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Cleve O. Westby

*The University of Montana*

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THE SELECTION AND ADOPTION OF  
TEXTBOOKS IN  
MONTANA

by

CLEVE O. WESTBY

B. A. State University of Montana, 1920

Presented in partial fulfilment of the re-  
quirements for the degree of Master  
of Arts.

State University of Montana

1936

Approved:

*Freeman Daugherty*

Chairman of Board  
of Examiners

*W. G. Bateman*

Chairman of Committee  
on Graduate Study

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CHAPTER I  
THE PROBLEM

The principle objective of this study is to determine the status of the selection and adoption of textbooks in Montana, taking into consideration present conditions as well as past experience in this regard.

No investigation of the status of a problem would be of much value unless it would be capable of serving as the basis for some definite conclusions as to how the needs of the present are met, and if they are not met, then to serve as a guide for the suggestion of remedies.

The first part of the investigation is largely concerned with the history of the textbook problem in Montana and the intended purpose is to secure a background upon which may be thrown in their proper perspective the present ideas and opinions of schoolmen in Montana. The history of this problem in Montana must involve a careful study of conditions that have existed throughout the various periods of our territorial and state development, how leaders in educational endeavor have reasoned that the issues might best be met, all legislation in any way related to the question, and how these ideas and laws have functioned when put into practice.

With a knowledge of what occasioned the difficulties of the past and how and with what success they were met, we are in a position to judge more accurately of the proper disposal of the criticisms of the present plan for textbook selection and adoption in Montana and the suggestions for its improvement. A properly devised questionnaire sent to a sufficient number of schools in Montana must be used to get these criticisms and suggestions.

The replies to the questionnaire must be so interpreted as to give definite ideas of what Montana schoolmen through their experience have found to be excellent in our method of textbook selection and adoption and what they have likewise discovered to be faulty. From their replies equally definite ideas must be secured as to how these faults may be remedied.

Finally, a conclusion based on these replies and what is to be learned from the history of the problem in this State must yield a plan for selection and adoption that lacks the inherent faults of the present system and that will meet our needs in Montana.

## CHAPTER II

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIFORM TEXTBOOK PLAN IN MONTANA 3

Along with the other problems confronting the first settlers in Montana in providing education for their children was that of textbooks. Undoubtedly a large portion of the textbooks used in the first few schools set up were those that the families had brought with them. Since they came from practically every state in the Union and some of the territories, there was, of course, a rather heterogeneous collection of books to be found in each school. That this must have caused a great deal of confusion and interfered with effective teaching may be gleaned from the fact one of the first laws passed at the first session of the territorial legislature provided that:

1

It shall be the duty of the directors to visit the schools of their respective districts at least once each term. They shall endeavor, in connection with the county superintendent, to procure the introduction of a good and uniform system of school books in the district. . .

There was nothing in this law that made the adoption of uniform textbooks obligatory and it provided only for uniformity within the district. It is doubtful if any attempt was made to make the textbooks for a whole county uniform. Since the teacher was looked to to pass judgment on what texts were to be used, parents sometimes found that they would have to purchase new books with the coming of each new

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1. Laws of Montana Territory, First Regular Session, 1864, Section 8, Chapter 3, Session Laws of 1864, p. 439.  
(Copy to be found in the Montana State Law Library, Helena, Montana.)

teacher, an item of no little expense. It is to be assumed that people moving from one district to another often found that the new school had an entirely different group of books, making the change in school systems difficult for the child.

The need for uniformity must have been apparent to everyone connected with the territorial school system. There was, however, the cost to the parents to be considered, since the adoption of a lot of textbooks would mean the discarding of many still useful books and the purchasing at one time of a new set for each boy and girl in school. By 1870 the problem had become important enough that the legislature more or less gave the territorial superintendent of public instruction complete charge of the matter and he set about to select a uniform series of books for the schools of the territory. His description of the deciding factors in his selection of textbooks gives us a fair picture of the situation at the time.

In deciding upon the list of textbooks to be used<sup>2</sup> in our schools, I was chiefly guided by the comparative number of any one kind that I found in use, resting my choice upon those which will accommodate the most and discommode the smallest number. I will not pretend that this was a very exalted principle of selection, but in a country situated as this is at present, where so much time is required to get any satisfactory results by correspondence, or to receive response to orders sent and where retail rates of school books are so exorbitant, it seemed better to choose from such as were in use, those which would cause the least delay, confusion, and expense than to seek to be guided very nicely by superior merit only. . .

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2. Biennial Report of Cornelius Hedges, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Years 1872-73, 1874. (Copy on file in the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana) p. 13



No mention of uniform textbooks occurs in the reports of the superintendent of public instruction from 1874 to 1878. It would seem that the legislature had made no provision for the enforcement of the selection made in 1874 since the \* superintendent in his report in 1879 deplures in no uncertain terms the sad state of affairs.

3

"Our present school law permits an endless variety of textbooks, and the consequence is an utter lack of uniformity in the books used. In many instances each new teacher introduces new and different books and the parents are compelled to incur the expense of a new set before the former ones are worn out. . . ."

He continues his report with a recommendation to the territorial governor relative to the situation.

4

"To obviate this needless expense and injury as well as the confusion it causes in the schools, some enactment that would secure uniformity is deemed worthy of consideration. I recommend that a law be enacted authorizing your Excellency to appoint a committee of three persons from different portions of the Territory to be known as a Text Book Commission, who shall secure a uniform system of textbooks for the use of the public schools, care being taken to discriminate between books published in the interest of the schools and those put forth in the interest of the publishers. The committee should correspond with county superintendents, teachers, and publishers and thoroughly examine the best obtainable books and select the most desirable series, covering the studies now prescribed by law, and these books should be known and designated as the "prescribed series", and be used in all the public schools during the five years next succeeding their introduction. . . ."

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\* A careful perusal of the statutes of the territorial legislature during this time (1870-78) reveals nothing that would enable the authorities to enforce any uniform textbook adoption.

3. Wright, C., Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Years 1877-78. (1870.) p. 6 (Copy to be found in the Montana Historical Library, Helena)

4. Wright, loc. cit.

It was not until February 23, 1881, however, that the first uniform textbook law, that may really be regarded as such, was enacted. This law provided that

. . .the publishers (a) file their bonds, each in the penal sum of one thousand dollars, with two sufficient securities, with the Territorial secretary, for the performance of the contract; . . . (b) to furnish a specified series of books at certain prices in New York to all merchants and school trustees desiring the same; also, to keep on hand and for sale said books at retail prices in at least one town in each county in the Territory; (c) That they will prepare a special edition of Monteith's Comprehensive Geography, which shall contain a reasonable and proper amount of special geography of Montana; (d) That they shall maintain the "Mechanical excellence" of the books adopted and keep constantly revised those which require revision; . . .

The textbooks adopted were to be used for a period of four years beginning July 2, 1882. The recommendations of the Superintendent of Public Instruction were not wholly followed, for the books were not selected by a committee known as the \* "Text Book Commission", but by the members of the Territorial Legislature.

The law of 1881 seemed to meet with approval in most quarters. The Superintendent of Public Instruction in his

5. Wright, C., Third Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Territory of Montana, 1881. 1881  
p. 17-19. (Copy to be found in the Montana Historical Library, Helena)

\* The textbooks adopted were as follows: 6

1. Watson's Independent Series of Readers
2. Watson's Independent Child's Speller.
3. Swinton's Word Book
4. Monteith's Elementary and Comprehensive Geographies
5. Robinson's First Book in Arithmetic
6. Sill's Practical Lessons in English
7. Barnes' Brief History of the United States
8. Robinson's Complete Arithmetic
9. The Spencerian Copy Books,

6. Wright, op. cit., p. 23

report made in 1884 states,

7

The two principal objects sought by the text-book law has (have) been secured. Uniformity has been obtained and children removing from one part of the territory to another, have not been compelled to purchase new books on returning to school. A still more important gain to the people has been the ability to obtain school books at a uniform reduced rate in every county. It is not claimed that the publishing houses with whom contract was made to supply the text books at a schedule of prices set forth by law made any reduction from their usual rates to dealers. The money advantage to the public came through the arrangement by which the retail dealer, in consideration of a larger and surer trade, charged less retail profit. There has been but little complaint during the continuance of the law of failure to comply with its terms, and whenever such complaint has been made, they have been promptly attended to and the cause removed.

