

Frank says that "prior to the acceptance of the State Constitution, whenever in the south-eastern part of the State, the measure was introduced of supporting the schools by taxation on the assessed property of the districts it encountered the most determined opposition." But when voted upon, scarcely a prominent voice was raised against it. It is believed that the question which overshadows all others in the Constitutional Conventions, so engaged the thoughts of the people that the free school provision was almost lost sight of in the heated discussion. The reason for the ready acquiescence is more obvious. The people had become somewhat accustomed to paying taxes in the counties, to maintain schools; the income of the magnificent School Fund could lessen very materially the burdens of taxation, and the noble utterances of Gov's. Dodge, Doty, Tallmadge, and Dewey, in their annual messages, in favor of the broadest education of the people, had prepared them to some extent to accept the measure.

The opinion has prevailed quite generally that our school system was framed after that of the State of New York. This is a mistake. Our statute laws were copied, even in their principal headings, their arrangements, their wordings to a great extent, and of course their substance, from those of Michigan. A few minor provisions were taken from the New York statutes; such as those creating the office of the Town Superintendent, now abolished, and the district library, which first originated in that State. The other features differed widely from those of the New York system in very many respects.

The next year after the other State officers were elected, Hon. Eleazer Root, of Waukesha, was chosen State Superintendent by the people. The manner of electing this officer had been determined by the Legislature of that year. He was nominated by the State Central Committee of both the Whig and Democratic parties, and elected without opposition. This first action was in deference, in some degree, to the sentiment which prevailed then quite extensively, that the election of the State Superintendent should not be connected with