howe 2d," New York Times, December 20, 1965, p. 31.

VII

By 1965, Office of Education personnel, including the Commissioner, had grown accustomed to national attention and a good deal of criticism. Most of the latter was relatively temporary in nature and could be turned aside, but in the area of civil rights nothing the Commissioner of Education or his staff could do seemed to allay criticism.

Until 1962 the Office of Education had generally ignored school segregation in the allocation of its funds. But beginning in September of that year, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare authorized the withholding of federal funds to segregated schools if the parents of any of the children who attended them lived or worked on federal property.[34] Gradually this authority extended until under the terms of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Office of Education was given power to withhold federal funds from any schools which were not making satisfactory progress toward desegregation. In April, 1965, the Commissioner handed down the first set of guidelines, in essence requiring segregated school systems to submit a plan for gradual desegregation. The guidelines were aimed primarily at legal segregation in the South, but they had not been in operation long when trouble developed in Chicago.[35]

---

[34]Edgar Fuller, "Politics of Desegregation," Nation's Schools, LXIX (May, 1962), 110.

[35]Robert G. Sherrill, "Guidelines to Frustration," Nation, CCIV (January 16, 1967), 69-74.

In the fall of 1965, the Office of Education asked the Chicago School Board to supply additional information on some questions pertaining to the Board's compliance with the Civil Rights Act. A five-man investigating team had been to Chicago in response to charges by a civil rights group, the Co-ordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO), that the Civil Rights Act was being violated. When the Chicago Board failed to supply the requested information, the Office wrote to say that approximately $30,000,000 in school funds could not be paid until the information was in. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley complained to President Johnson of what he considered high-handed treatment and vilified Keppel and the Office for days in the press. Illinois Republican Senator Everett M. Dirkson threatened a Senate investigation. The money was released, and according to many sources at the time, Keppel was reprimanded by the White House. Whether the latter was true or not, critics of the Office's efforts at desegregation gloated over what they considered at least an indirect rebuke.[36]

Keppel was apparently ready to leave government service by mid-1965. He had gotten enough legislation through Congress to make the Office of Education a major

---

[36] Ibid.; Robert Schultz, "Chicago and Its Mayor Protest, and U. S. Quickly Restores Money," National Observer, October 11, 1965, p. 5; Interview with John Naisbett (assistant to Francis Keppel when the latter was Commissioner), March 29, 1967.

agency and to give Lyndon Johnson the title of "Education President." Keppel reportedly felt that someone else should administer the new programs.[37] He might have left before the Chicago incident if incoming Secretary of HEW John W. Gardner had not asked him to stay on until Gardner got oriented. In September, 1965, Keppel became Assistant Secretary of HEW. Three months later he resigned as Commissioner of Education so that a man whom he and Gardner had chosen (Harold Howe II) could step in. Then in April, 1966, Keppel announced his resignation as Assistant Secretary and in July went to New York City as chairman of the Board of the General Learning Corporation, a Time-General Electric subsidiary designed to develop technological equipment and programs for education.[38]

VIII

Harold Howe II (1918-), seventeenth U. S. Commissioner of Education, was born in Henry Barnard's city of Hartford, Connecticut. "Doc" Howe, as his friends called him, was the son of an All-America quarterback at Yale, went to private schools, and was a classmate at Yale

---

[37]Jerold K. Footlick, "Big, New Federal Role Is Defined for Education," National Observer, January 3, 1966, pp. 1, 14.

[38]"Johnson Adds 4 Poverty Aides; Proctor Will Head Office Here," New York Times, September 5, 1965, p. 58; "Education Official Named by Johnson," New York Times, December 19, 1965, pp. 1, 37; Schrag, loc. cit.

of Presidential assistant McGeorge Bundy, who became president of the Ford Foundation upon leaving government service in 1966. Howe graduated from Yale in 1940 and began an educational career (interrupted by five years' service in the navy during World War II) by teaching history in private high schools (Darrow School, New Lebanon, New York; and Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts). After the war, he received an M. A. degree in history from Columbia University and in 1950 became principal of the Andover, Massachusetts, High School and Junior High School. From there he moved to Cincinnati as principal of the Walnut Hills High School, then went to Newton High School in Massachusetts as principal. During this time he studied education at the University of Cincinnati and at Harvard University (where Francis Keppel was dean). At Newton, Howe also worked closely in a cooperative arrangement with Harvard on its Master of Arts in Teaching program.[39]

In 1960, Howe left Newton for Scarsdale, New York, to be superintendent of schools. He made a good record at Scarsdale (where John Gardner lived) but left in 1964 to become director of the Learning Institute of North Carolina (LINC) at the invitation of Governor Terry Sanford. Until

---

[39]Maxine Greene, "The Visibility of Harold Howe: Some Notes Toward a Profile," School and Society, XCV (January 21, 1967), 45-48; Luther J. Carter, "Education: New Commissioner Champions Change and Reform," Science, CL (December 31, 1965), 1794-96; "A New Commissioner," Time, LXXXVI (December 31, 1965), 34.

that time, nearly all of Howe's experience had been in plush private schools or in wealthy public school districts. Both Newton and Scarsdale were well-to-do middle class suburban areas. The LINC program, however, was an attempt to reach potential dropouts with ability from the bottom of the social and economic class structure. Most of these students were Negro.[40]

This was the background forty-seven-year-old Harold Howe brought to the Office of Education in 1965. He had seen middle class schools at their best in Massachusetts; he had seen the changing of middle class attitudes toward race and educational opportunity in North Carolina. He had two convictions: (1) like McMurrin, Keppel, Gardner, Conant, and others, he believed the quality of education in general needed to be raised to that of the best schools then available; (2) he believed that all children, especially the long-denied Negro children, should have access to these quality schools. Neither of these things could be realized, he thought, by backing "into the future looking wistfully at the past."[41]

Howe's appointment, while it did not please everyone, met with general favor. Reporters agreed that he

---

[40] James Cass, "Education in America: Leadership for Education," Saturday Review, XLIX (January 15, 1966), 57-58.

[41] "We Shouldn't Back Into the Future: Observations on the Education Scene," Life, LXII (January 20, 1967), 37-38.

handled his early press conferences adroitly and with humor. Southern schoolmen who feared the Office might force them to integrate came away from early meetings somewhat relieved.[42] The honeymoon was short-lived, however, Howe began making speeches--forthright, clear pronouncements calling for an end to segregation. These made many people nervous. "But," he commented, "that's what I wanted to do--make them nervous."[43] Not only did he make speeches but the Office, under his control, stiffened the guidelines on school desegregation. Enemies and critics began to increase.

Within six months of the time he took office, Harold Howe had become for many racial conservatives one of the most hated men in America.[44] Part of the difficulty was that Office of Education field representatives, of whom there were only about forty to cover the entire South, were sometimes less tactful than sensitive school people wanted. Both Howe and Keppel, and even President Johnson, admitted on different occasions that there had been mistakes.[45] But the real problem with respect to integration was not what

---

[42]Carter, loc. cit.

[43]"We Shouldn't Back Into the Future," Life, loc. cit.

[44]"Commissioner on a Hot Seat," New York Times, October 2, 1966, p. E9; U.S., Congressional Record, 89th Cong., 2d Sess., 1966, CXII, A5430, 21830, 23846, 25555, 25557, 26343, 27060, 27428.

