

OUR PUBLIC-SCHOOL SYSTEM: EVILS IN BALTIMORE.

DURING a recent journey extending over a period of more than five months made for the purpose of studying our public schools, I collected a large amount of material, the essential features of which will be published in this and in a number of succeeding articles in the FORUM, under the auspices of which magazine the travels were made.

In undertaking this work my aim was not only to find what methods of instruction were followed in our public schools, but also to discover the reasons why the schools of some localities were so far inferior to those of others. I hoped in this manner to learn something concerning the causes underlying certain educational evils, fully conscious of the fact that the first logical step in permanently raising the standard of the schools must necessarily be the eradication of the causes of their inferiority. This necessitated two distinct series of observations: one for the purpose of learning the actual condition of the schools of any given locality, and the other for the purpose of studying the general management of the schools of that locality, in order that the connection between the manner in which the schools were conducted and their general degree of excellence might be discovered.

In studying the condition of the schools, I relied upon one thing only, namely, personal observation of the instruction as carried on in the class-room. I placed no reliance whatever upon reports printed by school officials regarding the condition of their schools, for the reason that experience had taught me that many of these officers displayed a wonderful talent for praising the institutions in their charge. I endeavored, therefore, to witness as much actual teaching as possible, in consequence of which I passed, with few exceptions, all the school hours of every school day during the entire trip, which lasted continuously from January 7 to June 25 (of this year), in class-rooms. I was thus enabled to observe upward of twelve hundred teachers at their work. In all, the schools of thirty-six cities and some twenty institutions for the training of teachers were visited.

In the investigations made concerning the general management of the schools, the study of the by-laws of the various boards of educa-

tion proved of some value. For the rest, I was necessarily compelled to rely, in great part, upon information received from superintendents, principals, teachers, and others in position to know how the schools of their own locality were conducted. And, when possible, I attended board and teachers' meetings, as well as teachers' institutes.

The length of time devoted to the study of the schools of any particular locality varied considerably. It depended upon whether the conditions were comparatively simple or complicated, upon the number of schools in that locality, and, to a great extent, upon the special information which I sought there. In some cities nearly two weeks were spent in collecting the required data, while in others these were comfortably obtained in one day, or even less. The tour was made under exceptionally favorable circumstances, as I was limited neither in regard to time nor to the territory to be covered. I consequently selected my own route, changing it whenever I thought it advisable to do so, and continued my researches until the number of observations made justified my drawing certain definite conclusions. The following places were visited: Boston, Quincy, Lowell, Worcester, Springfield, and Holyoke, Mass.; Hartford, Conn.; New York City, Brooklyn, Yonkers, and Buffalo, N.Y.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Baltimore, Md.; Washington, D. C.; Detroit, Ann Arbor, Lansing, Jackson, Howell, and Ionia, Mich.; Toledo, Cleveland, and Cincinnati, Ohio; Indianapolis and La Porte, Ind.; Chicago, Peoria, and Moline, Ill.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Davenport, Des Moines, and State Centre, Iowa; St. Louis, Mo.; and St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn. Besides these the schools of Toronto, Canada, a number of State normal schools, and a few country district schools were visited. It may not be inopportune to remark here that before undertaking the study of our own school system, I spent a large part of my time during a stay of nearly two years abroad devoted to the study of educational questions in visiting the schools of various European countries.

As to the criticisms which will be found in these articles, I beg that they be accepted in the spirit in which they are written, for it is far from my purpose to inflict injury upon any one. It is to be hoped, however, that the reader will bear in mind one thing which is too frequently forgotten, but which I never forgot, for the reason that it is the foundation upon which these articles rest, namely, that the school exists for the benefit of the child and not for the benefit of boards of education, superintendents, and teachers. In these articles the child's side will be presented, and the spirit in which they are written

is the same as that in which an advocate pleads for his client. Once having taken this stand, I deem it my duty to present the child's case fairly and squarely, frankly and freely, and without fear or favor, just as it appears to me.

