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The Land Grant of 1862 and its Effects on Industrial Education uo to 1917

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THE LAND GRANT OF 1862 AND ITS EFFECTS ON INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION UP TO 1917

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

When in 1856, Mr. Justin S. Morrill became interested in the movement of promoting colleges of agriculture and mechanical arts thru federal aid grants, he found adequate precedent before him. Congress was always generous with aid, although the Constitution did not confer direct powers of promoting education to the Federal Government. Education was a concern of the individual states. The active encouragement for education began in 1785, after the Congressional Land Survey, the sixteenth lot in every township was reserved for religion, and not more than two townships in each state were set aside for a university. Whatever may have been the subsequent history of the grants, the statement of Daniel Webster may be fully endorsed as he said, "I doubt whether one single law of any lawgiver, ancient or modern, has produced effects of more distinct, marked, and lasting character than the Ordinance of 1787."[1] It incorporated wholly the principle that religion, morality, and knowledge are necessary to good government, and to the happiness of mankind.[2]

The next major step in history of general grants for education was the Morrill Act of 1862. A comparison of this act with grants up to this period of history brings about

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[1] I. L. Kandel, Federal Aid for Vocational Education (Boston: The Merry Mount Press, 1917), Bulletin No. 10 p. 69, quoting Works, Volume III p. 263.

[2] Ibid., p. 69.

the following difference of principle. The grants before 1862 were general in character and did not prescribe specifically the nature of the institution to be established or the character of the education to be given. This act not only made grants for agriculture and mechanical arts, but prescribed some of the curriculum and details for management.[1]

This change of principle has made the Land Grant Act of 1862 one of the most famous acts for the promotion of Industrial Education in the history of the United States.

The purpose of this paper is to show the importance of this act through the events that took place during the period from 1800 to 1917. The information was obtained by investigation of material in the library at Eastern Illinois University.

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[1] Ibid., p. 70.

CHAPTER I

BEGINNING STRUGGLE FOR INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, European and especially English influence continued to be a dominant factor in determining the character of the provisions made in this country for systematic education in the industries.[1]

The Lyceum Movement

An indication of the increasing influence of peculiar American conditions was the organization of the American Lyceum, in 1826. "Though suggested by the Mechanics' Institute, it was planned to meet the educational needs, vocational as well as cultural, of a far larger section of the population."[2]

The Lyceum system afforded great aid to the public schools, both at the village level and the state legislatures, by creating a general atmosphere favorable to them. The lyceums were the center of the elementary public schools.

The lyceum solicited voluntary contributions, rather than asking state legislatures for financial support. The

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[1]Lewis Flint Anderson, History of Manual and Industrial School Education (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1926), p. 138.

[2]Ibid., p. 139.

sum total of money needed was not great. It was designed to make better workingmen and those being educated were generally supporting themselves.

The Lyceum Movement was a means of enhancing the American ideal of popular education; it placed emphasis on acquiring useful knowledge. "In those days the natural sciences as applied to agriculture and the mechanical arts were regarded as the best source of knowledge."[1]

While the teaching of science was developing, the necessity of providing for more and systematic industrial education is reflected in various experiments designed to survey education in the practical applications of science, mathematics, agriculture, the mechanical arts, and engineering.

The Gardiner Lyceum

The first institute of this type, the Gardiner Lyceum in Gardiner, Maine, in 1822, was substantiated. It was classified as a manual labor school since studies were incorporated with manual labor so students could earn part of the cost of their education. Its most distinctive characteristic was that it was a full time scientific and technical school with emphasis on liberal and cultural subjects. It was conducted on funds from the students, gifts, and partial support from the state.

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[1]Charles Alpheus Bennett, History of Manual and Industrial Education up to 1870, (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1926) p. 328.

The institution was so contingent upon the latter that when, after it had been effectual for a period of ten years, the legislature withdrew its financial support, the Lyceum closed its doors. It had, however, directed a definite, practical need, and had shown how to satisfy that need in a practical way. It had taken the initial measure in what later became a popular division of American education of college level.[1]

The Rensselear School

The second and most important school of this type was established at Troy, New York, in 1824, and was known as the Rensselear School. The purpose of this school was not only to educate the sons and daughters of farmers and mechanics, in the principles of chemistry, philosophy, agriculture, the arts, and manufactures, but to instruct them how to impart the knowledge to others. The school was the first to offer a degree in agriculture and provide a large number of teachers of applied science to schools and colleges. It gradually, after changing names to Rensselear Polytechnic Institute in 1850, became America's first college of engineering.