[45]Josephine Ripley, "Howe Besieged: School-Desegregation Guidelines Hit by Southern Congressmen," Christian Science Monitor, October 3, 1966, p. 3.

the Office did--even Howe privately admitted that the guidelines were accomplishing little--but what it stood for. The schools had become by 1967 the focal point of the conflict over integration. More than any other arm of the federal government, the U. S. Office of Education, with its guidelines, represented the policy of moving the country toward racial integration. The policy was there even if, as civil rights and civil liberties groups charged, the implementation was missing. Since it is easier to hate a man than a policy, Harold Howe superseded even Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren as the man to hate.[46]

IX

The one hundredth anniversary of the Office of Education came quietly in March, 1967. The small celebration was largely unheralded because the Office had been too much in the news for comfort in recent months. Harold Howe II was still Commissioner. He had weathered a storm of criticism at least momentarily, but whether he could survive future ones was problematical. The Office had by then achieved at least one thing: it was no longer obscure. The 1967 budget was nearly four billion dollars. The 2,500 employees were in a new seven-story building on Maryland Avenue, which had already become for thousands of school people both a source of money and frustration. As a

---

[46] Sherrill, loc. cit.

newsmaker, the Office of Education was probably second in government agencies only to the Defense Department.

After a hundred years of operation, there seemed to be more questions than answers about the Office. Would it become a genuine leader in curriculum reform? Would the civil rights controversy pass? What role would the Office play in the expanding international arena where dozens of aspiring nations were turning to education for help? Would the Office ever become the source of inspiration and the center of enlightenment envisioned by some of its early congressional advocates, or would it bog down in bureaucratic red tape and sonorous pronouncements while running from the real issues? Although the future was uncertain, one thing was clear. The dramatic growth of the Office was not finished. Whatever the course of the Great Society in America, the Office would play some part in it.

CHAPTER XIII

THE OFFICE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

I

For most of its hundred years of existence, the U. S. Office of Education has been a minor force in shaping American education. This generalization is decreasingly true for the decade beginning in 1957, but it remains true that until very recently the Office of Education has not been nearly so potent in the United States as, for example, the Ministry of Education has been in France. Reasons for this relative impotence must be seen in the perspective of history.

II

During the early national period, and for a good many years thereafter, political and intellectual leaders in the United States, while favoring education as a desirable undergirding for republican government, left the management and support of schools to the states. This was partly because education was too closely tied to religion to seem desirable as a government function in the minds of many

Americans, who had recently fought against a centralized power where a state church had a powerful influence on education. Too, many people during the early years of American independence hoped education could be supported privately rather than through taxation. Those who believed in public education supported by the national government were not numerous enough at the 1787 Constitutional Convention to get their way. But the spread of public education in the North and the West from 1820 to 1860 increased support for national involvement.

The Civil War convinced some Northern congressmen and educators that not only did the newly freed Negro need federally assisted and directed education, but also that the diffusion of public education for all youth would be necessary in time to forestall repetition of the Civil War tragedy. Men like Ignatius Donnelly, Charles Brooks, James A. Garfield, and E. E. White drew up the proposal which led to the founding of the Department of Education, a fact-finding, statistics-gathering agency that was to assist the growth and spread of public schools and general learning.

The new agency was in trouble from the first, partly because its powers and duties were not generally agreed upon. Some educators believed the Department was a gift from Congress to them to be used however they saw fit. Most congressmen regarded it as a fact-finding agency whose only excuse for being was to supply them with information

upon request. The first Commissioner Henry Barnard (1867-70), almost caused its demise by misunderstanding the information-gathering service function intended to progress though he did lend a tone of scholarly dignity which the forgetfulness of later years enhanced.

If there was disagreement over the role of the Office, there was also a problem over its partisan dimension. Although the vote creating the original Department was split very definitely along partisan lines, many educators persisted in the belief that the Office should not be sullied by politics. All commissioners found that their effectiveness was directly proportional to the amount of support they could command in Congress and the executive branch. Presidents, on the other hand, soon discovered that the commissioners they appointed needed the endorsement of educators. The commissioner had to be able to play two simultaneous, and sometimes contradictory, roles. Most of them managed this reasonably well.

John Eaton (1870-86) brought a combination of political-mindedness, administrative efficiency, and educational commitment to the Office matched only by Francis Keppel. Eaton moved forward the public library as an adult education agency and involved the Office in a wide range of educational concerns: nursing, Negroes, Indians, Alaskan natives, international exchange of educational information, and others. N. H. R. Dawson (1886-89) furthered the

upon request. The first Commissioner, Henry Barnard (1867-70), almost caused its demise by misunderstanding the information-gathering service function intended by Congress, though he did lend a tone of scholarly dignity which the forgetfulness of later years enhanced.

If there was disagreement over the role of the Office, there was also a problem over its political dimension. Although the vote creating the original Department was split very definitely along partisan lines, many educators persisted in the belief that the Office should not be sullied by politics. All commissioners found that their effectiveness was directly proportional to the amount of support they could command in Congress and the White House. Presidents, on the other hand, soon discovered that the commissioners they appointed needed the endorsement of educators. The commissioner had to be able to play two simultaneous, and sometimes contradictory, roles. Most of them managed this reasonably well.

John Eaton (1870-86) brought a combination of political-mindedness, administrative efficiency, and educational commitment to the Office matched only by Francis Keppel. Eaton moved forward the public library as an adult education agency and involved the Office in a wide range of educational concerns: nursing, Negroes, Indians, Alaskan natives, international exchange of educational information, and others. N. H. R. Dawson (1886-89) furthered the

administrative involvement of the Office through improved annual reports and wiser conduct of Alaskan education, and he kept the Office in line with congressional wishes by uncomplainingly accepting low budgets.

By the turn of the century, rural and agrarian America was rapidly giving way to twentieth century urban industrialization. As superintendent in St. Louis, William Torrey Harris (1889-1906) had helped pave the way for acceptance of this change, but as Commissioner, he isolated the Office both from Congress and from changes in educational theory and practice. Harris' status quo views matched the conservative Darwinian survival-of-the-fittest attitude which set the promotion of big business above the needs of the growing influx of immigrant children into city schools.

Elmer Ellsworth Brown (1906-11) wanted to meet new needs by enlarging the Office staff, functions, and budget; but a hesitant Congress said no. Philander P. Claxton (1911-21) continued Brown's efforts and was briefly successful in increasing the Office's scope because of the First World War; but the quiescence of the 1920's represented a time when the Office held its own and confined its operations to service functions. John J. Tigert (1921-28) tried unsuccessfully to broaden the scope of the Office; William John Cooper (1929-33) welcomed a cut in all activities except the school surveys.

The Depression, with its growing alienation of the poor from the American mainstream, offered an opportunity

for greatly expanding the activities of the Office. But with the exception of administering funds for vocational education, neither George F. Zook (1933-34) nor John W. Studebaker (1935-48) was able to convince the New Dealers that education could be an effective lever in fighting depression. Indeed, Studebaker apparently did not try very hard to do so.

World War II saw the Office begin its rise to prominence. Defense training added significant funds and duties to the Office--heralding and underscoring a theme of things to come: that while the Office might be a quiet servant to state dominance in education during normal times, it could fill a bigger role during periods of national peril and travail.

The thrusting of an uncertain and unprepared America into western world leadership in the post World War II period greatly enlarged the federal government enterprise. Unfortunately, but probably inevitably, this enlargement was defensively anti-communist. Its concerns were largely political and economic rather than educational (which they later became). Had the nation's leaders and the people had the prescience to foretell the massive renovation within American society which the 1960's were to set in motion, they might have given the Office a higher priority and its commissioner cabinet or near-cabinet status. But defensive international political and economic-aid concerns were in

the forefront, and a growing but still minor "sub-department" Office was wedged for administrative convenience first into the Federal Security Agency (1939-53) during the commissionerships of Studebaker and Earl J. McGrath (1949-53), and then into the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Lee Thurston's brief tenure (1953) and that of S. M. Brownell (1953-56) were both unfortunately dimmed by the quiescent Eisenhower administration.