At the recent Territorial Teachers' Institute, in which were gathered some of the ablest and most successful teachers and county superintendents, it was voted unanimously, that the principle of uniformity of text books established by law and furnished at moderate fixed prices, had worked well and should be continued. With such record of experience and endorsements it is presumed that some similar text book law will be adopted at your present session. . . .

Since this law and the list of adopted textbooks would expire on July 2, 1886, and a new law and new list of adoptions would have to be made in 1885 by legislature to secure a continuance of the program, it is probable that the above report was rather highly colored. Evidence may be had that it did not function quite as smoothly as indicated. Not all teachers were satisfied with the adoptions, some parents objected to having to purchase an entirely new set of books for

7. Hedges, Cornelius, Sixth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Territory of Montana for the year 1884. (1884) p. 37-39. (Copy to be found in the Montana Historical Library, Helena)

it was difficult to secure dealers in every county who would wish to handle the books on the small margin of profit that the legal price provided. This was especially true in Missoula and Custer counties. Arrangements were finally made by the publishers so that provisions of the law were met in good faith and the textbooks were on sale in every county in the territory.

That the Territorial Teachers' Association was not always in unanimous accord with the textbooks selected is found in the following:

The merit of these respective text-books was made the subject for special consideration at the meeting of the Territorial Teachers' Association. With the exception of some of the minor criticisms, the books were all commended, after due deliberation by the respective committees to which they were referred. Perhaps no subject is more fruitful of discussion and affords ground for wider differences of opinion than the relative merits of the various series of textbooks. The judgment is often warped in favor of those with which we are most familiar, and especially those that we have used in class as a teacher and pupil. . . .

While the superintendent does not come right out and state that some of the teachers were more or less behind the times, yet the last sentence in the above paragraph cited carries a considerable sting in it.

It is altogether probable that the matter of leaving the selection of the textbooks to the territorial legislature was

a bone of contention, too, involving charges of corruption  
O. Wright, C., Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the year 1882. (1882) p. 24-25  
 (Copy to be found in the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana)

O. Wright, op. cit., p. 25.

and suspicions of unethical practices, but in the opinion of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction the legislature was the only body that should perform this function. In a recommendation to the territorial assembly in 1885 he states:

10

So long as it is agreed that uniformity is a good thing and that when any book is adopted, it should be used for at least four years, why should not the adoption be made directly by the legislature on the best terms that competition will offer between books of nearly equal excellence? If you devolve this duty upon any territorial, county, or district board, the same struggle with agents ensues, followed by charges or suspicions of indirect and improper influence. It seems best for all concerned that this issue be settled where it first rises, before and by the people's representatives. It is for you to save the people unnecessary expense and to see that they get the best for their money.

With such an attitude being exhibited by the head of the school systems of the State, the territorial legislature adopted a new series of textbooks and passed a new law relative to uniformity during the fourteenth regular session in 1885. While the new law in main followed that of 1881, there were several innovations that are worthy of note. The previous law failed to make any provision for penalties for not using the adopted textbooks, but there was now a yearly report required from every school district in the state which served as an affidavit that the required books were used. If the trustees failed to see that the school did use the adopted textbooks, there was a rather serious penalty that would be

10. Hedges, Cornelius, Third Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Montana Territory, 1884. (1884) p. 39. (Copy in Montana Historical Library, Helena)

applied, consisting of a forfeit of twenty five per cent of the county fund, which, the next succeeding year, would be allocated to that district. The superintendent of public instruction was required to have printed copies of a price list of all adopted books, have these distributed to every trustee in the state through the several county superintendents. The trustees were required, in turn, to have a copy posted at the district school, where all patrons could note the prices. Should any of the publishers fail to comply with the terms of their agreements, then, the old adoptions would remain in force in the subjects affected. Firms publishing high school textbooks and having a contract with the state to furnish elementary school books, were required to sell the high school books at the same discount rates as the elementary books, though no particular books were adopted for high schools.<sup>11</sup>

Like its predecessor, the new law provided that the new series were to be used in all public schools of the State for a period of four years, beginning in the latter case on July 1, 1885. The Robinson series of arithmetics, Farnes' "Brief History of the United States", and the "Spencerian Copy Books" were retained.<sup>11</sup>

11. Wylie, William W., Seventh Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Year 1885. (1885)  
p. 17. (Copy on file in Montana Historical Library,  
Helena, Montana)

\*. New adoptions at this time included Lancroft's First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Readers; Harper's Introductory Geography; Harper's School Geography; Swinton's Language Primer; and Swinton's Language Lessons.

One of the last acts of the legislature in 1885 was to enact a law providing for a textbook commission that was to act in an advisory capacity. The commission consisted of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and two other members, one of which was to be a practical teacher, appointed by the governor. Their term of office was to be for two years, that is, until the end of the session of the next legislative assembly. Their duties consisted of reviewing the texts then in use and reporting to the next legislature what changes, if any should be made, their reasons in full therefor, terms on which the books could be purchased, and any other information that they felt would be useful to the legislature.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction was required to correspond with publishers and secure sample copies of their publications along with prices at which they would furnish them at wholesale.<sup>12</sup>

No records are available as to just how the commission functioned and how far the territorial legislature of 1887 followed its recommendations. The legislature must have approved of the plan, however, for an exactly similar law was passed in 1887 providing for a new commission to make recommendations to the assembly when it met in 1889.<sup>13</sup>

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12. Seventh Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1885. p. 50-51. (Copy to be found in the Montana Historical Library, Helena, Montana)

13. Territory of Montana, Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of, Passed at the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly, August 29, 1887 to September 14, 1887. p. 79.

While this new commission was decidedly limited in its powers, yet it was a step forward in the direction of having school men represented in the selection of the textbooks to be adopted. Just how much influence the commission had on the selections made in 1889 cannot be definitely determined, but the extended list of adoptions would lead one to believe that it was not inconsiderable.<sup>14</sup>

Changes in the law of 1889 that should be noted include the extension of the time of adoption from four to six years, granting the teacher the power to decide that the old books might be used for an additional year if she thought best, and giving the county superintendents the duty of exchanging the old textbooks for new ones, if the dealer in the county refused to take the old books and if the school trustees requested it.<sup>14</sup> In all other essentials the law remained about the same as the one passed in 1885.

The list of adoptions was larger by far than anything that had gone before. Subjects to be cared for by state-wide adoption for the first time included physiology, bookkeeping, civics, drawing, and advanced penmanship and tracing. While there had been fourteen different textbooks selected by the legislature in 1881 and a similar number in 1885, the new

list comprised twenty three books, the majority of which were

14. Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of the Territory of Montana, Passed at the Sixteenth Regular Session of the Legislative Assembly, 1889. (1889) p. 213.

(Copy to be found in the Montana State Law Library, Helena, Montana).

14. Ibid., 209-13.



different from those of the 1865 list.<sup>15</sup>

With a few months after the enactment of this law the territorial government ceased to exist and Montana achieved statehood. (November, 1889). The law, however, remained in effect until the date stipulated for its expiration, July 1, 1895. There was evidently growing a feeling that some other agency should do the work of determining the list of textbooks to be used in the schools of the State. For the first time a Superintendent of Public Instruction (E. A. Steere) comes out boldly critical of the plan used theretofore.

I will mention briefly some of the (suggested)<sup>16</sup> changes and the reasons for them.

First. The method of selection of textbooks. Heretofore the duty of selecting textbooks for our common schools has devolved upon the Legislature. It may not be inappropriate to say that their settlement of the question has not been uniformly satisfactory. The question is one that is claiming the earnest attention of those interested in the education of the masses. I have devoted no little time and research in the investigation of the system in operation in other states, with a view to making some recommendations as to the proper solution of the question. I find that in all states having a uniformity of textbooks and a State Board of Education this matter is left to the State Board.

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15. Ibid., 213. The books selected included McGuffey's Revised Electric Readers, Books I, II, III, IV, and V; Swinton's Word Book; Fish's Arithmetic No. 1 and No. 2; Barnes' Elementary Geography; Barnes' Complete Geography; Barnes' Short Studies in English, Part I; Barnes' Short Studies in English, Part II; Harvey's Revised English Grammar; Barnes' Brief History of the United States; Barnes' Primary History of the United States; Childs' Health Primer; Physiology for Young People; Steele's Hygienic Physiology; Spencerian Copy Books (Common School Series and Short Course and Tracing); Electric Complete Bookkeeping with blanks; Lovell's Graphic Drawing Books and Lovell's Civics for Young People.
16. E. A. Steere, Third Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1894, (1894), p. 250.