Until about 1840, the Lyceum functioned steadily for the welfare of the common school. It did so in a large number of ways. It expressed official interests in schools, lectures were held on primary education, teachers held

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[1] Ibid., p. 350.

conventions on the local and state levels and toiled for the public schools by making common cause with thousands of educators ranging from national leaders such as Horace Mann and Henry Barnard, to the multitude of local school men.[1]

Congress was implored twice for money by the American Lyceum. In one resolution it was requested to appropriate from the rich legacy of the British philanthropist, James Smithson, which was left, and devote it to education. In another, it asked to appropriate to education a portion of the money coming from the sale of public lands. If Congress heard their plea, it gave no sign.[2]

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[1]Carl Bode, The American Lyceum (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 114-115.

[2]Ibid., p. 118.

CHAPTER II

THE LAND GRANT OF 1862

From an early period in its history, Illinois had had what was known as the college and seminary fund--the first was from the proceeds of the sale of the state's public lands, the second was the accumulation from the grant of two townships in accordance with the Enabling Act of 1818--both being a direct result of the spirit of the Ordinance of 1787. This fund had increased in Illinois until it was about 150 million dollars and seventy-two sections of land, worth probably much more. By 1850, public attention was being strongly attracted to the probable disposition of this fund. Propositions to apply this fund to its original and proper purposes, i.e., the establishment by the state of a "State University or High Seminary of Learning" had been repeatedly made, but had failed adoption.[1]

Convention at Granville, Putnam County

People had the conception that such funds should be allotted among the existing private colleges since they had been founded during the endeavor for the establishment of eminent education in the state.

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[1]Edmund J. James, The Origin of the Land Grant Act of 1862 (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois 1910) p. 19.

> For the purpose of heading off such a movement and of securing the applications of these funds to the establishment of a state institution which should develop the education of the farmer and the mechanic in the same way as private institutions thus far established were promoting the education of the clergyman and the lawyer and the doctor, the farmers of the state by public notice at county fairs, and in the press were called to meet in convention in the village of Granville, Putnam County, on Tuesday, November 18, 1851.[1]

The attendance at this convention was large and came from all sections of the state, though the majority came from the northern area of the state.

The goal of the convention was to further the interests of the agriculture community and the establishment of an agriculture university. The leading speaker and spirit of the meeting was evidently Professor Jonathun Baldwin Turner, of Jacksonville, Illinois.

He had prearranged a plan for an industrial university which was approved by the meeting. Since so much influence is attributed to the resolutions they are reprinted here:

> Whereas, the spirit and progress of this age and country demand the culture of the highest order of intellectual attainment in theoritics and industrial science; and
>
> Whereas, it is impossible that our commerce and prosperity will continue to increase without calling into requisition all the elements of internal thrift arising from the labors of the farmer, the mechanic, and the manufacturer, by every fostering effort within the reach of the government; and
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> Whereas, a system of Industrial Universities, liberally endowed in each state of the union, co-operative with each other, and with the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, would develop a more liberal and practical education among the people, tend to more intellectualize the rising generation and eminently conduce to the virtue, intelligence and true glory of our common country; therefore be it,

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

> Resolved, by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring herein, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives be requested, to use their best exertions to procure the passage of a law of Congress donating to each state in the Union an amount of public lands not less in value than five hundred thousand dollars, for the liberal endowment of a system of Industrial Universities, one in each state in the Union, to co-operate with each other, and with the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, for the more liberal and practical education of our industrial classes and their teachers; a liberal and varied education, adapted to the manifold wants of a practical and enterprising people, and a provision for such educational facilities being in manifest concurrence with the intimations of the popular will, it urgently demands the united efforts of our strength.
>
> Resolved, That the Governor is hereby authorized to forward a copy of the foregoing resolutions to our Senators and Representatives in Congress, and to the Executive and Legislature of each of our sister States, inviting them to co-operate with us in this meritorious enterprize.[1]

Turner's plan first designates a National Institute of Science for the promotion of practical education of the industrial classes and for a university for such in each state of the union, which was still to be appreciated.

His proposal was published in many newspapers throughout the country. It was reprinted at many farmers conventions and in the New York Tribune of September 4, 1852. It was brought to the attention of the National Agriculture Association which met in Washington, D. C. in June, 1852, by Richard Yates, representative of Illinois.[2]

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[1]Kandel, op. cit., p. 78.