Sputnik charged and quickened the cold-war atmosphere during Lawrence G. Derthick's term of office (1956-60). If, as was thought, the USSR was one great schoolhouse in which education was used as a weapon for world dominance, then American education too would have to be honed to win the technological race. NDEA funds and other emergency programs marked a turning point for the Office from that of horse-puller to whip-driver of the national education enterprise. Though the transition had not gone that far by 1960, the trend was there.

This turn away from the past near-oblivion of the Office on the national educational scene was heralded by the brief commissionership of Sterling M. McMurrin (1961-62) under the thrusting "New Frontier" Kennedy Administration. McMurrin and his two successors were of the elite, higher-education-oriented, critic-of-mediocre-public-education strain. Commissioners Francis Keppel (1962-65) and Harold Howe II (1965-) were a new breed of quality-concerned,

hardheaded, politically conscious intellectuals who were committed to both educational quality and democratic quantity--and to the measured use of education as a solvent, not a sop, to rural and urban poverty. It is too early to take the measure of these men and the political men who direct them except to note that insofar as the political backing of the Presidency has been bold, they have been bold commissioners; and that even when a conservative Congress has retrenched, they have generally been outspokenly for a continuation of large federal funds for education.

III

In one hundred years the Office staff has grown from a commissioner and three assistants housed in two rented rooms over a restaurant to 2,500 administrators, specialists, clerks, and messengers, officed in a large, modernistic building. The operating budget for administering the Office itself has gone from $20,000 annually to more than $35,000,000; funds available to the Office for administering its programs have increased from none in 1867 to over $3.8 billion in 1967.[1] One hundred years ago the Office was less than inconsequential. The fact that it was created at all was due to a few farsighted men who after the Civil War believed that the educational enterprise needed a fact-finder and

---

[1]"Appropriation History," Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Prepared by the Bureau of the Budget, Copy in possession of the author.

stimulator. That the same Office stands today near, if not in, the center of the government's determined design for a renovated society is a tribute to its founders and to the growing importance of education in American culture.

Though the Office has become both large and influential by 1967, there are still many unanswered questions about its future role. (1) Will it become in time a cabinet-level department? (2) Will federal-state relations in education be permanently altered? (3) Will the Office become a dominant leader in forming national educational policy? (4) What will be its future role in international education?

Based on the first one hundred years of the Office's history, the following surmises are ventured:

(1) A Secretary of Education. Since at least the 1890's there have been moves to create a cabinet-level department of education. Though all of these moves have failed, the general direction has been toward higher status and more independence. From an obscure bureau in the Department of the Interior, the Office has moved to a position of importance as one of the three constituent parts of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In 1967 a reorganization of HEW along the lines of the Defense Department was pending, with the likelihood that there would soon be a sub-cabinet Secretary of Education. The next step, at some time in the future, will likely be

full cabinet status. If this happens, several smaller independent agencies, such as the National Science Foundation and the Office of Economic Opportunity, may well be absorbed by the new department.

(2) Federal-state relations. Though Francis Keppel as Commissioner liked to describe the federal government as a junior partner to the states in educational matters, the federal percentage of support is steadily increasing. Given the rapidly mounting costs of education, no end to this trend is in sight. It appears, then, that the federal portion will continue to grow and the power of the Office (or Department?) will also increase. There is some possibility that the States Compact on Education may become a counterbalance--especially if it gets large sums of money through an income tax rebated to the states--but its future influence cannot be judged because it is too new, too small, and too uncertain at present.

(3) Office leadership. By 1967 the Office appeared to be moving toward leadership in several important areas. McMurrin, Keppel, and Howe all supported this new leadership role. In such areas as curriculum reform, chances for success seem good. Given federal funds to administer through the cooperative research program, there is no reason why project English, project social studies, or any other "project" should fail to change the curricula of the schools. Even in the Office's bid to end racial segregation in the

schools, there is some possibility of eventual success. Though the guidelines are not working perfectly, they are a step in the right direction. Given time and congressional support, the Office may yet play a significant part in bringing about racial equality in education.

(4) International education. Since education is increasingly seen as a tool for solving social and economic ills, it seems highly likely that the Office of Education will assume many new duties in the American bid for international influence. The International Education Act of 1966, though just beginning to be implemented, establishes within the Office administrative machinery for this purpose.

In sum, the future of the Office of Education is assured. Tied to the growing federal involvement in education, it is already a dispenser of large funds, a patron of research, and an agent of social change. From present perspective the Office seems destined to become one of the most important national government agencies. There will be cries of federal control, in some cases probably justified. But if the Office can attract clear-sighted men to fill its upper echelon positions--educational politicians who can, in Harold Howe's words (quoting President Truman), stand the heat in the kitchen and who can win executive and legislative support--then it may yet exert the kind of intellectual leadership which some of its early architects envisioned.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER FROM JAMES A. GARFIELD TO E. E. WHITE, DECEMBER 26, 1868, ON THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*

Yours of the 21st inst came duly to hand. I am very sorry that the Department of Education has had such a stormy weather since it was launched. It has incountered two difficulties. In the first place the law was never heartily supported by either House of Congress. It was only by the most persistent efforts on my part, that the law was passed at all; and since that time, every member who has made an effort at retrenchment, has found it convenient to strike the Department.

But all these difficulties could have been avoided, if we had had the right man at the head. I shall never cease to regret that you were not appointed. While I appreciate the abilities and educational services of Doctor Barnard, I have been forced to the conclusion that he has failed in administrative ability. He has succeeded in making the impression that he has been running the department in the interest of the "Journal of Education," and has produced so bulky a report, that it has been condemned in advance solely on avoirdupois principles. I entreated him to leave out nearly half of the matter, especially my speech and all his indexes of the Journal. But he left it all in, and the presence of my speech in it, makes it impossible for me to defend his report as I otherwise could. It was with the greatest effort that we were able to save the Department last term, and then it escaped with the loss of most half the crew.

I am inclined to believe, it will be a good move to consolidate our Department and the Educational Department of the Freedmen's Bureau that survies the general repeal of

---

*James A. Garfield Papers, Letters Sent, 1868, p. 437 (Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.).

that law, and the statistical bureau just about to be reduced from the bureau to a more subordinate position into one bureau to be called a "Bureau of Education and Statistics." Such a consolidation may present commercial features sufficiently attractive to secure the approval of Congress. I see no other hope of saving, even the pieces of the wreck.

I do not know how you feel about it, but I have thought that the educators of the country have manifested but little interest in the department. Some of the leading Teachers Associations have not mentioned it in their proceedings; and of course, if the educators of the country do not want it, Congress will not be likely to keep it up. If any favorable turn in the prospect of the Bill should occur, so that you might be willing to take the Department, I believe your appointment could be secured when Genl Grant comes in. Anything I can do to bring about that result, I shall do most cheerfully. . . .

Very truly yours,

J. A. Garfield

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATION AND STAFF OF THE BUREAU OF EDUCATION UNDER N. H. R. DAWSON*

Commissioner

Col. N. H. R. Dawson

Chief Clerk

Mr. William H. Gardiner

Clerk

Mr. Isaac N. Wyckoff

I. RECORD DIVISION.
Including the Former Division of Correspondence and Files, and the Work of Receiving and Distributing Documents.

Mr. William H. Gardiner	Chief
Mrs. Marriette F. Hover	Clerk
Miss Eleanor T. Chester	Clerk
Miss Carolyn G. Forbes	Copyist
Mrs. N. H. McRoberts	Copyist
Mrs. M. E. Urmy	Copyist
Mr. W. H. Moffat	Skilled Laborer
Frank Morrison	Laborer
Washington Jones	Laborer
Walter T. Byron	Laborer
James R. Durham	Laborer
John H. Chun	Laborer
Miss Myra E. Ourand	Laborer

---

*Taken from a typed list in the "Outgoing Correspondence of the Commissioner of Education," dated October 29, 1886, Record Group 12, (National Archives, Washington, D.C.).