. . .In view of the information and the facts obtained, and actuated by a desire to discharge properly the duty I owe the children of Montana, I recommend that this important duty be given into the hands of the State Board of Education. Composed as this board is of men prominent in the business and educational affairs, the obligation imposed on them, I believe, would be discharged with fidelity and impartial judgment. . . .

Again in the same report Superintendent Steere brings up<sup>17</sup> the subject of who should select the books when he calls the attention of the legislature to the fact that the present contract for text books will expire on July 1, 1895. Let us quote,

. . .Having, as we do, a State Board of Education, this entire subject should be placed in their hands. The state Senate will always have a check over the Board of Education, as it has to act upon the appointments of the Governor. . . .

. . .The very name of the State Board of Education should be a sufficient guarantee that this is the proper body to superintend this work. This provision is given to the said Board by the proposed new school law. . . .

Whether Superintendent Steere really believed that the State Board of Education would be a satisfactory body to undertake the selection of textbooks for the public schools of the State or if he believed that it was probably the best that could be done about it at the time is problematical.. It is altogether probable that his proposal didn't meet with much favor, for nothing was done about the matter during the session of the legislature held during the year 1895.

When the legislature met on January 4, 1897, however, the first bill introduced in the House was one to create a 17. Steere, op. cit., p. 245-46.

textbook commission. The bill became law when the Governor<sup>18</sup> signed it on March 1 of that year. It provided for a commission of seven members consisting of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Attorney General, the President of the State University, the President of the Agricultural College, and three public school teachers to be appointed by the Governor. The commission was to meet yearly at Helena on the first Monday in May and was empowered to select a uniform series of textbooks for use in the public schools of the State.

It was provided that the Superintendent of Public Instruction was to advertise for thirty days in two daily Montana newspapers giving notice the commissioners would meet to receive bids for supplying the required textbooks. The books adopted were to be in use for a period of six years after September 1, 1897. The law specified that books were to be selected for spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, physiology and hygiene, civil government, history of the United States, and all other branches taught in the graded and common schools of the State. Provision was

18. School Laws of the State of Montana, 1896; p. 92-97.

Also

Laws, Resolutions and Memorials of the State of Montana Passed at the Fifth Regular Session of the Legislative Assembly January 4, 1897 to March 4, 1897. Sec. 1750

also made for the commission to select supplementary readers.

The commission was empowered to make all necessary contracts for books. The publishers were required to pass on to the state any price reductions made elsewhere and furnish a bond to guarantee performance. Any failure on the part of the publisher rendered the adoption null and void.

While it had been the practice for the past several years to make a district forfeit twenty five per cent of the county funds that it should receive, if the district did not use the adopted textbooks, the new law provided that failure to observe the adoptions would be regarded as a misdemeanor on the part of the trustees and the teacher. All schools were required to make an annual report showing what books were used in each subject.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of the new law was the permission granted each district to furnish free textbooks, if through an election, it was found that the majority of the voters so desired. If any ten voters in the district presented a petition to the trustees other than in an incorporated city, or one hundred voters presented the petition in an incorporated city, fifteen days prior to the regular election of trustees, the trustees were required to notify the voters of an election "for" or "against" free textbooks.

If the majority vote in the district was "for free textbooks", the trustees would have to furnish the same and the county commissioners were required to make a special

levy to pay for the books.

Instead of providing five dollars per day for three days as a maximum as in the old law, the new stipulated that each commissioner was to receive six dollars per day for as long as the commission met and ten cents mileage going to and from the meetings, with a maximum of one thousand dollars as the amount to be appropriated to cover the expenses.

As required by law, the commission met on the first Monday in May, 1897, in the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Steele. All members were present including the Attorney General, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Presidents of the State University and the State Agricultural College, and three members appointed by the Governor, namely, "Prof. J. G. McKay, principal of the Butte High School; Prof. M. A. Stapleton, superintendent of the Anaconda schools; and Prof. E. O. Euseburg, principal of the Glendive schools."<sup>19</sup>

The comments of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on the meeting and what it accomplished are worthy of note:

19

"The commission met at the time and place designated and selected a complete list of text-books for all the public schools below the high schools. Bids for furnishing the books were received and considered from nineteen publishing houses. . . .

The sessions of the commission lasted for four days  
 19. Steere, E. A., Fifth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Montana, 1898.  
 (1899), p. 6.

and a careful examination was made of the books offered. The people of the state are to be congratulated upon the manner in which the Text-Book Commission performed its important duty. While scandal of the very worst sort has often attended the selection of books by the legislature of this as well as other states, and has frequently attended their selection by boards of education and commissions, not even a whisper was heard of any attempt to improperly influence any member of this commission. The success of this method of selecting school books has been fully demonstrated. It was a great and radical step forward. The books selected give, I believe, general satisfaction. . . .

There were parts of this law that hadn't been well considered by those who drew it up. In the first place the commission was to meet once each year, the first Monday in May. This called possibly for a meeting that was not needed and it prevented the holding of any meeting at any other time of the year, when it might be needed, should some publisher go out of business, fail on his contract, etc. In the second place there was no provision for any specified length of term that the members were to serve, though it is probable that since the adoption was to be for a period of six years the intention was that would also be the term of life of the commission. At any rate, when the legislature met in 1903 an entirely new law came into existence replacing that of 1897, though many of the features of the old law were retained.

The principal changes to be found in the new law in-<sup>20</sup>cluded the membership, length of terms of office, taking

20. Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of the State of Montana, Passed by the Eighth Regular Session of the Legislative Assembly, 1903. (1903) p. 273-81.

oath of office, meetings to be public, vote of each member must be recorded, provisions for special meetings, further provisions for free textbooks, books must bear union labels, and manner in which trustees might adopt supplementary books.

In the matter of membership the governor was authorized to appoint seven members, four of whom must be persons actively engaged in the common public schools of the State. There were to be no ex-officio members. The term of two of the members was to be for two years, while the remaining five were to be appointed for a term of four years each. Each member upon assuming office was required to take the constitutional oath of office and his oath was filed with the Secretary of State. Upon organization the commission was to elect a president and a secretary from among its own members. It was further provided that all votes cast for or against the adoption of any textbook should be recorded with names of those voting and that all meetings be open to the public. A full report of each meeting was required to be made to the governor not later than the first Monday in November of the year next preceding any regular or special meeting of the legislature.

The first meeting of the commission was to be held on the third Monday in June, 1903, but after that meetings were to be held the first Monday in October of each year preceding the sessions of the legislature. The president, however, was authorized to call a special meeting at any time,

should there be proposals to receive or contracts to be considered, such meetings to be called by having the secretary give ten days notice to each member.

Since the adoptions made at the meeting held in May, 1897, would no longer be in effect (they were adopted for six years), the meeting set for the third Monday in June, 1903, was for the purpose of adopting a new series of books to be used in the schools of the State beginning September 1, 1903.

While the law provided that upon petition in each district a vote would be taken on the question of free textbooks at the regular election each year, it further provided that for the year 1903 every district in the State must submit the question of free textbooks to the voters.\* Parents were permitted to purchase books for their children, even though the district might furnish them.

Textbooks to be used for supplementary purposes in any school would have to be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the trustees of that district. All such books would have to bear a union label.†

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\* For information as how many districts in the State voted for free textbooks see chapter on "The Growth of the Free Textbook Idea", page 31

† The pressure brought to bear by the unions to insure the adoption of "union label" books was at times tremendous and occupied a large portion of the time the commissions should have used in selecting textbooks. See pages 34-35



The law of 1903 was repealed in 1905, but the new act, passed that same session, was not radically different from its predecessor. The principal changes to be found in the<sup>21</sup> new law include the personnel of the commission, their term of office, manuscripts of books to be published might be used in selection of new books, high school textbook selection definitely not a duty of the commission, length of period of adoption, and provision for annual election on free textbooks.

