

for the time being; and all of which could be properly regulated by this officer, the general superintendant, should the Couvention think proper to adopt this proposition, which he earnestly hoped they would. The proposition was that this school fund, already considerable if properly managed, should be preserved from being appropriated to any other purpose whatever. It provided that the Legislature, so soon as the financial condition of the State would justify it, should provide a uniform system of common schools, open to every child in the State; and further, that the people should elect a general superintendant of education, whose business it should be to devote his whole time and attention to this important subject.

The next and last proposition or article was one which he had already adverted to—the establishment of a Normal school. He had heard it suggested that this was going to be a very heavy expense. This was a mistake, as had been shown from the example of Massachusetts. Maryland has already the foundation of such a school, and by engrafting a Normal department on St. John's College, we could have such a school at a comparatively light cost—a cost not to be compared with the benefit it would be to the people of the State. We now have to depend upon the North for teachers, and seldom get the best, or those who are willing to abide with us, and follow teaching as a profession. If the State would adopt the policy of educating her own teachers—of qualifying young men and ladies, who are reared up among us, accustomed to our habits and institutions—for this important profession, we doubtless would find many who would gladly embrace the opportunity, and devote their lives to teaching as a profession.

It is a very great error to suppose that every educated person is qualified for the office of school teacher, or that it can, without great injury to youth, be taken up or put off at pleasure. His own bitter experience had taught him this, for it was his misfortune to receive the little education he got at school, at the hands of some dozen or fifteen so called teachers. But two of that number, he was now satisfied, was fit to be dignified with the name of "teacher." In combination with a knowledge of the subject to be taught, the school master should first learn, or be taught to govern himself, and then possess a tact and aptitude to impart instruction. These are rare but very important qualities, and one which he felt satisfied could be learned with proper instruction, as well as the practical part of the profession—of either law or medicine. He hoped this subject, as well as the whole report, would receive the favorable consideration of the Convention.

Mr. Ege desired the Convention to look at this subject carefully, dispassionately and calmly; and he desired to have the section changed so as to meet his views. The object he had in view was that the common school system should bring education to the door of every man, and should educate every man's child within the broad limits of Maryland. They had heard the gentleman

from Allegany, (Mr. Smith,) speak of his own county, and speak in a kind and feeling manner of the citizens of that county; and he had no doubt that other gentlemen might rise here, and strengthen what he had said in reference to this subject. Was there a citizen within the limits of Maryland who would refuse to appropriate that small sum for the purpose of education? The present fund he considered was distributed not in accordance with the wishes of the people of Maryland, not in accordance with the interests of the common school education, not in accordance with justice, or any thing like right. He desired that the fund should be distributed equally and proportionately among all the citizens, without distinction, without difference, without county limits or any other limits. He wished it to be distributed according to the population in the State.

Mr. E. then moved to amend the report by striking out from the beginning of 1st section, these words: "a permanent and adequate school fund shall be established by the Legislature, as soon as the financial condition of the State shall justify it," and inserting in lieu thereof, the following:

"A general common school system shall be established by the Legislature at their first meeting after the adoption of this Constitution."

Mr. BLAKISTONE said:

That he would state that Baltimore county, before its division into Baltimore and Carroll counties, had received, under a special act of the Assembly, her proportion of the school fund which had been distributed by an act of the Legislature among the other counties, and Carroll, now, he understood had a fund of her own. He did not think it would be right to bring that fund into the general fund, because they had invested it in stocks, and a large interest had accumulated upon it. It was now the fund of Carroll county.

Mr. Ege presumed that some counties had the same benefit that Carroll had.

Mr. HOWARD desired some gentleman would state what was the amount of the school fund, how it was raised, and how it was distributed.

Mr. SMITH in reply, stated:

That in regard to the distribution of the fund and amount, he would say that the fund derived from the surplus revenue of the United States, and set a part and denominated the common school fund revenues, amount to \$34,069.36 annually. The amount arising from the tax upon the banks of the State, called the free school fund, is \$21,000, so that there were over \$56,000 to be distributed throughout the State. The free school fund, as it was called, \$21,000, was distributed equally among the counties of the State. The common school fund, amounting to \$34,000, was distributed one half to the counties and the city of Baltimore, and the other half according to the white population in each respectively.

Mr. RIDGELY was very glad that this subject had presented itself to the consideration of the Convention again, for he had not the pleasure of being present when it was under discussion pe-