II. LIBRARY AND MUSEUM.

Including the former assignments to the Library and the Museum.

Mr. Henderson Presnell	Chief
Mr. A. P. Bogue	Clerk
Mr. Wellford Addis	Clerk
Miss Frances G. French	Clerk
Mr. L. J. K. Clark	Clerk
Mrs. Mollie J. Greene	Copyist
Miss Aduella P. Bryant	Copyist
Miss Frances C. Darrall	Copyist
Mr. J. W. Collins	Copyist
Mrs. F. A. Reigart	Assistant Manager

III. COLLECTOR AND COMPILOR OF STATISTICS.

Mr. I. Edwards Clark
Mrs. Rebecca L. Foot

IV. STATISTICAL DIVISION.

Including the former assignments of Statistics, General Statistics, Foreign Statistics, and Abstracts.

Mr. Charles Warren	Chief
Mr. Alexander Shiras	Clerk
Miss Annie Toleman Smith	Translator
Mr. Daniel Rhodes	Clerk
Mr. Frederick E. Upton	Clerk
Mrs. J. A. Holmes	Clerk
Miss Mary S. Williams	Clerk
Mr. John Dudley	Clerk
Miss Margaret Bingley	Copyist
Miss Fanny S. Crosby	Copyist
Mrs. Helen E. Shepherd	Copyist

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Public Documents

U.S. Congressional Globe, 1865-1870.

U.S. Congressional Record, 1871-1967.

U.S. House of Representatives. Hearings Before the Committee on Education on H. R. 12318, February 2, 8, 15, 23, 1910. 61st Cong., 2d Sess., 1909-1910.

U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Education and Labor. Report: Department of Education. Report No. 25. 40th Cong., 3d Sess., 1869.

U.S. House of Representatives. The Bureau of Education: Hearings Before the Committee on Education, House of Representatives, Concerning the Bureau of Education, June 11, 1912. 62d Cong., 2d Sess., 1911-1912.

U.S. Senate. Journal of the Senate of the United States of America. 39th Cong., 2d Sess., 1866-1867.

U.S. Senate. Operations of the United States Office of Education: Hearings Before the Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments, persuant to S. Res. 189. Part IV, 80th Cong., 2d Sess., September 27-28, 1948.

Books

A Federal University for the People. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906.

Albree, John. Charles Brooks and His Work for Normal Schools. Medford, Mass.: Press of J. C. Miller, Jr., 1907.

Anderson, H. Dewey and Eells, Walter Crosby. Alaska Natives: A Survey of Their Sociological and Educational Status. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935.

Arctander, John W. The Apostle of Alaska: The Story of William Duncan of Metlakahtla. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1909.

Babbidge, Homer D., Jr., and Rosenzweig, Robert M. The Federal Interest in Higher Education. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962.

Beach, Arthur Granville. A Pioneer College: The Story of Marietta. Chicago: Privately printed by the John F. Cuneo Company, 1935.

Beale, Howard K. The Critical Year: A Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1958.

Bentley, George R. A History of the Freedmen's Bureau. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1955.

Blair, Henry W. The Education Bill. New York: American News Co., 1887.

Blauch, Lloyd E. To Promote the Cause of Education. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953.

Boutwell, George S. Reminiscences of Sixty Years in Public Affairs. New York: McClure, Phillips & Co., 1902.

Brooks, Charles, et al. Free Education in the United States: Petition of the Town of Medford, Middlesex Co., Massachusetts, for Governmental Aid in Securing Free Education to All the Children in the United States. (39th Cong., 1st Sess.; H.R. Misc. Doc. No. 5). Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865.

Brown, Elmer Ellsworth. A Few Remarks. New York: The New York University Press, 1933.

_____. The Making of Our Middle Schools; An Account of the Development of Secondary Education in the United States. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1903.

Butler, Nicholas Murray. Across the Busy Years: Recollections and Reflections. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

Caldwell, Robert Granville. James A. Garfield: Party Chieftain. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1931.

Carrighar, Sally. Moonlight at Midday. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.

Cook, Katherine M. Public Education in Alaska. (Office of Education Bulletin 1936, No. 12.) Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936.

Cremin, Lawrence A. The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1867-1957. New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

Cubberley, Ellwood P. Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History. Revised and enlarged edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel. National Education in the United States of America. Translated by B. G. Du Pont. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1923.

Dupre, Huntley. Edward Duffield Neill: Pioneer Educator. Saint Paul, Minn.: Macalester College Press, 1949.

Eaton, John (in collaboration with Ethel Osgood Mason). Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen: Reminiscences of the Civil War with Special Reference to the Work for the Contrabands and Freedmen of the Mississippi Valley. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907.

Educational Policies Commission of the United States. Educational Responsibilities of the Federal Government. Washington: National Education Association, 1964.

_____. Federal Activities in Education. Washington: National Education Association, 1939.

_____. Public Education and the Future of America. Washington: National Education Association, 1955.

Farrand, Max (ed.). The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787. 2 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911.

Harrington, Fred Harvey. Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948.

Harris, William T. Psychologic Foundations of Education; An Attempt to Show the Genesis of the Higher Faculties of the Mind. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1898.

Hartman, Edward George. The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant. (Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, No. 545.) New York: Columbia University Press, 1948.

Holt, W. Stull (ed.). Historical Scholarship in the United States, 1876-1901: As Revealed in the Correspondence of Herbert B. Adams. (Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Sciences, Series LVI, No. 4.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1938.

Keppel, Francis. The Necessary Revolution in American Education. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966.

Kursh, Harry. The United States Office of Education: A Century of Service. Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965.

Lee, Gordon Canfield. The Struggle for Federal Aid. First Phase. A History of the Attempts to Obtain Federal Aid for the Common Schools, 1870-1890. (T.C.C.E., No. 957.) New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949.

Leidecker, Kurt F. Yankee Teacher: The Life of William Torrey Harris. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1946.

Lewis, Charles Lee. Philander Priestley Claxton: Crusader for Public Education. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1948.

Lomen, Carl J. Fifty Years in Alaska. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1954.

McMahon, Arthur W. and Millett, John D. Federal Administrators. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939.

Nelson, Martha Furber (comp.). Index by Authors, Titles, and Subjects to the Publications of the National Education Association for Its First Fifty Years, 1857-1906. Winona, Minn.: The Association, 1907.

Reid, Robert H. American Degree Mills: A Study of Their Operations and of Existing and Potential Ways to Control Them. Washington: The American Council on Education, 1959.

Rhees, William Jones (ed.). The Smithsonian Institution: Documents Relative to Its Origin and History, 1835-1899. Vols. 42 and 43 of the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901.

Rice, Jessie Pearl. J. L. M. Curry, Southerner, Statesman, and Educator. New York: King's Crown Press, 1949.

Ridge, Martin. Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of a Politician. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Rubin, Louis D., Jr. (ed.). Teach the Freeman: The Correspondence of Rutherford B. Hayes and the Slater Fund for Negro Education, 1881-1887. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959.

Rudolph, Frederick (ed.). Essays on Education in the Early Republic. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965.

Russell, James E. Federal Activities in Higher Education After the Second World War: An Analysis of the Nature, Scope, and Impact of Federal Activities in Higher Education in the Fiscal Year 1947. New York: King's Crown Press, 1951.

Smith, Darrell Hevenor. The Bureau of Education: Its History, Activities and Organization. (Institute for Government Research, Service Monographs of the United States Government, No. 14.) Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1923.

Smith, Theodore Clarke. The Life and Letters of James Abram Garfield. 2 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925.

Snyder, Richard (dir.). The U.S. Office of Education: A New International Dimension. New York: Education and World Affairs, 1964.

Steiner, Bernard C. Life of Henry Barnard: The First United States Commissioner of Education, 1867-1870. (Bureau of Education Bulletin 1919, No. 8.) Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919.