Whereas the 1903 law had set the membership at seven of which four must be actively engaged in teaching, the new law specified that five of the seven must be so engaged. The terms of the three of the members was to be for a period of three years and the terms of the remaining four, for five years, but, as any term expired, the term of each successor would be for five years, except when a vacancy occurred through death or resignation, in which case the appointment was to be for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Should a publisher wish to submit a copy of the manuscript of any textbook that was as yet unpublished, the commission was authorized to adopt such a book, having been at the same time given samples of the paper, style of type, binding, etc. to be used.

For the first time in a uniform textbook law in this State an express statement was made to the effect that the commission was not to select textbooks for high schools.

21. School Laws of the State of Montana, Sessions of 1905 and 1907. p. 46-53.

The period for which the new textbooks were to be adopted was changed from four years to five years.

While provision was made for voting in each district on the question of free textbooks through there being presented a petitioner to the trustees, as in the laws of 1897 and 1903, the new law stipulated that on the first Saturday in April, 1907, and every year thereafter, the trustees were required to have the question voted upon in their respective districts.

The law of 1905 continued in effect until 1913 without any changes. During the session of the thirteenth legislative assembly, however, it was set aside and a new law passed,<sup>22</sup> which differed only in a few respects from the old. As far as membership is concerned, it provided that five of the seven members must either be engaged actively in teaching in the public schools of the state or in state educational institutions at the time of their appointment. The purpose of this was to permit the appointing of college men and women who might be valuable on the commission.

For the preceding ten years the commission had been required to meet every four years on the third Monday in June, beginning with 1903, and every five years on the third Monday in June, beginning with 1907. Under the law of 1913 the commission was required to meet on the third Monday

32. Session Laws of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, 1913. p. 269-76.

in January, 1917, and every two years thereafter. The president of the commission, in addition, was required to call a meeting the first Monday in October of 1916, and every second year thereafter. The purpose involved in this change was to permit the commission to meet in October of each even year and consider in what subjects changes needed to be made or expiring contracts extended, provided that not more than three subjects could be changed at any one meeting. If the commission should recommend at its October meeting that any changes be made, the Superintendent of Public Instruction was required to advertise for thirty days in two Montana daily newspapers for bids, beginning with November 1. The meeting in January of each odd year was for the purpose of receiving the bids advertised for after the October meeting and to let contracts accordingly. As in the laws of 1903 and 1905, the president of the textbook commission was authorized to call special meetings at any time that contracts were terminated by rescission or otherwise ceased to be in full force and effect and for the purpose of receiving bids and letting new contracts.

The period of adoption was extended from five years to six years. Prices on the books were required to be F. O. B. textbook depositories in Montana, whereas, F. O. B. Chicago had been the stipulation of the laws of 1903 and 1905.

Before the commission was permitted to meet under the law of 1913 the legislature was in session again and amended.

section 1803 of that act, permitting the commissioners to<sup>22</sup> extend any expiring contract for a textbook for a period of not more than four years, if in the opinion of the commission this was advisable, and at prices not to exceed those of the original contract.

Section 1808 of the 1913 law was amended to provide that the bids for supplying textbooks were to specify prices F. O. B. Chicago, as well as F. O. B. Montana depositories.

In the law of 1913 nothing was stated as to a time when the trustees of a school district were to notify the county commissioners of the amount of funds needed to pay for free textbooks in event that there was not enough in the district's general fund to care for the entire cost of the books. In 1921 section 1812 of the 1913 law was amended<sup>23</sup> to provide that the trustees must inform the county commissioners on or before the first day of July of each year of the amount needed to provide the textbooks. Then, if there was not a sufficient amount in the district's general fund, the commissioners were required to make a levy on the taxable property in the district to provide the funds.

This section was again amended in 1925 by stipulating that the total amount that might be raised by a tax to pro-

22. Session Laws of the Fourteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, 1915. Chapter 84, Sections 1, 2 and 3.

23. Laws, Regulations, and Memorials of the Seventeenth Regular Assembly of Montana, 1921. p. 54.

vide for free textbooks should not exceed three dollars and<sup>24</sup>  
 fifty cents per pupil, based on the number of pupils attend-  
 ing the schools of the district during the preceding year.  
 Each district was now required to furnish free textbooks to<sup>25</sup>  
 the children without having the question voted upon every  
 year at the time of the trustees' election.

The dates for the regular sessions of the commission<sup>26</sup>  
 were again changed in 1925. The first meeting of each bi-  
 ennium was set for the third Saturday in September and the  
 second Monday in December, the first meetings under this  
 plan to be held during the year, 1926. The chairman of the  
 commission, as under previous laws, was permitted to call  
 special meetings if for any reason any existing contract  
 expired.

Since 1925 there have been no changes in the textbook

law of Montana.

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24. School Laws of the State of Montana, 1927. p. 86.  
 25. School Laws of the State of Montana, 1917. Section  
 1911, p. 101.  
 26. School Laws of the State of Montana, 1927. p. 83.

Even before Montana became a state there was agitation afoot for free textbooks. The first mention of any suggestion along this line came in 1884 in the report of the territorial superintendent;<sup>26</sup>

"When the time comes that our population is more settled, generally distributed, and wealthy, with revenues from our prospective school fund, it may be the wisest course for each district to furnish the books for the scholars. It would not be difficult to show that this was really the cheapest and best method of all, wherever practicable. . . ."

There are no records to show that the territorial legislature paid any attention to this or that any further recommendations were made for a period of about ten years. In 1895 Superintendent E. A. Steere argued before a State Senate<sup>27</sup> committee in favor of a free textbook law, but no action was taken during that session of the legislature. Referring to this in his biennial report in 1897, he states,<sup>28</sup>

. . . Today after a more careful and complete investigation of this subject in states where it has been tried, I am more than ever convinced that justice and economy demand that this be put into practice in this State just as soon as our commonwealth is able financially.

In both theory and practice wherever it has been tried, it has proven a success. I believe it is necessary to enact this law to make our public schools unlimitedly and unqualifiedly free. As in the establishment of a new industry the burden of expense is incurred at the time of establishment, so with free text-books - the greatest expenditure occurs at the time of introduction. . . .

26. Cornelius Hedges, Sixth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Territory of Montana for 1884. p. 39.

27. E. A. Steere, Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1895. p. 9.

28. Ibid. p. 9-10.

The movement for free textbooks for public school children began more than a century ago, but provision at first was made only in city school systems, Philadelphia inaugurating the plan as early as 1818. Durin; the succeeding fifty<sup>29</sup> years many Atlantic seaboard cities made similar provisions. Massachusetts enacted the first state-wide free textbook law in 1864. She was followed by Maine in 1889 and by 1900 there was a total of twelve states which had enacted mandatory laws for free textbooks.

The force of the arguments of E. A. Steere probably \* was responsible for the enactment in 1897 of Montana's first free textbook law. The law was not mandatory. It merely pro-<sup>18</sup>vided that in each district if ten voters (if the district did not comprise an incorporated town or city) filed a petition with the trustees, the trustees would be required to notify the voters of an election for or against free textbooks. In an incorporated town or city the petition would have to bear the names of at least one hundred voters.

29. Ward W. Keesecker, Legislation Concerning Free Textbooks.  
p. 1.

18. School Laws of the State of Montana, 1899. Section 11,  
p. 96-97.

\*. The arguments put forth by Superintendent Steere are so convincing that justice demands that they be included in this report. The following is a continuation of his comments included on the preceding page:

. . . In all probability the expenditures for books in succeeding years will not be over fifty per cent of the first year, perhaps not over forty per cent. It depends upon the supply secured the first year. But whatever the expense may be, it is conceded by all who have investi-

gated the question to be far cheaper than individual ownership.

For this very reason book companies, of course, oppose this plan.

The free text book law was adopted in Massachusetts in 1883\* and the following table exhibits the expenditure per pupil for each successive year.

1884	\$2.08	1888	1.42	1892	1.75
1885	1.69	1889	1.54	1893	1.77
1886	1.45	1890	1.60	1894	1.82
1887	1.49	1891	1.70		

An average for the ten years subsequent to the first is 1.62.

Every New England State has adopted free text-books but Maine has the best record. In Maine the expenditure per pupil for the five year period reported since the adoption is as follows: 1891, 1.16; 1892, .54; 1894, .40; 1895, .46.