Before beginning the detailed description of *particular* schools, a brief *general* survey of the American school system will be in place:

The characteristic feature of our school system may perhaps be best defined by the single word "chaos," as it lies in the fact that each city, each county, and in some States each country district, has practically the privilege of conducting its schools in accordance with any whim upon which it may decide, being restricted only by certain State laws of secondary importance. Consequently, unless chaos be preferable to law and order, there is no foundation for the opinion held by so many that our public schools are the best in the world. That the schools of different localities should vary greatly in regard to their degree of excellence, owing to the peculiarity of the American system, is but natural.

But what is the educational standard by means of which the degree of excellence of a school may be measured? Upon this point opinions differ. Many believe that there is no science of education, that school is a place where children must be put through certain definitely fixed mechanical processes, that there can be no deviation from these, and that any attempt to vary them must emanate from a brain that verges on the border of insanity. And even to-day there may be found such persons as those of whom Rousseau speaks in his "*Emile*," and who are of the opinion that because it is essential for some persons in adult life to pass along roads not strewn with roses, it is right purposely to thrust burdens upon the young, purposely to rob childhood of its happiness, so that if troubles and sorrows come in later life, the child will have become accustomed to bear them. On the other hand, there are those who believe in the preservation of the happiness of childhood, and who think that the means with which to gladden the early years of life are at hand. They believe in the science of education. They recognize that certain definite natural laws of mental development have, during the courses of centuries, been discovered, that certain educational principles and methods have been founded upon these, and that such men as Comenius, Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart have not lived in vain.

Owing to the fact that the matter has never been carefully investigated, it cannot be stated upon direct evidence that natural methods

ultimately produce better and wiser men and women than the mechanical. But there is an abundance of evidence to prove that the life of the child is rendered happy by natural methods, while the mechanical render it burdensome and miserable. The reason for this is that natural instruction aims at giving the child his mental food in a digestible and palatable form, in the form in which he craves for it, while mechanical instruction is simply a stuffing process, its aim being to force a certain quantity of mental food upon the child in a given period of time, utterly regardless of his tastes or digestive powers.

It must, however, not be supposed that one can teach naturally, instead of mechanically, simply because he is ordered to do so, in the same manner that he can prepare to order a steak instead of a chop. For between mechanical and natural instruction lies the science of education, a road unlimited in extent and abounding in difficult passes, a considerable portion of which must be traversed before one learns to apply, in an intelligent manner, the principles of psychology to teaching, and to use the energies of the child to the best possible advantage. In regard to the methods in vogue in our own country, I found that while the schools of some cities have not risen perceptibly above the purely mechanical stage, those of others are striving toward naturalness, a few having already advanced considerably. Yet, owing to the fact that the science of teaching has not yet taken deep root in the United States, thorough philosophical teaching is but seldom found here.

Another thing remains to be considered before the discussion of class-room work can be profitably begun. As the character of the instruction which the child receives represents but the result of the general management of the schools—the resultant, as it were, of the action of a number of forces—to observe the teacher at her work without a knowledge of the whole school machinery would be observing with but half an eye. A brief sketch of the formation and action of the various elements which enter into the management of a school system will therefore be given at the outset. With this knowledge the reader will the more readily perceive that the description of ludicrous teaching found from time to time in my articles is not given for the purpose of ridiculing the teacher, but for the purpose of showing the results of unscientific—yes, at times pitifully poor—management. Besides, this sketch will be the means of showing clearly why the schools of different localities vary so much and where the roots of all educational evils must be sought.

The elements which exert an influence upon the schools of each locality are four in number: the public at large, the board of education, the superintendent and his staff, and the teachers.