Stewart, Robert Laird. Sheldon Jackson: Pathfinder and Prospector of the Missionary Vanguard in the Rocky Mountains and Alaska. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908.

Thursfield, Richard Emmons. Henry Barnard's American Journal of Education. (Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series LXIII, No. 1.) Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1945.

Todd, Lewis P. Wartime Relations of the Federal Government and the Public Schools, 1917-1918. (Teachers College, Columbia University Contributions to Education, No. 907.) New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1945.

Wesley, Edgar B. NEA: The First Hundred Years. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957.

White, Emerson E., Bateman, Newton, and Adams, J. S. National Bureau of Education: Memorial of the National Association of State and City School Superintendents, Asking for the Establishment of a National Bureau of Education. (39th Cong., 1st Sess.; H.R. Misc. Doc. 41.) Washington: Government Printing Office, 1866.

Zook, George F. The Role of the Federal Government in Education. (The Inglis Lecture, 1945.) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945.

Articles

"A Bureaucracy for Our Children," Outlook, CXLII (March 10, 1926), 358-59.

"Administrators Three to Two Against U.S.O.E. Leadership in Curriculum Development," Nation's Schools, LXX (October, 1962), 65.

"Aggressive Plans of Commissioner Claxton," Elementary School Teacher, XII (December, 1911), 186-88.

Anderson, Melvin A. "James Abram Garfield: Scholar and Statesman," School and Society, LXXXVII (November 7, 1959), 448-50.

"A New Commissioner," Time, LXXXVI (December 31, 1965), 34.

"Another Harvardman," Time, LXXX (November 30, 1962), 66.

Arrowood, Charles F. "Young Henry Barnard, as Revealed in His Letters to Ashbel Smith," Educational Forum, XIV (March, 1950), 307-21.

Asher, John William. "Cooperative Research in Teaching and Learning," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXIX (March, 1958), 292-94.

Babbidge, Homer D. "New Role for the U. S. Office of Education?" Nation's Schools, LXVIII (September, 1961), 53.

Barnard, Henry. "Plan of Central Agency for the Advancement of Education in the United States," American Journal of Education, I (August, 1855), 134-36.

Bawden, W. T. "Reorganization of the Bureau of Education," Manual Training Magazine, XXIII (October, 1921), 131-33.

Baynham, Dorsey. "Sterling M. McMurrin, New U. S. Commissioner of Education," Saturday Review, XLIV (February 18, 1961), 66-67, 74.

Bonham, Milledge L., Jr. "Shall We Prussianize American Education?" School and Society, XXII (November 14, 1925), 620-22.

Boutwell, William O. "What's Happening in Education," PTA Magazine, LVII (January, 1963), 11.

Brown, Elmer Ellsworth. "A Message from the United States Bureau of Education," Independent, LXIX (August 4, 1910), 229-33.

_____. "Education Abroad and at Home," Journal of Education, LXV (February 28, 1907), 228-29; (March 21-28, 1907), 312-13, 341-42.

_____. "Educational Progress of the Past Fifteen Years," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, LIII (1915), 48-54.

_____. "Present Problems in the Theory of Education," Educational Review, XXIX (January, 1905), 38-61.

_____. "The United States Bureau of Education," Science, n.s., XXX (August 20, 1909), 235-36.

Brown, F. J. "Education in Governmental Reorganization," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXI (May, 1950), 437-41.

"Brownell to Detroit," American School Board Journal, CXXXIII (August, 1956), 48.

"Bureau of Education," Journal of Education, LXXIX (January 29, 1914), 126.

Butler, Nicholas M. "The Future of the Bureau of Education," Educational Review, XXI (May, 1901), 526-29.

Caliver, A. "United States Office of Education and Negro Schools," Southern Workman, LXII (May, 1933), 218-31.

"Call Me Mister," Newsweek, LXI (February 25, 1963), 88.

"Campaign to Divorce Office of Education," Nation's Schools, XLII (November, 1948), 78ff.

Canfield, James H. "Teacher, Philosopher, Friend," Review of Reviews,XXXIV (August, 1906), 164-66.

Capen, Samuel P. "Wanted: An Active Coordinated Government Bureau of Education," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CXXIX (January, 1927), 97-101.

Carter, Luther J. "Education: New Commissioner Champions Change and Reform," Science, CL (December 31, 1965), 1794-96.

Clark, D. L. and Carriker, W. R. "Educational Research and the Cooperative Research Program," Phi Delta Kappan, XLII (March, 1961), 226-30.

Claxton, Philander Priestley. "Educating a Nation," Independent, LXXXVII (August 14, 1916), 223-24.

_____. "Importance of Kindergartens in War Time," School and Society, VIII (November 23, 1918).

_____. "United States School Garden Army," Review of Reviews, LVII (April, 1918), 393-94.

"Close-ups," Overview, II (March, 1961), 36-37.

Cocking, W. D. "U. S. Office of Education," School Executive, LXXIII (December, 1953), 7.

"Commissioner McGrath," Newsweek, XXXIII (March 14, 1949), 84.

"Commissioner Thurston," Newsweek, XLI (June 29, 1953), 62.

Condit, James H. "Alaska's Health Needs," Survey, XXXIII (March 27, 1915), 701.

Cooper, William John. "Educational Finance Inquiry," Educational Record, XII (July, 1931), 333-43.

_____. "Some Responsibilities of the United States Office of Education," Educational Record, X (July, 1929), 184-90.

"Cooperative Forum Projects of the Office of Education," School and Society, XLVII (January 8, 1938), 60-61.

"Curriculum of Rural Schools: New Service in Division of Rural Education," School and Society, XXVII (May 5, 1928), 533.

Curry, J. L. M. "Reports of the Bureau of Education," Education, XVI (June, 1896), 640-41.

Curti, Merle. "William T. Harris, the Conservator," Chapter IX in The Social Ideas of American Educators, with New Chapter on the Last Twenty-five Years (Paterson, New Jersey: Littlefield Adams & Co., 1963), pp. 310-47.

"Debate in the House of Representatives on the Appropriations for the Bureau of Education," Educational Review, XLI (February, 1911), 170-92.

"Doers or Dodos?" Newsweek, LIX (May 7, 1962), 86-88.

"Dr. Earl J. McGrath's Letter of Resignation," School and Society, LXXVII (May 30, 1953), 346-47.

"Dr. Tigert's Resignation," School and Society, XXVIII (August 11, 1928), 179-80.

Draper, Andrew S. "A Federal Educational Plan Needed," Outlook, LXXXVII (October 5, 1907), 258-62.

Dunbar, M. M. "Functions and Organization of the Bureau of Education," School and Society, VI (December 8, 1917), 661-68.

Eaton, John. "Of What Use Is the Bureau of Education?" International Review, XIV (April, 1883), 284-91.

_____. "Sheldon Jackson, Alaska's Apostle and Pioneer," Review of Reviews, XIII (June, 1896), 691-96.

"Educational Events: New Federal Commissioner of Education Asks Larger Appropriations," School and Society, XIV (December 17, 1921), 572-73.

"Education and the Reindeer Industry in Alaska," School and Society, XIX (May 10, 1924), 544.

"Education Chief's Goal: Tougher Schools for U.S.," U.S. News & World Report, L (April 17, 1961), 21.

Edwards, Glen. "Fight for the Bureau of Education," Journal of Education, LXXIII (March 23, 1911), 311-14.

"Eisenhower Appoints Lee M. Thurston to Office of United States Commissioner of Education," School Executive, LXXII (July, 1953), 75.

Elliott, Edward C. "The Annual Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1908," Science, n.s., XXX (September 17, 1909), 358-59.

"Enlargement of the Bureau of Education," School Review, XXXI (December, 1923), 721-22.