In the light of these figures let some fond parent sit down with his offspring and compare notes with individual ownership. A word to the wise is sufficient.

Hon. Mason S. Strong, State Superintendent of Education of Vermont, in his late report makes the following statement:

"Probably no school law spread upon our statute books during the last few years has been more acceptable to the people than the law providing for free-text-books for the pupils of the public schools."

"The advantages to be derived from the system may be briefly summarized as follows:

1st, A large annual saving to the people of the State.

2nd, An increase in school attendance. Statistics show that such increase is eleven per cent.

3rd, Pupils equipped to begin work the first day of school; loss of time so frequently resulting from previous systems prevented.

4th, All pupils well and equally provided, sensitiveness resulting from the disparity of equipment removed; advantages equalized.

5th, Pupils trained in the formation of habits of order, neatness, and regard for the property of others.

6th, Enables teachers better to classify their schools, to place books in the hands of pupils adapted to their ability; to do better work.

7th, It fills out the intent of the free school system."

In the State of Maryland a committee consisting of eight of the most prominent educators, having Hon. E. B. Prettyman as chairman, was appointed to thorough-



ly investigate the question of free text-books and report its findings with recommendations. This committee on November 26, 1895, made a most exhaustive report upon this subject and among its findings is the following:

"We find that free text books have now been adopted throughout the whole United States by ten States, and by a very large number of districts and other subdivisions in the other States. In some towns free books have been in use for nearly twenty years.

"We invite special attention to the assertion that we have not been able to find a single instance of the abandonment of the free text-book system after its adoption in any state or locality; on the contrary, it is the uniform and emphatic testimony of those who have tried it, that the advantages claimed have been fully realized, and that the reasons assigned for opposing the scheme have not been sustained. The cost of books has been reduced; schools have been able to organize on the first day of the term; new classes have been promptly formed during the year; the attendance upon schools has been increased; and, for these and other reasons, the efficiency of the schools has been increased. It has also been shown that the books loaned free have been better cared for, and last longer, under, proper regulations, properly enforced, than those sold to the pupils. . . .

" . . . In all of which I heartily concur. Then I would respectfully recommend the following plan to meet the first cost of the introduction, viz: have the State use the funds which accumulate in the State School Income Fund. Last February I had the honor to distribute this fund among the several counties of the State as provided in section 1713 of the Political Code. This amounted to \$51,027.60, or on the basis of \$1.30 per capita of school age. Of course the same has been accumulating since we became a State, and therefore is a larger sum than will be distributed next year by my successor. However, this fund in a few years will be adequate to nearly meet the entire expense of our school system and for that reason I give this as a source from which to draw to procure the introduction of free text-books.

"This fund has reached nearly \$20,000 since last January, and if the Legislative Assembly would relieve the State Superintendent from carrying into effect the provisions of 1714 of the Political code for one year this sum would amount to \$45,000 or \$50,000. This amount would certainly pay first cost of introduction and this would not be felt by any tax payer."

If the issue carried, the trustees were required to inform the county commissioners of the fact, stating what they estimated would be needed to provide free textbooks in their district. The county commissioners were required to raise the necessary funds by means of a special levy on all taxable property within the district.

The bill was passed and became law in March 1897. This gave the people of the State only a month in which to become acquainted with the provisions of the bill and the result was it wasn't voted upon very generally. Nevertheless ninety two districts decided to furnish textbooks free to their pupils, including Butte, Miles City, and Helena.<sup>30</sup> By 1899 it was estimated that one third of the pupils in the state were having their books furnished to them.

In the Superintendent of Public Instruction's biennial<sup>30</sup> report for 1898 we find the following comment on the new law:

"Notwithstanding the law has not been in operation quite eighteen months, the reports made from those districts adopting free books fully justify all that the friends of the law claimed for it. The law is a success. The reports made to this office from the county superintendents to whom we have sent circular letters specifically asking for information regarding the working of this law, uniformly show that the people like it. We received a letter from a county superintendent which reads as follows:

"Glasgow, Montana, Jan. 21, 1898

"In answer to your letter of sometime ago concerning free text-books I would say that the four districts that have adopted them are delighted with them and I think those that did not, wish they had.

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30. Fifth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Montana, 1898. p. 15.

At the April election the four remaining districts adopted free books.

JESSIE HILL, County Superintendent"

One would gather from the foregoing report that the free textbook idea was being adopted almost unanimously all over the State. That many of the districts that voted for furnishing textbooks in 1898 were "back-sliders" by 1902 may be gathered from the reports on the condition in Montana on August 31, 1902. At the regular school elections held that year, fifty districts voted on the issue and of these only twenty two were favorable, while twenty eight were against the plan. Various districts in the State owned at that time a total of 83,200 textbooks, of which 73,930 were owned by districts in Silverbow County.<sup>31</sup>

The law providing for a textbook commission and which was enacted in 1903 made it obligatory for every district in the State to put the proposition of free textbooks up for a vote.<sup>20</sup> Causing the issue to be voted upon in every district of the State necessarily increased the number of districts in which textbooks would be furnished. By 1905 there were 204 districts voting in favor of the issue, with 200 opposed. However, by 1906, only 149 districts favored the plan.<sup>32</sup> In 1910 it was reported that 297 districts were furnishing free

textbooks and the number of textbooks owned by the districts

31. Seventh Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1902. Statistical report, part II.

32. Ninth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1906. Statistical report, part II.

20. Op. Cit., p. 51-52.

of the State totalled 182,012.<sup>33</sup>

When the State Legislature in 1905 passed the law creating a new textbook commission to supersede the one set up by the law of 1903, provision was made to have the matter of free textbooks voted upon in every district of the state every year.<sup>21</sup> This proviso continued in effect until 1913. The textbook commission law passed that year made no mention of this, but specified that voters would have to petition as was the plan under the law of 1897, except that in districts not in incorporated towns or cities only five petitioners were required.<sup>22</sup>

When the legislature met in 1917 section 1811 of the<sup>25</sup> textbook law was changed. All districts in the state were henceforth required to furnish textbooks free to all pupils. Since no distinction was made as to whether high school or grade school pupils were meant, it was understood that the districts would be required to furnish texts for both. This, of course, obviated the necessity for the matter of free textbooks being voted upon each year in each district.

The method of paying for the books remained the same as under the law of 1907.

Montana was now one of the sixteen States in the Union<sup>29</sup> which required free textbooks. There were seventeen others

33. Eleventh Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1910. Statistical Report, Part II.

21. Op. Cit. p. 51.

22. Op. Cit. p. 274.

25. Op. Cit. p. 101.

29. Op. Cit. p. 1

that authorized some system whereby free textbooks could be furnished. By 1934 the number of States furnishing free textbooks had grown to 25, while 20 had provisions for local option in this respect.

Only six States, including Montana, require that the<sup>29</sup> textbooks be furnished by the district. In all of the New England States the books are furnished by the town or city. In ten States, Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas, the textbooks are furnished at state expense. In South Dakota and Utah the county is the unit that supplies the books.<sup>29</sup>

While all States having mandatory free textbook laws furnish the books to the elementary schools, all but five also supply them to their high school pupils. Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, New Mexico, and Oregon are the exceptions. Oklahoma's law makes the matter of supplying free textbooks to the high school students permissive in each respective<sup>29</sup> district.

In one half of the twenty States having permissive free<sup>29</sup> textbook laws, the district or county may also supply the books to the high school pupils. These States are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Vir-

29. Op. Cit. p. 2 For the first three citations  
29. Op. Cit. p. 3 For the last citation

ginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Fourteen of these States provide that the districts may elect whether to furnish free textbooks or not, namely, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. In four of the States, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and North Carolina, the books may be furnished by either the county or the district, while in Virginia this may be done by either the county or a city.

CHAPTER IV  
A HISTORY OF THE STATE TEXTBOOK  
COMMISSION

No minutes or other records are available pertaining to the meetings of the commissions which existed prior to 1907, except for a brief mention of the sessions of the 1897 body by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in his biennial<sup>19</sup> report. Since the commissions of 1897, the advisory type before that time, and that of 1903 were all killed by law, they were really not a former part of the 1907 body, which has continued without interruption since that time.