[2]James, op. cit., p. 21.

The Second Convention

A second convention was held in Springfield, Illinois, at which representatives of some of the private colleges attended. Controversies between the industrial members of the convention and the representatives of the small colleges ensued, but the resolution was accepted to create a state university for the industrial classes. The result of the assembly was noticed in the annual message of the Governor of the State, as a matter to be considered by the legislation.

The resolutions, presented on June 8, 1852, among other items included this paragraph:

> We desire that some beginning should be made as soon as our statesmen may deem prudent so to do, to realize the high and noble ends for the people of the state proposed in each and all of the documents above alluded to, and if possible on a sufficiently extensive scale to honorably justify a successful appeal to Congress in conjunction with eminent citizens and statesmen in other states who have expressed their readiness to co-operate with us for and appropriation of public lands for each state in the union for the appropriate endowment of universities for the liberal education of the industrial classes in their several pursuits in each state in the Union.[1]

As far as the writer knows, this is the first formulation of the proposal that was realized in the land grant act constructed by any individual or group.

Industrial League of Illinois

A third convention was held in Chicago, November 24, 1852. Among other items, it was decided to organize "The Industrial League of the State of Illinois," which was to secure funds to apply toward encountering the objectives of the convention,

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[1] Ibid., p. 22.

the goal of which was to attain a land grant to establish industrial institutions in every state in the union.

A fourth convention held in Springfield, Illinois, submitted the final plan of the establishing the Industrial League, which was approved and granted a charter from the state in 1853. At this convention, it was stated that the plan proposed at the other conventions, had been completed, and that a committee, which the Governor of the State of Illinois, Augustus C. French, the chairman, had forwarded it to Congress.

The Industrial League of Illinois initiated its work in publicizing the concept of industrial universities in every state in the union. Through the direction of Mr. Turner, a pamphlet was printed containing the proceedings of all the conventions and circulated throughout the country to all men of prominence who might be interested in this undertaking, requesting them to petition Congress for the adoption of the plan.

CHAPTER III

THE PLAN BEFORE CONGRESS

Justin S. Morrill

The proposal that federal aid should be given to the states for agricultural education was introduced in the House of Representatives, by Justin S. Morrill, Senator of Vermont, on December 14, 1857. Mr. Morrill was beginning his second term in Congress. He had been in Congress when several issues of the era were being discussed, such as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, the Treaty of Paris, and the War Tariff Bill. "The Proposal that the United States should begin a policy of assisting the states for agricultural education could not have been entrusted to firmer or more skilful hands."[1]

"The bill (H. R. 2) granted six million three hundred and forty thousand acres of the public land to the states, each state receiving twenty thousand acres for each senator and representative in Congress to which it was entitled under the census of 1850, the proceeds to be used in maintaining colleges of agriculture and the mechanic arts."[2]

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[1]Kandel, op. cit., p. 3.

[2]Ibid.

The Act in Congress

Mr. Morrill stated in his address to the House, of the many petitions that he had received from the Northern and Southern States, state societies, county societies, and individuals, that Federal aid in favor of agriculture was imparitively sought. He also stated that the soil was getting indigent and the sole way to remedy this condition was for special schools and literature for the farmer and the mechanic to educate themselves. The message was quite lengthy and summarized definite purposes the school would fulfill.

Senator Cobb of Alabama gave just as lengthy address in opposition of the bill, but was not as influential as necessary. The bill passed the House by a vote of 105 to 100.

The House of Representatives forwarded the bill to the Senate the same day it was passed, where it was referred to the Committee on Public Lands. The advocates could not anticipate getting the bill thru smoothly. The bill inaugurated a new policy, "being a direct appropriation from the Treasury for the encouragement of the schools of agriculture."[1]

Various times the bill was introduced in the Senate, but each instance it was delayed by other measures. It was not presented again until February, 1859, where it met considerable opposition from Senator Pugh of Ohio. He stated:

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

> He felt that if Congress can assist states in regard to agricultural education, it can do so for every species of education, and gradually take the whole of this most important matter into the power of the federal government. In any case, "this bill is not for the promotion of agriculture, through the agency of the state governments. Beyond the title there is nothing of the sort to be found in it."[1]

Senator Rice of Minnesota, in a lengthy speech, opposed the bill as being unconstitutional. In essence he said that universities would make fancy farmers and fancy mechanics. This was not desirable. What was needed was homes for the farmers, the developers of the soil.[2]