"Exhibit of the Bureau of Education at the Alaska Pacific Exposition," Educational Review, XXXVII (June, 1909), 100-104.

"Exit McGrath," Newsweek, XLI (May 4, 1953), 87-88.

"Extension of the Powers of the Commissioner of Education," School Review, XXIV (March, 1916), 229-31.

"Extensions in the Work of the Alaska Division of the Bureau of Education," School and Society, XVI (July 29, 1922), 130.

Exton, Elaine. "Do School Boards Want a Federal Curriculum Service like the Agricultural Extension Service?" American School Board Journal, CXLIX (October, 1964), 77-79.

_____. "Federal Security Agency Attains Cabinet Rank," American School Board Journal, CXXVI (May, 1953), 45-46ff.

_____. "Hoover Commission Reports on Education in the Federal Government," American School Board Journal, CXVIII (June, 1949), 53-54.

_____. "How Should Our Federal Office of Education Be Staffed?" American School Board Journal, CXLIII, September, 1961), 38-39.

_____. "Office of Education in Its 85th Year," American School Board Journal, CXXV (December, 1952), 27-30.

_____. "Office of Education Reorganization Plans," American School Board Journal, CXXX (June, 1955), 51-52ff.

_____. "U. S. Education Office--Its Future," American School Board Journal, CXLIII (August, 1961), 34-36.

"Federal Commissioner of Education," School and Society, XIII (May 21, 1921), 601.

"Federal Education Forces United Under One Office," American School Board Journal, LXXXVII (December, 1933), 28.

"Federal-State Vocational Education Program," Journal of Business Education," XXV (October, 1949), 33.

"For a Better Office of Education," American School Board Journal, CX (April, 1945), 50.

French, Harold. "Duncan of Metlakahtla Deserted," Overland Monthly, LXII (October, 1913), 327-35.

Fuller, Edgar. "New U.S.O.E. Commissioner Keppel Inherits Chaos in Education at the Federal Level," Nation's Schools, LXXI (January, 1963), 121-22.

_____. "Politics of Desegregation," Nation's Schools, LXIX (May, 1962), 110.

_____. "U. S. Office of Education Reorganized for Expansion," Nation's Schools, LXIX (May, 1962), 108-109.

Galey, Charles Mills. "The Commissionership of Education," Nation, LXXXIII (July 5, 1906), 9-10.

Geare, R. I. "Reindeer Industry in Alaska," Scientific American, XCI (August 20, 1904), 131.

"General Counsel," Time, LXI (June 29, 1953), 69-70.

"Going Up Fast," Time, LXXXV (January 15, 1965), 50.

"Government Schools in Alaska," School and Society, XXVI (August 20, 1927), 228.

Graves, Frank Pierrepont. "Professional Anachronism," Nation's Schools, XI (April, 1933), 64-65.

_____. "The Controversial Subject of Federal Control in Education," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CXXIX (January, 1927), 95-96.

"Greatly Increased Appropriations Probable for the U. S. Office of Education," School and Society, LII (September 21, 1940), 227.

Greene, Maxine. "The Visibility of Harold Howe: Some Notes Toward a Profile," School and Society, XCV (January 21, 1967), 45-48.

Greene, Samuel Stillman. "The Educational Duties of the Hour," American Journal of Education, XVI (June, 1866), 229-43.

Hagie, C. E. "Alaska and Her Schools," NEA Journal, XV (June, 1926), 165-67.

Haimos, E. E., Jr. "H.E.W. after the Election," Overview, I (November, 1960), 80-81.

Harris, William Torrey. "Establishment of the Office of Commissioner of Education of the United States," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, XXXX (1901), 409-35.

_____. "President Harrison's Political Wisdom," Independent, XLIV (November 3, 1892), 15-16.

"Health When the Home Is an Igloo," Survey, XXVII (January 27, 1917), 494-95.

Hinckley, Ted C. "Sheldon Jackson as Preserver of Alaska's Native Culture," Pacific Historical Review, XXXIII (November, 1964), 411-24.

"Hint Keppel Will Push for Reform in U.S.O.E.," Nation's Schools, LXXI (January, 1963), 116.

Hobby, O. C. "Schools Remain a Local Responsibility," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXV (February, 1954), 204-206ff.

Hook, J. N. "Project English," Wisconsin Journal of Education, XCIV (April, 1962), 18-19.

Howells, William D. "Instruction of the Eskimos in the Facts of Our Civilization," Harper's, CXXXIX (October, 1919), 765-68.

Hunt, H. C. "Educational Research and National Education Policy," Journal of Educational Research, XLIX (May, 1956), 641-48.

Hurja, E. E. "Alaska, the World's Meat Shop," Overland, n.s., LXIII (February, 1914), 120-25.

Ianni, Francis A. and McNeill, Barbara D. "Organizing for Continuing Change," Saturday Review, XLVIII (June 19, 1965), 55-56, 71.

"Industrial Training for Alaskan Natives," School and Society, XXVIII (July 14, 1928), 39-40.

"Installation of Chancellor Brown," Outlook, XCIX (November 18, 1911), 644-45.

Jackson, Sheldon, "John Eaton," in the Fiftieth Anniversary Volume: 1857-1906, National Education Association (Winona, Minn.: The Association, 1907), 283-93.

Jordan, David Starr. "Colonial Lessons of Alaska," Atlantic Monthly, LXXXII (November, 1898), 577-91.

Kandel, I. L. "Education: Republican or Democrat?" School and Society, LXXVII (May 9, 1953), 298-99.

Kellogg, Louis Phelps. "Henry Barnard," Wisconsin Alumnus, XLI (February, 1940), 115-21.

Knoll, Erwin. "First Scars of the School Aid Battle," Overview, II (March, 1961), 42-43.

_____. "Gunsmoke on the New Frontier," Overview, II (May, 1961), 38-39.

Kolbe, P. R. "War Work of the United States Bureau of Education," School and Society, VII (May 25, 1918), 606-609.

Lang, Ossian H. "Commissionership of Education," Nation, LXXXIII (July 5, 1906), 8-9.

Lantis, Margaret. "The Reindeer Industry in Alaska," Arctic, III, No. 1 (April, 1950), 27-44.

Lombard, E.C. "Home Reading Courses of the United States Bureau of Education," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, LXVII (September, 1916), 267-69.

Lomen, Carl J. "Camel of the Frozen Desert," National Geographic Magazine, XXXVI (December, 1919), 538-56.

McDonough, R. H. "Twenty Years A-growing; the Library Services Branch in 1958," American Library Association Bulletin, LII (January, 1958), 23-27ff.

McGrath, Earl J. "American Education in Crisis," School and Society, LXXXI (January 22, 1955), 17-22.

_____. "Education and Political Action," Vital Speeches, XXI (September 15, 1955), 1479-82.

McMurrin, Sterling M. "Federal Government and Education," Kentucky School Journal, XL (March, 1962), 26-27.

_____. "The Real Weakness in American Schools," U.S. News and World Report, LI (August 28, 1961), 58-60.

_____. "The U. S. Office of Education: An Inside View," Saturday Review, XLVI (February 16, 1963), 78-81.

Miller, Walter. "Elmer Ellsworth Brown, the New Commissioner of Education," Southern Educational Review, III (November, 1906), 73-78.

Moore, E. C. "How Can the Bureau of Education Help the City Superintendent of Schools?" Science, n.s., XXX (October 8, 1909), 470-74.

Morris, Richard K. "Parnassus on Wheels, a Biographical Sketch of Henry Barnard, 1811-1900," Teacher Education Quarterly, XVIII (Winter, 1960-61), 45-57.

_____. "The Barnard Legacy," Teacher Education Quarterly, XVIII (Spring, 1961), 93-105.

"National Leadership in Secondary Education," School Review, XLIV (September, 1936), 481-83.

"National Teacher Education Project Planned," Art Education, XVI (January, 1963), 22.