The first meeting of the commission that exists under our present law was held in Helena on June 17, 1907. The members included the Hon. R. B. Smith, former governor of the State of Montana, Principal L. R. Foote of Dillon, Superintendent R. J. Condon of Helena, Superintendent of Public Instruction, W. E. Harmon, Principal W. E. Chambers of Lutte, Principal Lewis Terwilliger of Livingston, and Superintendent S. D. Largent of Great Falls, all schoolmen, except the former governor.

Bids were received from thirty one publishers to supply texts in history, physiology, arithmetic, language, grammar, reading, spelling, geography, and writing. Probably the outstanding feature of the meeting was the attempt on the part of the typographical union through several locals to secure the agreement on the part of the commission that

34. Minutes of the Montana State Textbook Commission. (The minute book is on file in the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana)

it contract for books sold only by publishers employing union labor. Telegrams were received setting forth the status of each publisher, though some of the messages were not in agreement with one another in this respect. Several Committees of union representatives called and were heard by the commission. Finally after four days of almost constant interruption by labor representatives the commission closed the matter by passing the following resolution:

34

"Resolved, that it is the sense of this commission that there is no evidence before it that would characterize any house offering bids on school books to this commission as an unfair house. That this commission has already acted thus far and will continue to act in the selecting of books solely upon the merits of the books adopted."

After making the required adoptions, the commission adjourned\* until it was called again by the chairman on December 30, 1908. The Hon. R. B. Smith had died since the last meeting, but no one had been appointed to the vacancy thus created. The purpose of the meeting was to ascertain if any changes needed to be made in the textbooks selected the year before. No changes seemed necessary, though Judson's "Land of the Shining Mountains" was adopted as a Montana history text.

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34. Op. Cit. p. 34

\*. The texts adopted included American Leaders and Heroes by Gordy, New Century Elementary Physiology by Hall, the Southworth-Stone Series of Arithmetics, the Webster-Cooley Series of Language texts, Modern English Grammar by Emerson and Bender, Wheeler's Primer and Graded Literature for grades one to six, Wheeler's Literary Readings for grades seven and eight, Fairbanks' Home Geography for Primary Grades, First Steps in Geography by Frye, Montana Higher Geography by Frye, Graded Lessons in Spelling by Doub, and Perry's Writing Books.



Several textbook commissions in the past had wondered what jurisdiction they had in the matter of high school texts, though the laws in some instances stated that they were not to adopt either high school texts or library books. The commission in 1908, however, felt that they should have at least an advisory capacity in this respect and consequently made the following resolution to the legislature which was about to convene:

34

"Be it resolved, that the incoming Legislature be requested to authorize the State Textbook Commission to select an advisory list of high school textbooks, together with contract prices from which the several high schools of the state may select their texts."

Search of the House or Senate Journals fails to indicate that the resolution was ever considered.

The commission did not meet again until January 22, 1910. There were only four members present, including Terwilliger, Harmon, Condon and Chambers. No basal texts were adopted, but several supplementary reading books were added to the list. Dr. T. D. Tuttle of the Montana State Department of Health presented a manuscript, "Principles of Public Health", which he had prepared in accordance with an act of 1909. It evidently did not appeal to the commission as a very satisfactory textbook and after the whole manuscript was thoroughly discussed they declined to accept it until after several suggested changes would be made.\*

34. Ibid

34. Ibid

\* No mention was made of the changes desired.

More than two years elapsed before the commission met again, this time on March 30, 1912. New members, all of them schoolmen, were W. K. Dwyer of Anaconda, H. A. Davee of Lewistown, Ward H. Nye of Billings, John Dietrich of Helena, and C. V. Fullerton of Butte. These with L. R. Foote of Dillon and the Superintendent of Public Instruction made the commission a one hundred per cent school organization.

It was decided at this meeting that new textbooks should be adopted in physiology, spelling, writing, language, grammar, geography, history, civics, reading, and arithmetic. They met again on May 11, 1912 and notices were prepared for the papers that the commission would receive bids up till noon of June 17, 1912 for the supplying of textbooks in the above subjects.

All members were present at the meeting which opened on June 17, 1912. As in the meeting held in 1907 the labor unions were on hand to influence the commission in making its choice of books. So much pressure was brought to bear on the commission that they finally asked the attorney general as to the legality of requiring that all books bear a union label. The attorney general held that such requirement would not be legal. After five days thus consumed, the commission finally got down to work on the selection, representatives of publishers being restricted to 10 minutes of discussion. Charges brought by union representatives that publishers were selling the same texts in other states at a less price than

that charged in Montana went unheeded though the actual price lists for the states in question were submitted. Adoptions\* were made for textbooks in all the subjects declared open at the March meeting.

There was at the time but one depository for textbooks in the State and that at Butte. Some complaints as to the great distance from the depository to schools in the eastern and western parts of the State resulted in the commission expressing a feeling that there should be two depositories, one in the eastern and one in the western part of the State.

Since no supplementary readers were adopted at this session the commission convened for that purpose on November 23, 1912. The members were much elated over the letters received commending the selection of basal texts made on June 17.

The adoptions made in 1912 were for six years and hence there was little need for a meeting in the immediate future. The commission had not assembled for almost four years when called by the chairman to come to Helena on

October 2, 1916. The only new member was Doctor J. P. Rowe  
 \* The adoptions included Conn's Elementary Physiology and Hygiene, Palmer Practice Book in Writing and Teacher's Manual, Power's Speller, Robbins and Row's Essential Studies in English Language and Grammar, (Emerson and Fender made supplementary) The Natural School Geography, Reinsch's Civil Government, Riverside Primer for grades one to four, Elson Readers for grades five to eight, Tarr and McMurray's Elementary Geography, Stories of Heroism by Luce for primary grades, Gordy's A History of the United States (Indiana Ed.), Wentworth and Smith's New Elementary Arithmetic (1907 Ed.), Wentworth and Smith's Arithmetic Part I and Part II.

of the State University at Missoula. The inclusion of a school man from one of the colleges in the State was permissible under the textbook law adopted in 1913. The principle<sup>22</sup> reason for the meeting at this time was to ascertain whether the adoptions made four years before were still satisfactory. After considerable discussion on the merits of the texts in use, it was decided that except for the books in use in language and grammar, arithmetic and geography, all the books adopted in 1912 were still satisfactory. However, after further discussion the commission retracted and decided that the Wentworth-Smith series of arithmetics were satisfactory and they agreed that no change would be made in that respect.

Contracts were extended for two years for Elson Readers, Riverside Primers, Power's Spellers, Palmer Writing, Elementary Physiology and Hygiene by Conn, Civil Government by Reinsch, Gordy's history, and Wentworth-Smith arithmetics.

The question of the legality of the readoption of any textbook now in use before the expiration of the six year period was referred to the attorney general. No mention, however, is made of the latter's opinion, but evidently he must have approved of their action in that the adoptions made at the time were not rescinded later.

Superintendent R. J. Cunningham of Bozeman was a  
 22. Session Laws of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of  
the State of Montana, 1913, p. 269-76.

new member when the commission convened January 13, 1917. Again the labor unions appealed to the commission to buy nothing but books bearing the union label. A list of the "50 Class A" publishers was given the commission with the request that only "fair" books be adopted.

Twenty three companies submitted bids and the adoptions included Tarr and McMurray's New Geography, First Book and Second Book; Live Language Lessons, Elementary Book and Advanced Book; and a large number of supplementary readers in both reading and geography.

The same group met again August 1, 1917, to receive bids for a text in agriculture. The text by Benson and Betts was adopted.

Frank B. Baird, superintendent at Roundup, and Elga M. Shearer, assistant superintendent at Butte, were appointed to fill the vacancies created by the expiration of the terms of Dr. J. P. Rowe and the outgoing Superintendent of Public Instruction, H. A. Davee. Though Miss May Trumper was now Superintendent of Public Instruction, she did not serve as a member of the State Textbook Commission during the first four years that she held office.

When the board met on October 7, 1918, all members were present except Miss Shearer. It was decided to receive bids for supplementary material in history, reading, and civics when the commission would meet on October 26. Feeling that

they would like to have some expression of the feelings of the superintendents of first and second class districts in regard to changes in the texts used, the following letter was ordered sent by the secretary:

"Dear Sir or Madam:

"The Textbook Commission will be glad to receive from you any suggestions in regard to changes in present texts, either basal or supplementary.