First. *The public at large.* As to the attitude of the public toward the schools, little need be said for the reason that in the large majority of instances it is entirely negative. I do not here refer to that form of interest which is found nearly everywhere in abundance, and which manifests itself among the citizens of most localities in a certain pride in their own particular schools, which they consider the best in the country, but which pride is founded neither upon a knowledge of what is going on in other schools, or even in their own schools, nor upon the slightest knowledge of the science of education; but I refer to an intelligent interest, an interest sufficiently deep to lead one to follow closely the actions of the board of education, superintendent, and teachers, and to seek some knowledge of the scientific development of children. If but one in a hundred would be interested to this extent, I believe that most of our flagrant educational evils would disappear. It is indeed incomprehensible that so many loving mothers whose greatest care appears to be the welfare of their children, will so thoughtlessly resign the fate of their little ones to the tender mercies of the ward politicians, who control the schools of a large number of cities, and many of whom have no scruples in placing the children into class-rooms the atmosphere of which is not fit for human beings to breathe, and in charge of teachers whose demeanor toward them is rather that of stern officers of the law than that of friend and guide.

Secondly. *The boards of education.* These boards are selected according to whims. Some are elected by the people, others are appointed, the appointing power lying in the hands of mayors, judges, or councilmen; or a board of education (as at Buffalo) may be simply a committee of the common council. In some cities the board of education is formed by two or three distinct bodies, each of which is so constituted that while it has enough independent power to create a considerable amount of mischief on its own account, it is sufficiently dependent upon the others to prove that the latter are at fault when anything goes amiss. As to the attitude of the board toward the schools, this varies greatly in different localities, the actions of some being governed, to a considerable extent, by selfish motives, whether political or otherwise, while those of others are, in the main, unselfish.

Thirdly. *The superintendent and his staff.* The office of superin-

tendent is, in my opinion, one the importance of which cannot be over-estimated. Indeed, in the study of the educational conditions in any given locality, the superintendent may be regarded as the central figure, as a careful consideration of what he is, what he does, as well as the circumstances under which he labors, will scarcely fail to point out the reasons why the schools of that locality are upon a comparatively high or low level. When he is a thorough educator (that is, when he has made a profound study of the science of education), spares no pains in instructing his teachers in both the theory and practice of teaching, and is fully sustained in his actions by the board of education, the schools in his charge, if there be not too many, improve rapidly and ever continue to advance. But a modification of any one of these conditions impedes the progress of the schools. However thorough and enthusiastic a superintendent may be, if the board be not in sympathy with his movements he is hampered and cannot do his best. If he be ever so diligent a worker, but not sufficiently conversant with the science of education, the teaching will be liable to retain a mechanical stamp. Should he possess the necessary qualifications, but fail to devote a sufficient amount of time and energy to the instruction of his teachers, the schools will not be sufficiently benefited by his knowledge. And if he is the right man and does all in his power to raise the standard of his teachers, the extent to which his good influence will be felt will depend both upon the qualifications of the latter and the number of teachers in his charge.

But even when the superintendent labors under very unfavorable circumstances he seldom fails to stamp the schools with his individual pedagogical ideas, thus giving the education in his schools at least a tendency in a certain direction, provided he remains long enough—say four or five years—in any one city. Superintendents do not, however, as a rule remain long in any one place. They frequently, for political or other reasons, fail to be reappointed, or they accept other positions by reason of higher salaries. Superintendents of small cities not uncommonly go from one locality to another for a consideration of one or two hundred dollars per annum. By reason of these changes the schools of many cities are always in a transitional stage, never reaching any distinctive character.

One of the above points—that relating to the number of teachers in any given locality—requires special consideration. As the number of teachers which a single individual can supervise is limited, in the larger cities the superintendent is furnished with one or more assist-

ants, whose duties are, to a great extent, similar to those of the superior officer. Without entering into the details of the matter here, the general statement may be made that in large cities the duty of raising the standard of the teachers devolves mainly upon the assistant-superintendents. Consequently an assistant-superintendent, as well as a superintendent, should be a thorough educator, a fact which is unfortunately but too frequently forgotten.

