

Benton; and by his oversight and instruction, they became flourishing institutions. He died four years since in the midst of his labors, honored and revered by many friends.

For a number of years the Government sustained a school among the Winnebagoes, in accordance with a treaty made with them in 1832, which required the school to be kept at or near Prairie Du Chien. It was afterwards located on the west side of the Mississippi river, in Iowa, and placed under the supervision of Rev. David Lowry, an accomplished and enterprising man.

These educational efforts aided in attracting to our State some of our most useful citizens, and influenced in many ways all our earliest public and business enterprises.

When Wisconsin was organized into a Territory, by itself in 1836, the laws of the Michigan Territory, with which it had been connected for eighteen years, were, by an organic act of Congress, declared in full force in the Territory. The school laws continued as such until 1839, with some slight modifications made by the Legislature of 1837. To no other circumstance is our public school system so much indebted, as to this, for its peculiar provisions, and especially for its methods of school supervision in all departments in respect to the district, the town, and the State. The prominent features of the Michigan school law were retained among all the changes in our Territorial history, and were subsequently engrafted into our State Constitution.

By the terms of this law, each district elected three school officers—a Clerk, a Treasurer, and a Collector, and as a board were called Directors. They selected the sites for school houses, hired teachers, levied and collected the taxes for the erection of the houses, and the support of the schools. Each town had two sets of school officers, Commissioners and Inspectors. The former, three in number, held their office for three years, divided the township into districts, called the first school meetings, had charge of the school section, leasing it when it could be done, and applying the rents for the support of common schools. The Inspectors, five in number, were