"Nation's Office of Education," American School Board Journal, LXXXII (March, 1931), 40.

"New Commissioner of Education to Succeed Dr. William John Cooper," Nation's Schools, XI (June, 1933), 61.

"New Education Chief: Harvard's Keppel Takes Over," U. S. News and World Report," LIII (December 24, 1963), 13.

"New Federal Commissioner of Education Asks Larger Appropriations," School and Society, XIV (December 17, 1921), 572-73.

"New Quarters of the Bureau of Education," School and Society, V (June 30, 1917), 768-69.

"New Team to Spend the Billions in School Aid," U. S. News and World Report, LX (January 3, 1966), 12.

"N. H. R. Dawson," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, XXXIV (1895), 208.

"No Future," Time, LII (July 12, 1948), 37.

Obourn, E. S. "How the United States Office of Education Plans to Assist in Meeting the Crisis in Science Teaching," California Journal of Secondary Education, XXXII (March, 1957), 177-81.

"Office of Education," New Republic, CXLVII (December 8, 1962), 6-7.

"Office of Education Transferred," California Journal of Elementary Education, VIII (August, 1939), 5.

"Organization," Congressional Digest, V (May, 1926), 151-52.

Parker, Franklin. "Francis Keppel of Harvard: Pied Piper of American Education," School and Society, XCI (March 9, 1963), 126-28.

Patton, R. D. "Whither the U. S. Office of Education?" Journal of Higher Education, XXXIII (November, 1962), 443-45.

"People of the Week," U. S. News and World Report, XLI (December 7, 1956), 20.

"Petition for a Federal Department of Education," School Review, XXIX (December, 1921), 726-28.

"Pro and Con Argument on Education Bill," Congressional Digest, III (February, 1924), 159-62.

"Quitting Time," Newsweek, LXVII (April 18, 1966), 37.

"Radio Services of the United States Office of Education," California Schools, XI (March, 1940), 97-100.

Ray, Dorothy Jean. "Sheldon Jackson and the Reindeer Industry of Alaska," Journal of Presbyterian History, XLIII (June, 1965), 71-99.

Redefer, F. L. "Washington Dizzy," Frontiers of Democracy, VII (May, 1941), 240-43.

"Regarding the Civilian Morale Service of the Office of Education," School and Society, LIV (November 15, 1941), 434.

"Reorganize U. S. Office of Education," Chicago School Journal, XLIV (October, 1962), 35.

"Reorganization," School and Society, LXXIII (March 24, 1951), 187.

"Reorganization in the Bureau of Education," Educational Review, XXXVII (September, 1909), 215-16.

"Reports of the Bureau of Education," Educational Review, XXX (October, 1905), 318-24.

"Resignation Interpreted as Protest," Nation's Schools, XLII (July, 1948), 25.

"Resignation of Dr. Harris," Independent, LXI (August 23, 1906), 469-70.

"Retirement of Commissioner Claxton," School and Society, XIV (July 2, 1921), 10-11.

Richey, H. G. "Streamlining the Office of Education," Elementary School Journal, LI (April, 1951), 419-22.

Rickoff, Andrew Jackson. "A National Bureau of Education," American Journal of Education, XVI (June, 1866), 283-97.

Schrag, Peter. "The New Pedagogy," Reporter, XXXV (September 22, 1966), 58-59.

Schuchat, Theodore. "Moving Day for the U. S. Office," Overview, II (August, 1961), 28-29.

Sheats, P. H. "Forums--Under Cultivation," Journal of Adult Education, XI (January, 1939), 63-65.

Sherrill, Robert G. "Guidelines to Frustration," Nation, CCIV (January 16, 1967), 69-74.

Smith, Glenn. "A Cabinet Post for Education: History and Prospect," Southwestern Philosophy of Education Society Proceedings, XVII (Norman: College of Education, University of Oklahoma, 1967), 30-37.

Sonnenfeld, J. "An Arctic Reindeer Industry: Growth and Decline," Geographical Review, XLIX (January, 1959), 761-94.

"Strengthening the U. S. Office of Education," National Elementary Principal, XXIV (April, 1945), 44-45.

Studebaker, John W. "Shall Party Politicians Run Our Schools?" American School Board Journal, CXXI (February, 1951), 28-30.

_____. "State of the Schools and Activities of the Office of Education During the Past Year," School and Society, XLV (January 9, 1937), 66-69.

_____. "United States Office of Education," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCXXXV (September, 1944), 62-68.

"Tangled Office of Education," Nation's Schools, XLVII (April, 1951), 86-88.

"The Bureau of Education," Popular Science Monthly, LXIX (September, 1906), 283-85.

"The Department of Education at Washington, 1867-1870," American Journal of Education, XXX (March, 1888), 193-99.

"The Fourth R--Rigor," Time, LXXVII (April 14, 1961), 76.

"The Head of the Class," Time, LXXXVI (October 15, 1965), 60-62, 67-68.

"The Moderate," Time, LXVIII (December 10, 1956), 81.

"Thinker in Education," Outlook, XCIII (November 20, 1909), 611-12.

Thurston, Lee M. "What of the Future for the U. S. Office of Education," Nation's Schools, XLIX (January, 1952), 42-43.

Tigert, John J. "Activities of the United States Bureau of Education," School and Society, XVI (August 12, 1922), 169-75.

"Toward a Stronger Office of Education," NEA Journal, XXXIV (March, 1945), 53-54.

"Tribute to Dr. Claxton," School and Society, XIV (September 10, 1921), 152-53.

"Uncle Sam's Reindeer Farm," Literary Digest, XLVIII (February 21, 1914), 373-74.

Updegraff, Harlan. "The United States Bureau of Education," American School Board Journal, XLIV (May, 1912), 13-15.

"United States Government and Negro Education," School and Society, XXXII (September 27, 1930), 421.

"United States Office of Education Seriously Threatened," Elementary School Journal, XXXII (May, 1932), 641-43.

"U. S. Office of Education," Congressional Digest, XXV (February, 1946), 39.

"U. S. Office of Education," Congressional Digest, XXXIII (November, 1954), 265ff.

"U. S. Office of Education Wartime Commission," American Association of University Professors Bulletin, XXVIII (February, 1942), 46-49.

"Vacancy in Washington," Newsweek, XLVII (June 25, 1956), 87.

Walsh, G. E. "Alaskan Reindeer--the Camel of the North," Scientific American, LXXVII (September 4, 1897), 151.

Ward, Karl. "A Study of the Introduction of Reindeer into Alaska," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXIV (December, 1956), 245-55.

White, Emerson E. "National Bureau of Education," American Journal of Education, XVI (March, 1866), 177-86.

White, S. H. "A National Bureau of Education," American Journal of Education, XV (March, 1865), 180-84.

Wilbur, Ray L. "Federal Lookout on Education," Journal of Education, CXV (February 15, 1932), 164-65.

Williams, Frank B. "John Eaton, Jr., Editor, Politician, and School Administrator," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, X (December, 1951), 291-94.

"Willing and Able," Time, LIII (February 28, 1949), 69-70.

Wilson, J. Ordman. "Richards, Zalmon," NEA Journal of Proceedings and Addresses, XXXIX (1900), 713-14.

Winship, A. E. "Federal Commissioner in Action," Journal of Education, CXII (October 20, 1930), 285.

_____. "United States Commissioners of Education," Journal of Education, LXXXIII (March 30, May 4-25, 1916), 339-40, 483-84, 509-10, 541-52, 563-64.

Woodring, Paul. "The New U. S. Commissioner of Education," Saturday Review, XLV (December 15, 1962), 41.

Zook, George F. "Educational Program for Relief and Reconstruction," School and Society, XXXVIII (December 23, 1933), 813-18.