"A reply by return mail will be appreciated.

L. R. Foote, Secretary"

At the meeting held on October 26, 1918, the commission extended the contracts on Reinsch's Civics, Conn's Physiology and Hygiene, Gordy's history, and the Palmer Penmanship for a period of two years. All other subjects were thrown open for bids to be received on January 20, 1919. No mention was made of the sort of response received to the letters sent out three weeks previously.

Two innovations characterized the meeting begun on January 20, 1919. First, it was decided to adopt four texts as basal in reading and, second, that the commission members be grouped into several committees, each committee to study texts for a certain subject. Under this arrangement the meeting would adjourn each day after convening so that the committees might take up their respective groups of textbooks to study. After four days the elections had been decided\*

\* The adoptions: Stone-Mill's Arithmetic, Every Day Mental Arithmetic by Gifford, Lyons and Cavanaugh's Easy Road to Reading, Natural Method Readers, Houghton Mifflin Co.'s Riverside Readers, University Publishing Co.'s Studies in Reading, Elson Grammar School Readers, Young and Field's Literary Readers, and New World Speller by Wahlforth and Rogers.

upon by each committee and the adoptions were for ally made by the commission. An unusually long list of supplementary readers and spelling books was among the selections made.

The minutes of the commission state that a special meeting was called on June 2, 1919, to consider some modifications that Ginn and Co. desired in their contracts. The Young and Field Readers and the Beacon Series of Readers had both been readopted at the January 20 session and the commission decided at this special meeting to extend the contracts for these readers for a period of six years at the old prices. Just what modifications were desired or in what way the new contracts were different from those issued at the January 20 meeting is not indicated.

America was at the time in a highly emotional state of mind because of the war then in progress and anything that smacked of Germany was decidedly not patriotic; witness the naming of weinerwursts, "Liberty Sausages". Complaints that the Kaiser's picture had appeared in some of the "Easy Reading" texts had come to the board. It developed that this had been in a few of the books and without the knowledge of the publishers. Another complaint arose about the color of the flag imprinted in the cover of the fourth grade reader of the same series. After the attention of the publishers had been called to it they changed this to the accepted colors, red, white and blue.

Miss May Trumper was appointed to take the place of\*  
 \*. Miss Trumper was elected Superintendent of Public Instruction that a term for the second term.

L. R. Foote and met with the commission at its meeting on October 4, 1920. It was decided to ask for bids in history and civics. The contracts for Conn's Physiology and Hygiene and the Palmer Penmanship books were extended for two years.

Because of fluctuations in manufacturing costs due to excessively high labor and materials prices at the close of the war several of the publishers were not anxious to enter into agreements to furnish books at any set price for so long a period as six years. Houghton Mifflin and Co. expressed a desire to have a contract whereby they would agree to sell the books on a constant discount basis and then only on a two year contract. D. C. Heath and Co. were willing to take a six year contract provided that they might charge the schools in Montana a price that would be as low as they charged schools in any other state. The commission was unable to make any decision on this, since the law specified conditions under which contracts might be made which were not compatible with the offers of either of these companies.

The bids for the subjects declared open at this meeting were to be in the commission's hands by October 20. When the commission met at this time John Dietrich of Helena resigned and Ward H. Nye of Billings, a former member, was appointed in his place. Among the first matters to be considered were objections from the publishers to furnish texts at the old prices. Silver Burdett and Co. declined



the extension of their contract to furnish Conn's Physiology and Hygiene, but agreed to sell the texts at 65 cents, the actual cost of production. The World Book Co. likewise declined their contract for Tuttle's Principles of Public Health except for as many books as they had on hand. The commission decided to extend the contracts at the advanced prices subject to the ruling of the Attorney General as to the legality of extending a contract at other than the old price. If the contracts thus made were found to be not legal it was agreed that bids would be accepted to furnish texts in those subjects affected when the commission would meet on January 17, 1921.

Contrary to expectation the above contracts were declared to be legal. Adoptions made at the January 17 meeting included The Making of Our Country by Smith and Burnham, Introductory American History by Bourne and Denton, Stories of Later American History by Gordy, Stories of Early American History by Gordy, and Hughes' Community Civics with Montana supplement. Publishers were advised that the commission felt that better facilities for distribution of their textbooks be provided in this State.

Feeling that they could do their work better if the times for meeting were better distributed throughout the year the commission made the following recommendation to the legislature which was then in session:

"1. Amendment to section 1802, Chapter XVIII: "The said textbook commission shall hold two regular meetings every two years as follows: The first meeting shall be held on the second Saturday in September of 1922 and every second year thereafter, and the second meeting the second Monday in December 1922 and every second year thereafter.

The purpose of the first meeting shall be to determine what subjects, if any, as hereinbefore provided, textbooks shall be changed and expiring contracts extended; provided, that changes shall not be in textbooks in more than three subjects at any one meeting.

The purpose of the second meeting shall be to adopt textbooks in those subjects in which a change has been recommended."

It was further recommended that Section 1803, Chapter XVIII be changed to read so that advertising for bids that were to be received for subjects that had been opened would go out on October 1 for thirty days. Contracts would be let for a term of six years, with four year extensions. Nothing was done at that session of the legislature about either of the proposed amendments.

C. V. Fulton, W. K. Dwyer, and Eliza H. Shearer had been replaced by Mittie Shoup and Lydia Rademacher, teachers, and D. S. Williams, superintendent of schools at Bozeman, when the commission met on October 1, 1922. Because of the serious financial condition in the schools throughout the State in 1922 it was decided to ask the publishers to extend their present contracts for a period of two years and make no new adoptions. The contract for Benson and Betts Agriculture expiring at this time, was extended for a period of two years. The MacMillan Co. reported that they were unable to renew their geography contract. This was declared open for

bids at the January, 1923, meeting. After considerable discussion it was decided to open penmanship to bids at the same meeting, since the Palmer system had been in use in the State for eleven years.

However, when the commission met on January 15, 1923, the Palmer method of penmanship was adopted for another period of six years. Shepherd's Geography for Beginners and McMurray and Parker's Geographies were also adopted for six years. Bookmen were given thirty minutes to show their geographies.

Miss May Trumper, R. J. Cunningham, D. S. Williams (old members), Mittie Shoup of Missoula, E. M. Laure of Plentywood, W. D. Swetland of Kalispell, and Ward L. Tye of Billings (new members) made up the commission which met on October 6, 1924. It was decided to open the subject of language and grammar and physiology and hygiene for bids. Mr. Davidson, representing the attorney general's office stated that the commission may not extend contracts at advanced prices. This was a complete reversal of opinion as compared with the decision of the attorney general prior to the meeting of the commission January 17, 1921. (See page 45)

The question arose as to whether the publishers would forfeit their present contracts if they refused to accept the extended contracts at the old prices. The consensus of opinion of the members seemed to be that should the publishers refuse to take the contracts that their bonds would become

forfeit and it was voted to extend contracts for Benson and Betts Agriculture for two years, the present series of arithmetic for four years, readers for two years, and encyclopedias for four years, the evident belief being that the publishers were would take the contracts to avoid forfeiting the bonds.

Robbs-Terrill, publishers, agreed to extend the Benson and Betts Agriculture for anywhere from one to five years at the prices in the old contract.

The fact that most of the publishers refused to accept their contracts occasioned the meeting held December 27, 1924. The attorney general, however, ruled that they were bound by their old contracts to accept an extension at the old prices, if the commission should tender an extension.

Local dealers in textbooks throughout the State sent in complaints to the commission that the publishers do not maintain the prices that were stipulated in their contracts. The president and secretary of the commission were ordered to send warnings to the publishers who have violated the price schedule agreed upon.

No notice of the attorney general's opinion was sent the publishers, however, until the commission met on January 19, 1925. At this meeting a Mr. Hoerl of the McKee Stationery Co. called to discuss having depositories at the company's stores in Luttrell, Billings, and Great Falls. He complained that the publishers were not meeting the prices agreed upon at depositories.