Lastly. *The teachers.* This is, after all, the greatest problem. If all teachers were perfect, how little need there would be for troubling with political corruption and superintendents. But, as has already been intimated, this is far from the case. Indeed, the professional weakness of the American teacher is the greatest sore spot of the American schools. We find earnestness, conscientiousness, and enthusiasm in abundance, but these characteristics, favorable as they are, no more constitute expert pedagogical qualifications than they do expert medical or legal qualifications. The truth is that, as a rule, our teachers are too weak to stand alone, and consequently need constantly to be propped up by the supervisory staff. It is for this reason that the quality of the schools of any given locality depends to so great an extent upon the ability of a single, or at most a few, individuals. The weakness of the American teachers can be well observed in those cities where only the best obtainable are employed.

The graduate of a good city training-school represents, generally speaking, the best which this country produces in the way of teachers. When the training received at one of these institutions is compared with that received at a normal school of Germany, the limited extent of the former becomes apparent. The State normal schools are conducted upon broader bases, it is true, but then their requirements for admission are in most instances much lower. But the true professional incompetency of our teachers, taken all in all, does not become fully apparent until we consider that not more than a small percentage of persons engaged in teaching in the public schools of this country are normal-school graduates. Of those teaching (besides the normal-school graduates) some are high-school graduates, others have simply attended a normal school, high-school, or academy for one or more terms, while a very large number of licenses to teach are granted to those whose education does not extend beyond that received at a grammar school, with or without a little extra coaching.

Then, again, each city is, to a great extent, free to make its own regulations regarding the qualifications required for granting teachers'

licenses, and entirely free to place the power of appointing its teachers in the hands of any individual or individuals whom it may select for the purpose. And once a teacher is appointed, her position is, in many cities, secure. The office of teacher in the average American school is perhaps the only one in the world which can be retained indefinitely in spite of the grossest negligence and incompetency. And it is in the appointment and discharge of superintendents and teachers that politics plays the greatest mischief in the American schools.

It is not my purpose to decry the good done by our training-schools. It is nevertheless true that the professional knowledge received at these institutions does little more than open the book to the student, and that unless the studies be continued after graduation the value of the scientific pedagogical training soon becomes lost, and the trained teacher soon falls to the level of the one who has had no training. And it is upon the superintendent that the duty of continuing this training will devolve until we enact laws to the effect that no teacher shall be employed in a public school of this country who has not had a thorough professional training.

We may now enter upon the discussion of class-room work. In this discussion I shall begin with the schools of those cities where, in my opinion, the nature of the instruction is least scientific, and gradually ascend the scale, describing, as far as possible, in groups, those schools which most resemble each other. But for the reason that so much space has been devoted to the introductory remarks, I shall consider in the remainder of this article the schools of only one city. I have selected for the opening the schools of Baltimore, because they were the first of a group of schools of a certain order that came under my observation. My first illustration will be that of an arithmetic lesson which I witnessed in an "advanced first grade" (actually the second school year) in one of Baltimore's schools. This lesson will indicate, to a great extent, in what a soul-inspiring manner from one-fourth to one-third of the time is spent in the average primary school of that city during the first two years of school life.

On entering this class-room a large blackboard entirely covered with problems in addition, in endless variety, struck my eye. First there were such columns as—

$$1 + 1 =$$

$$2 + 1 =$$

$$3 + 1 =$$

$$1 + 2 =$$

$$2 + 2 =$$

$$3 + 2 =$$

running down to $10 + 1 =$ and $10 + 2 =$, respectively.

Then there were columns with mixed figures, four lines deep, five lines deep, and ten lines deep; next, examples in horizontal lines, such as $3 + 6 + 8 + 4 =$, and columns where each succeeding figure was 5 greater than the one before: thus, 1, 6, 11, 16; 2, 7, 12, 17; and so on.

"We are just adding," the teacher said to me. "I am very particular with their adding. I devote from one and a half to one and three-quarter hours a day to this subject, and I will tell you," she continued, growing quite enthusiastic, "my pupils can add."

Then she faced the class and said, "Start that column over again."