In spite of the efforts of friends of industrial education, both in and out of Congress, on February 26, 1859, the land grant bill was returned to the House of Representatives with the President's veto. Buchanan had found the bill unacceptable for numerous reasons:

> It was extravagant as its effect would be to deprive the almost depleted treasury of the $5,000,000 which the sale of public lands was expected to produce during the next fiscal year; it was impolitical because it would encourage the states to rely upon the federal government for aid to which they were not entitled; it was injurious to the new states since it would force down the value of the land scrip and make it possible for speculators to obtain large tracts within their borders; it was insufficient to assure the promotion of industrial education because, although the state legislatures were required to stipulate that they would apply the land to the purpose for which it had been granted, there was no power in the federal government to compel them to execute their trust; it was unjust since it would interfere with and probably injure colleges already established and sustained by their own effort; it was unconstitutional since there was no

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[1] Ibid., p. 10.

[2] Ibid.

> grant of power to the federal government to expend public money of public lands for the benefit of the people in the various states.[1]

President Buchanan's veto of the land grant bill was a great dissappointment to the friends of industrial education. The presses, both east and west had fully endorsed the bill and the agriculture people had more veritable interest in its passage than any measure introduced for many years.

Senator Morrill attempted to pass the bill over the veto of the President but failed to get the required two-thirds majority. The Bill failed 105 to 96.

Passage of the Act

Turner, with other friends of the industrial educational movement throughout the nation, was greatly disappointed by the veto, even though he had known that such action was quite probable. He began forming plans for the re-introduction of the bill into Congress. It is related by one who had the best opportunities for knowing that before the campaign of 1860, Turner, talking to Mr. Lincoln at Decatur, told him that he would be nominated for the presidency at the coming convention and afterwards be elected. "If I am," replied Lincoln, "I will sign your bill for State Universities." Later, Stephen A. Douglas met Turner on a train as he was going to Peoria and assured him: "If I am elected I will

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[1]Burl E. Powell, Semi Centennial History of the University of Illinois (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1918), pp. 111-112.

sign your bill." Thus, Turner had assurances from both, the republicans and the democrats, the land grant bill if passed again by Congress, would not be vetoed.[1]

The bill was introduced again in the Senate on May 5, 1861. This was the Thirty-Seventh Congress and Mr. Lincoln was President. The provisions of the bill were similar to that vetoed by Buchanan, except that the grant to each state was increased to thirty thousand acres for each senator and representative instead of the twenty thousand acres. The basis for calculation was on the census of 1860 instead of 1850.

Amendments as to the effect the grants of land would have upon the new states in the west, in which most of the lands lay, were discussed. This discussion resulted in the adoption of several amendments which later became part of the bill when finally enacted into law.

By June 10, 1862, the bill came to a vote in the Senate. By a vote of 32 to 7 the bill was passed. The negative votes came from Senators Doolittle of Wisconsin, Grimes of Iowa, Howe of Wisconsin, Lane of Kansas, Saulsbury of Delaware, Wilkinson of Minnesota, and Wright of Indiana. The seats of the southern states were not occupied in this Congress.[2]

The bill was presented in the House of Representatives and Mr. Morrill moved that the bill be passed. It did by a vote of 90 to 25. On July 2, 1862, the Land Grant Act or the

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[1] Ibid., p. 122.

[2] Ibid., p. 18.

Morrill Act, became law with the signature of President Lincoln. The plan for federal assistance to the states for agricultural education became a reality. It was soon accepted by the states and at the end of the Civil War was extended to those states which had been out of the Union when the act became law.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECTS OF THE ACT

Establishment of Universities

The Land Grant Act of 1862, provided a common origin for the development of a large group of higher educational institutions. From this has sprung a great system of public institutions for higher learning in the fields of agricultural and mechanical endeavors. Sixty-nine universities were established throughout the nation.

Among these the Illinois Industrial University, later the University of Illinois, was established on March 2, 1868. Illinois received 480,000 acres of land for the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading objective would be to teach branches of learning as related to agriculture and the mechanical arts and to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes.