_____. "National Planning in Education," Journal of Educational Sociology, VIII (December 1934), 223-30.

"Zook Takes Education Helm," Journal of Education, CXVI (September 4, 1933), 348-49.

Newspapers and Periodicals

Christian Science Monitor, 1964-1967.

Education for Victory, 1942-1945.

Higher Education, 1945-1965.

New York Daily Tribune, 1867-1900.

New York Times, 1900-1967.

School Life, 1918-1965.

Washington Post, February 27, 1894.

Reports

A Federal Education Agency for the Future: Report of the Committee on Mission and Reorganization of the U. S. Office of Education. OE-10010. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1961.

Advisory Committee on Education. Committee Findings and Recommendations: Federal Relations to Education. Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1931.

_____. Committee Report: Federal Government and Education. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938.

An Evaluation of the Feasibility of Native Industry in Northwestern Alaska. A Report to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, United States Department of the Interior by Arthur D. Little, Inc. n.p.: multilithed, 1963.

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education, 1868-1965. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868-1966.

[Chase, Francis S.]. A Report on an Administrative Survey of the U. S. Office of Education of the Federal Security Agency. Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1950.

Quattlebaum, Charles A. Federal Education Activities and Educational Issues Before Congress: A Report Prepared in the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress. Vol. II, Part 3: Survey of Federal Educational Activities. Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1951.

Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1868. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868.

Report on the Work of the Bureau of Education for the Natives of Alaska, 1910-1927. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910-1928.

Soviet Commitment to Education: Report of the First Official U. S. Education Mission to the U. S. S. R., with an Analysis of Recent Educational Reforms. USOE Bulletin 1959, No. 16. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1959.

Reference Works

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1961.

Brewer, W. Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men, from 1540 to 1872. Montgomery: Barrett & Brown, Steam Printers and Book Binders, 1872.

Current Biography. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1942-1963.

Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931. Vols. I, II, III, V, VIII, IX, XIII, XV, XXI.

National Cyclopedia of American Biography. New York: James D. White and Co., 1907. Vol. IX.

Who Was Who in America. Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Company, 1950. Vol. II.

Theses and Dissertations

Agnew, Walker F. "The Federal Government in Education from 1855 to 1900." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1949.

Alexander, Philip Wade. "John Eaton, Jr.--Preacher, Soldier, and Educator." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1939.

Allbee, Lewis. "Education as an Implement of U.S. Foreign Policy, 1938-1948." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1948.

Anderson, Kenneth C. "Biography of Emerson White." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Western Reserve University, 1952.

Arscott, John R. "Moral Freedom and the Educative Process: A Study in the Educational Philosophy of William Torrey Harris." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1949.

Atkinson, Stewart B. "The High School Victory Corps." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1950.

Axt, Richard G. "Higher Education and the Federal Government: The Development of Federal Policy Toward Higher Education." Harvard University, 1952. Published as The Federal Government and Financing Higher Education. New York: Columbia University Press, 1952.

Barber, Herbert L. "The Development and Operation of the Civilian Education Requirements Program of the United States Office of Education and Its Effects on the Educational Institutions of the Nation, September, 1950-July, 1952." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1953.

Brougher, John F. "The Program of the Occupational Information and Guidance Service, United States Office of Education, 1938-1948." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1949.

Buis, Anne G. "A Historical Study of the Role of the Federal Government in the Financial Support of Education, with Special Reference to Legislative Proposals and Action." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1953.

Calkins, Thomas Vincent. "Educating the Alaska Natives." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1931.

Fisk, Franklin Gregory. "Is the National Science Foundation Becoming a New Federal Educational Agency?" Microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1963.

Ford, Thomas Benjamin. "The Educational Contributions of the U.S. Commissioners of Education, 1867-1928." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, American University, 1933.

Franzen, Charles Kugler. "Life Adjustment Education: Basic Concepts, Antecedents, and Later Manifestations." Microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1961.

Gauerke, Warren E. "The Attitude and Activity of Labor Concerning Federal Funds for Education, 1914-1947." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1949.

Hartley, Leslie Earle. "A Critical Study of the United States Office of Education Since 1933." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Colorado, 1941.

Henderson, Lester Dale. "The Development of Education in Alaska, 1867-1931." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1935.

Hinckley, Theodore Charles, Jr. "The Alaska Labors of Sheldon Jackson, 1877-1890." Microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, University of Indiana, 1961.

Jenkins, Ralph C. "Henry Barnard, Progressive Educator of Teachers." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1937.

Kolbrenner, Bernard J. "William T. Harris, Superintendent of Schools, St. Louis, Missouri, 1868-1880." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1942.

Lloyd, John H. "An Analysis of the First National Commission for Life Adjustment Education, 1945-50." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, American University, 1950.

Lykes, Richard Wayne. "A History of the Division of Higher Education, United States Office of Education, from Its Creation in 1911 until the Establishment of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1953." Microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, American University, 1960.

Messersmith, James Carl. "The United States Office of Education: Its Administrative Status in the Federal Hierarchy." Microfilmed Ed.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1956.

Montgomery, Mollie. "The Organization and Administration of the Bureau of Education on the National Government of the United States." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Texas, 1926.

Morgan, Jack W. "Factors Influencing the Passage of Federal Legislation for Vocational Education." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1951.

Olson, Olaf Elbert. "History of Education in the Territory of Alaska." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Washington, 1931.

Pettit, Lawrence Kay. "The Policy Process in Congress: Passing the Higher Education Academic Facilities Act of 1963." Microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1965.

Poole, Charles P. "Two Centuries of Education in Alaska." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1947.

Rodeheaver, Joseph Newton, Jr. "The Relation of the Federal Government to Civic Education: A Study of Certain Aspects of the Growth and Development of the United States Office of Education with Special Reference to Civic Education." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1951.

Sava, Samuel G. "An Evaluation of Section 1009 of Title X of the National Defense Education Act in Improving Statistical Services in State Education Agencies." Microfilmed Ed.D. dissertation, American University, 1963.

Stine, Dorothy Pearce. "The Role of the United States in the International Exchange of Teachers and Students." Microfilmed Ed.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1954.

Torosian, John, Jr. "A Study of Selected Proposals for Educational Planning at the National Level." Microfilmed Ed.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1962.

Wright, Isaac Miles. "History of the United States Bureau of Education." Unpublished Ped.D. dissertation, New York University, 1916.

Zeitlin, Harry. "Federal Relations in American Education, 1933-1943: A Study of the New Deal Efforts and Innovations." Microfilmed Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1958.

Manuscript Collections

Alaska. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

Banks, Nathaniel Prentice. Papers. Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Illinois.

Barnard, Henry. Collected Papers. Watkinson Library, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut.

_____. Papers--Will S. Monroe Collection. Fales Collection, New York University Library, New York, New York.

Central Classified File (1907-1936) of the Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior. Vol. II. Typescripts in Record Group 48, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

Dawson, N. H. R. Papers. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Eaton, John. Papers. Special Collections Library, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Garfield, James A. Papers. Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Gilman, Daniel Coit. Papers. Johns Hopkins University Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

Johnson, Andrew. Papers. Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Oriental University. Department of Justice Mail and Files Division. File No. 212077. Record Group 60, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

Records of the Office of Education. Record Group 12, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. Papers. Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.

Willey, Waitman Thomas. Papers. State and Regional History Collection, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Wright, Edith A. and Evans, Henry Ridgely. "The United States Office of Education: History, Functions, and Activities, with a Brief Sketch of Each Commissioner of Education." Unfinished typescript in the Office of Education Library, Washington, D. C., 1939.

Personal Interviews

Barrett, Eugene. June 28, 1966.

Derthick, Lawrence G. June 18, 1966.

Goodykoontz, Bess. November 4, 1965.

Naisbett, John. March 29, 1967.

Studebaker, John Ward. February 16, 1967.