A little boy (apparently the leader of the orchestra) then began to tap on the blackboard with a stick, beating time upon the figures, while the class sang in perfect rhythm: "1 and 1 are 2; 2 and 1 are 3; 3 and 1 are 4," and so on, until the column was completed; next they began with 2 and 1, 2 and 2, etc. (When later they came to 5 and 8 are 13, 5 and 9 are 14, the rhythm was retained, but the effect was changed.) Next came a column of 2s, the children adding "2 and 2 are 4; 4 and 2 are 6," and so on.

The teacher here said to me, "Now I shall let them add that column mentally." Upon receiving such an order, the children cried out, "2, 4, 6, 8, 10."

I discovered, therefore, that this teacher's idea of the difference between written and mental arithmetic consisted in nothing further than that in mental arithmetic the "and (2) are" is left out. Thus 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 is mental arithmetic, while 2 and 2 are 4, 4 and 2 are 6 is the other kind.

When the children had reached the bottom of the last column in sight I thought that they had finished. But here I was mistaken. The board had two faces and turned on pivots. In an instant it was swung around, and then I discovered that the other side of the board was likewise completely covered with columns in addition.

When this exercise was finished the children had some reading. The reading was fully as mechanical as the arithmetic. It amounted simply to calling off words. Not only was there no expression, but there was not even an inflection, or a pause at a comma or a period. Nor did the teacher ever correct mispronounced words or make any attempt at teaching them how to read. Before the children began reading the lesson there was a ludicrously mechanical introduction, including the calling off of the words placed at the top of the page, thus:

"Page 56, Lesson XVIII., The Dog and the Rat. Dog, Rat, Catch, Room, Run, Smell, Wag, Jump." And then came the story.

Besides reading and arithmetic, there is in this grade oral spelling, a subject which is by no means neglected. This exercise is carried on both individually and in concert. The children also have instruction in penmanship. The remainder of the time is occupied as follows: Drawing twenty minutes twice a week, an object-lesson of thirty minutes once a week, and music fifteen minutes daily.

Now, as to the modifications of the above methods in the various schools, I found but few. In arithmetic this was mainly confined to the skill with which the children at the board wielded the baton while pointing to the figures and beating time. In some cases this procedure was extremely complicated and still more ludicrous. Reading-lessons, such as the one described above, I found in abundance, and the results were, as might be expected, miserable. In one class I found that the children did use inflections while reading. They religiously raised their voices two tones at commas and dropped them four tones at periods.

I asked one of the primary principals whether she believed in the professional training of teachers.

"I do *not*," she answered emphatically. "I speak from experience. A graduate of the Maryland Normal School once taught under me, and she wasn't as good a teacher as those who came from the High School."

One of the primary teachers said to me: "I formerly taught in the higher grades, but I had an attack of nervous prostration some time ago, and the doctor recommended rest. So I now teach in the primary, because teaching primary children does not tax the mind."

I had occasion to attend a number of geography lessons. Such a thing as teaching geography from pictures, from the molding-board and the like, is, as far as I was able to discover, unknown in Baltimore. It is all text-book work, and the words in the book are studied *verbatim*. In the upper primary grade, where geography is begun, the children learn how to rattle off definitions quite marvellously. I heard in one class the recitation of geographical definitions and of the boundaries of States in concert. In the grammar schools text-books are used in studying geography. The teacher opened her text-book to the page which contained the subject of the day's lesson and asked—or rather read aloud—the questions which were printed upon the page; and in reply the children endeavored to recite, word for word, the text-book answers to these questions. I met one principal who was quite enthusiastic, but as she was hampered in her work by lack

of professional training, the teaching throughout her school did not differ much from that of other schools. She informed me, while speaking of natural-science work, that physics was studied quite thoroughly in the schools of Baltimore.

"Do the children experiment for themselves," I asked, "or do the teachers perform the experiments?"

"Oh, we have no experiments," she said. "We learn our physics from books. The city supplies us with no apparatus. We are at liberty to experiment if we desire. A friend of mine, a principal, informed me that she tried an experiment once, but it was a failure, and she vowed that she would never dream of making another one."