The Morrill Land Grant Act brought about continued development of engineering colleges in connection with Mid-West and Western State Universities. The significance of this movement was that vocational training shops were

established in these schools. It was and still is considered that shopwork of various kinds, forms a valuable part of training engineers.[1]

The organization of the land grant colleges appears as another contributing factor to aid the manual training movement. The growth of these colleges, bringing with it the consequent increase in the number of teachers devoting full time to industrial education, served to stimulate a general interest in the problems relating to the field of industrial training. Referring to the Morrill or Land Grant Act of 1862, the Report of the Commission on Industrial Education to the Legislature of Pennsylvania states that:

> Not the least important service conferred upon the people of the country by the act of Congress just mentioned has been the creation of a large body of men engaged in teaching and popularizing modern science, and especially manual training in connection with agriculture and the mechanical arts. Their influence in this respect has already been felt and promises to be still more so in the movement for popularizing manual training as a part of public school instruction.[2]

The Douglas Commission of 1906

The prediction of those who opposed the original land grant act on the grounds that they would inevitably be followed by further demands for money were soon justified.

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[1]John F. Friese, Exploring The Manual Arts (New York and London: The Century Company, 1926), p. 8.

[2]Ray Stombaugh, A Survey of the Movements Culminating in Industrial Arts Education in Secondary Schools (New York City: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936), p. 8 quoting Report of the Commission on Industrial Education Made to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, 1889, p. 8.

It seemed that as soon as the Land Grant Act of 1862 was made law, that it set the precedent for other acts to follow. Numerous supplementary bills of administrative nature were passed, most of which, had to do with vocational agriculture and the allocation of funds toward it.

In industrial education the manual training movement was spreading across the nation during the period from 1870 to 1900. More support for vocational education was being attained.

It wasn't until 1906, that Governor Douglas, of Massachusetts appointed a commission to study the needs of vocation education. A report was made and publicized concerning industrial education. The question as to who should support the expense of vocational education arose.

Immediately following the report of the commission, a National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education was organized. Its chief goal was to secure an adequate federal law providing national aid for industrial education. Reports made by the society were sent to the President, Vice-President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the States Commissioner of Education, recommending that appropriations be made enabling the United States Bureau of Education to investigate the functions of industrial education and its relationship to public instruction.[1]

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[1]Charles A. Bennett, Manual and Industrial Education, 1870 to 1917 (Peoria, Illinois: The Manual Arts Press, 1926), pp. 542-543.

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917

A large step toward the promotion of vocational education was taken when Congress passed a resolution creating the Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education. Senators Hoke Smith and Carroll S. Page, along with Representatives D. M. Hughes and S. D. Fess, together with five other members including Dr. Charles Prosser, deputy Commissioner of Education for the State of Massachusetts, were appointed by the Commission for the promotion of Vocational Education.[1]

The Commission held numerous conferences to determine the need and kinds of vocational education, Federal grants, the conditions under which aid should be given, and proposed legislation. The Commission recommended federal aid for the training of teachers; in agriculture, in trade and industry, and in home economics. Also, for paying part of the salaries of teachers in agriculture, trade and industrial subjects, and for studies and investigations, aid was recommended.[2]

The complete report of the Commission was presented to Congress in 1914 and bills were introduced in 1915 into the Senate by Senator Smith and into the House by Representative Hughes. Amendments were added and the Smith-Hughes Bill became law on February 23, 1917, when President Wilson affixed his signature.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 546-547.

[2] Roy W. Roberts, Federal Aid for Vocational Education (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965), pp. 130-131.

SUMMARY

From the beginning of the Nineteenth Century great efforts were put forth to institute laws to promote industrial education. The Lyceum Movement directed the way in the early years by popularizing the need for higher education. The Gardiner Lyceum and the Rensselear School attempted to satisfy this need, but due to lack of funds were unable to continue.

The solution of securing funds and establishing institutes of higher learning in industrial education was the purpose of the Land Grant Act of 1862. Through the endeavors of Jonathun B. Turner, a plan was devised to promote industrial education with appropriations of federal aid. The Illinois Industrial League and interested people throughout the nation sponsored its passage.

Justin S. Morrill, Senator from Vermont, was the leading advocate of the proposal in Congress. His continued efforts finally succeeded in passage of the bill and Federal Aid to Education became law.

The establishment of Universities with provisions for industrial education, the Douglas Commission of 1906, and the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 all stem from the passage of the Land Grant Act.

The signing of the Smith-Hughes Bill created a federal law directing and reimbursing funds for vocational education. This was the beginning of a new era in industrial education.

Illinois can be justly proud, since it was Jonathun B. Turner, of Jacksonville, Illinois, who formulated the plan, the Illinois Industrial League that provided support for its passage, and Abraham Lincoln, a President from Illinois, signed it into law, thereby creating a precedent for all other acts to follow in attaining Federal Aid for Vocational Education.

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