In one class, where they were having some physiology, in answer to the question, "What is the effect of alcohol on the system?" I heard a ten-year-old cry out at the top of his voice and at the rate of a hundred miles an hour, "It—dwarfs—the—body,—mind,—and—soul,—weakens—the—heart,—and—enfeebles—the—memory."

"And what are the effects of tobacco?" asked the teacher.

In answer to this, one boy called off, in rapid succession, a longer list of diseases than most physicians are acquainted with.

"What brings on these diseases, excessive or moderate smoking?"

"Moderate smoking," was the prompt reply.

Now, what do these illustrations mean? Simply that I did not succeed in discovering any evidence that the science of education had as yet found its way into the public schools of Baltimore. Is the pedagogical law requiring that the time and energies of the child be used to the best possible advantage taken into account when an hour and a half are devoted daily for two years to addition, and perhaps to a little subtraction; or when in teaching children to read two years or more are required to attain results which (as the schools of a number of cities prove) might be attained in six months or less? Or is the law that the study of things must precede the study of words regarded when objective work is almost entirely neglected and the sciences of physics and physiology are learned practically from books alone? What is there of a scientific nature in the teaching of geography—that study which can be made the means of opening channels of interest in so many directions—when the instruction dwindles down to little, if any, more than hearing the children recite the words which they have learned *verbatim* from a text-book? Is the fundamental law of pedagogy not absolutely ignored when all interest is crushed out of the process of learning, and what can be less interesting to little children than the computation of

abstract numbers by the hour, or the calling off of words in a meaningless way from a reading-book? Or is there anything less interesting and more burdensome than learning text-books by heart, and especially when the words convey little meaning to the learner? And, finally, what is there in the teaching above described which could not be undertaken by any one who is able to read, write, and cipher?

Now, the causes of this deplorable condition of affairs in Baltimore are not difficult to discover.

First. *The citizens* of Baltimore glory in the fact that their schools are among the best in the country; or, as the more modest claim, second to none but those of Boston. And if things are perfect or nearly so, why interfere?

Secondly. *The Board of Education* of Baltimore is a purely political organization, its members being elected, one for each ward, by the members of the Common Council. But while each member of the School Board is officially elected by a majority vote of the Common Council, he is—so far as I have been able to learn—practically appointed by the member of the Common Council from his own ward, that is, he is nominated by him and the nomination rarely fails to receive the official confirmation. The Board of Education of the city of Baltimore is, therefore, a product of the ward politicians.

Thirdly. *The supervision is by far too meagre.* While the city has some twelve hundred public-school teachers, the supervisory staff consists of only two members. That of Boston consists of seven members, although the number of teachers in that city does not exceed thirteen hundred. Besides, the schools of Baltimore have not even supervising principals, each principal having charge of a class of his own which he teaches during the entire school period.

Fourthly. *The schools of Baltimore are almost entirely in the hands of untrained teachers.* Of those now in the system some are high-school graduates, others have had no high-school education, and but comparatively few have ever received any professional training whatever. Further, political influence appears to play a much greater part in their appointment than merit. Although they are officially appointed by a majority vote of the Board of Education, the power to appoint teachers lies practically in the hands of local committees, consisting of two members, who have special charge of the schools of the two wards which they represent. These members nominate the teachers for the schools in their own wards, and the Board of Education confirms their nomination. Now, as each member of the School Board depends for

his appointment upon the councilman from his ward, it may readily be perceived to what extent the appointment of Baltimore's teachers lies in the hands of its ward politicians. The teacher is at first appointed on probation, the probational period being ninety days. Should her services during this time prove satisfactory she receives a permanent license, which entitles her to teach for ten years. But, unfortunately, the supervisory staff is so small that each school can be visited but seldom by its members, and the ninety days' probation may elapse before either one of them gets a single chance to see the teacher at work in her class-room. This does not, however, deprive her of the right of receiving her permanent license as soon as the probational period has expired. The discharge of teachers for negligence or incompetency is an almost unheard-of affair. There is one teacher who remains at home every time it rains, and yet she is not removed.

In consideration of these conditions—the schools practically in the hands of ward politicians, the teachers untrained, and the supervision far too scanty—is it surprising that the schools of Baltimore should be as they are?

As for the remedies? These are simple enough after the causes of the evils are discovered. They consist in taking the schools out of the domain of politics, in employing only professionally trained teachers, and in enlarging the supervisory staff.

But, alas! things are more easily said than done. Patronage is not frequently voluntarily resigned, and unless there is some one to take it away by force, it is liable to be retained indefinitely. But who is to wage war for the children, unless it be their natural protectors—the parents? And can that body of people, so utterly indifferent to the affairs of the schools, be relied upon to do anything toward their improvement?

It is true that it is not easy to change matters when acts of legislature are involved. Therefore to emancipate schools from politics is not a simple affair. Yet there is a way in which the schools of Baltimore might be markedly improved without drawing in the legislature. It lies in increasing the size of the supervisory staff to such an extent that the teachers may receive proper aid from its members. As such aid is needed even under the most favorable circumstances, it is doubly essential when the general conditions are unfavorable. In fact, in my opinion, strong supervision is the best counteracting influence to the evils arising from poor general management, and particularly from those due to carelessness in the selection of teachers.

Efficient supervision requires that each teacher stand in as close relationship to the superintendent or one of his assistants as a book-keeper or cashier does to his proprietor; that the superintendent meet his assistants frequently for consultation, and that the members of the supervisory staff see the teachers individually in their class-rooms at frequent intervals, in order to give them practical hints on teaching, and in bodies, to instruct them in their grade work, in the principles of education, and in the theory of teaching. (Professor Just, Superintendent of Schools at Altenburg, in Saxony, who is one of Germany's leading educators, once said to me that in his opinion, in order that a superintendent might do good work, the number of teachers in his charge should not exceed sixty. In Baltimore this number is six hundred.)

Under a management of this nature—allowing even, say, one hundred and fifty teachers to a supervisor—the schools of Baltimore would undoubtedly, within a very few years, present an entirely different aspect. Until a material change is effected, those attending the schools of that city will be doomed to a miserable childhood.

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VENAL VOTING: METHODS AND REMEDIES.¹

IN a previous paper the proportion of venal voters according to race, habits, and police record was given in tabular form for two Connecticut towns and one city ward. And upon these, together with less specific, but quite reliable, reports from a number of other towns and from one of the larger cities an estimate was made for the entire State. It was also shown that venality followed the laws of infectious disease in the phenomena of its distribution.

We now inquire: Of what sort are the venal? We have seen what their habits are. What is their method of life? In one town their occupations were as follows: boatmen, six; mechanics, nine; mechanics and farmers, three; mill hands, six; owners of farms worth three thousand dollars or more, six; owners of good farms, not mortgaged, worth one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars, four; owners of poor farms, sometimes mortgaged, worth four hundred to seven hundred and fifty dollars, eleven; pensioner, one; teamster, one; renters of poor farms, ten. The remainder and by far the largest class are farm laborers, unskilled laborers, wood-choppers and doers of odd jobs, and there is one man who is retired on what for the locality is a comfortable little property. A few have large families. All can read and write, though the majority may be somewhat below the general standard of popular education in the place. I can give no such accurate census of the city purchasables. But in many instances, as I am credibly informed, men who earn good wages or salaries expect pay regularly from their own side, and "hold off" until they get it; and one case has been given where the man had property worth seventy-five thousand dollars. But as may be easily divined from the facts as to drinking-habits already given, the great majority are more or less of the out-at-the-elbow and down-at-the-heel class. A few are marked "thrifty" with emphasis. "What that man gets goes right into the savings bank every time, you may be sure!" was related of one. But to the greater part, probably more than three-quarters, the election

¹This article is supplementary to the article on "The Alarming Proportion of Venal Voters" which Professor McCook contributed to the September FORUM.