It was recommended to the legislature, then in session, that the law be amended to permit the commission to have its meetings at other times than when the legislature was in session, with the first meeting to be on the third Saturday of September of even numbered years and the second meeting to be on the second Monday in December of the same year. It was also recommended that interviews by bookmen with members of the commission be concluded two weeks before adoptions were to be made.\*

The legislature took cognizance of the recommendation as to meeting times and amended the textbook law accordingly. Thus it was that the next meeting was held on September 18, 1926. New members at the time included A. G. Perthot of Fozeman, a layman, and Linden McCullough of Dillon (not present). The recommendation of the previous session that interviews with bookmen be concluded two weeks before adoptions were rescinded. The contract for Gordy's history was extended for another four years and it was decided to open the subjects of agriculture, reading and civics for bids.

The commission met on December 13, 1926, as prescribed by the new law for the purpose of receiving bids and making

\* Adoptions made at this meeting included the following:  
 Boys and Girls of Wakeup Town (physiology and hygiene);  
 The Child's Day (physiology and hygiene), Handbook of Health;  
 Oral and Written English by Potter, Jeschke and Gilbert;  
 Essential Language Habits by Cowan, Betz and Charters.  
 Contracts were extended for Benson and Betts' Agriculture for two years, Stone-Mills arithmetics for four years, Everyday Mental Arithmetic for four years, and World Spellers for four years.

adoptions for the subjects thrown open at the previous meeting. \*

An almost completely new group made up the commission which met on September 15, 1922. For some reason there were only six duly appointed members at this time and they included I. B. Collins of Roundup, Frank Livingston of Wolf Point, A. G. Harsely of Savage, G. E. Kidder of Glendive, F. S. Lusk of Missoula and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, May Tru per. It was decided to open arithmetic, penmanship and spelling.

Miss Elizabeth Ireland\*\* sat as the seventh member when the commission met on December 10, 1923, to receive bids.\*\*\*

W. A. Campbell of Helena (publisher), E. F. Duncker of Mozeman, and Helen Laird of Butte were new to the commission when it assembled September 20, 1930. Geography, history, and physiology and hygiene were thrown open for bids. Contracts for two years were extended for Potter, Jeschke and Gilbert's Language and Grammar and Cowan, Betz and Charter's

#### Essential Language Habits.

\* Adoptions included Western Agriculture by Midstoe; Loyal Citizenship by Reed; Bobbs-Merrill readers, grades 1-4; Learn to Study Readers, Books 1-5; Atlantic Character Building Readers, Books I-IV; Everyday Classics, preprimer and books through the fourth grade; Elson Readers, Books V to VIII, inc.; Reading and Living, Books I and II; Child's Own Day Readers; and The Silent Readers, Books I to VI, inc..

\*\* Elected Superintendent of Public Instruction Nov. 1923.

\*\*\* Adopted Standard Service Arithmetic series, Horn-Ashbaugh Spellers, Correlated Handwriting by Freeman (Zaner-Bloser). Extended contracts for two years for Mc'urray and Parker geographies and Shepherd's Geography for Beginners.

It was suggested that a "standard list" of school supplies, such as encyclopedias, maps, dictionaries, etc. be approved by the commission and a list printed for school boards. This evidently got no further as no subsequent mention is made of the list.

Adoptions for history, geography and physiology and hygiene were made when the commission met to receive bids on December 8, 1930.\*

The 'depression' was upon us in earnest when the commission assembled on September 17, 1932. Publishers were asked to reduce their prices in view of the lower costs of production during this period, but as far as can be ascertained, those having contracts failed to make any reductions. The contracts for Western Agriculture by Widstoe, Loyal Citizenship by Reed, Oral and Written English by Potter, Jeschke and Gilbert, and Essential Language Habits by Charters, Metz and Cowan were extended for two years. Reading was thrown open for bids. The following resolution was adopted by the commission:

"The members of the commission look with disfavor on the practice of companies sending into the State reading demonstrators to give wholesale reading demonstrations throughout the State to put over their books. It is thought by the members of the commission that a

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\* Adoptions included for history *Makers of Our Nation*, *Founders of Our Nation*, *Dawn of American History* (Revised edition), *American History* (Macmillan Co.); for geography *Home Folks*, *Home Life in Faraway Lands*, *The Americas*, *Nations Beyond the Seas*, *The United States Among the Nations*; and for physiology and hygiene *My Health Habits*, *In Training for Health*, *The Way to Keep Well*, *The Human Body and Its Care*.

textbook; should in itself carry the method and context to such an extent that a demonstration should not be necessary to make known the plan of the text."

The commission met to receive bids for readers on December 12, 1932.\*

The entire board, composed of W. A. Campbell of Helena, Frank H. Livingston of Wolf Point, Helen Laird of Lutte, Superintendent Elizabeth Ireland, A. J. Rooney, Glen L. Payne of Miles City and A. T. Peterson of Billings, met on September 15, 1934. Language and grammar, arithmetic and writing were opened for bids. Probably feeling that the main purpose was advertising and rather unethical the commission had the following statement read into the minutes:

"The Commission went on record that it would look with disfavor on committees that were organized within the State of Montana by publishing companies or their representatives for the purpose of evaluating textbooks."

The last meeting held to date by the commission was that beginning December 12, 1934. The order of business included receiving of bids and the adoptions for language and grammar, arithmetic and penmanship. \*\*

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\* Readers adopted included The Children's Own Reader by Purnell and Cusack; Child-Story Readers by Irecman, Johnson and French; Fact and Story Readers by Suzzalo, Ireland, McLaughlin and Skinner; Literature for Junior High Schools by Briggs, Curry and Payne; New Silent Readers by Lewis, Rowland and Mehres; Reading and Living by Hill, Lyman and Moore; and Stone Readers (Silent readers).

\*\* Adoptions included Introductory Book of the Daily Life Language Series, Special California Edition of the Triangle Arithmetics, Palmer Method of writing with Zaner-Bloser as supplementary, and the American Language Series.



## EVOLUTION OF THE SELECTING AND ADOPTING AUTHORITY

rior to 1881 no serious attempt was made in this State to provide for the adoption of a uniform series of textbooks. While the Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1870 did<sup>2</sup> select a list of books to be used, nothing in the laws of the territory at the time made possible the enforcement of the selection.

Despite the recommendations of the Superintendent of<sup>3</sup> Public Instruction in 1879 that a commission be appointed by the governor to adopt a uniform series of textbooks, the legislature took upon itself the task of selecting them. This plan was followed at each of the adoptions made during the next fifteen years, except that in 1885 a law was passed<sup>12</sup> providing for a textbook commission that was entirely advisory in its capacity. These commissions, consisting of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and two others, one of which must have been a practical teacher, held office from the time of their appointment immediately after the session of the legislature until their reports had been accepted by the next succeeding assembly. New laws were passed creating a new commission at every regular session after 1885 until 1893. The actual selecting and adopting still was the prerogative of the legislature, a duty it evidently did not perform to everyone's taste as may be gleaned from the reports and recommendations of the Superintendent of Public Instruc-

2. Op. Cit. p. 13

3. Op. Cit. p. 6.

12. Op. Cit. p. 50-51

tion at the time.<sup>16</sup>

Though the legislature did not follow the recommendation that the duty be placed in the hands of the State Board of Education, they did in 1897 relinquish their privilege of adopting textbooks to a commission created by a law passed<sup>18</sup> that year. There were to be seven members, four of whom were ex-officio, being the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Attorney-General, the president of the State University, and the president of the State Agricultural College. The remaining three were to be public school teachers appointed by the Governor. No length of term was stated in the law.

To this commission was granted all the powers needed in selecting and adopting textbooks, making of contracts with the publishers, causing them to put up bonds to guarantee performance, etc.

This commission met and functioned in a satisfactory<sup>19</sup> manner until it was superseded by a new body set up by the provisions of the law of 1903. Whether there was complaint<sup>20</sup> as to the preponderance of ex-officio members in the old commission is not known, but that may be surmised in that the new was entirely appointive. Four of the members must have been actively engaged in teaching in the public schools of the State at the time of their appointment. The term of

16. Op. Cit. p. 258

18. Op. Cit. p. 92-97

19. Op. Cit. p. 92-97

20. Op. Cit. p. 273-81

office for two of the members was to be for two years and of the other five for four years, with the provision that the Governor was to make new appointments on the same basis in the event of a vacancy for any cause.

What prompted the legislature to discard this scheme for a commission and replace it with a new one in 1907 is<sup>21</sup> not ascertainable. The principal changes were in the qualifications for membership and the length of term. Five of the commission now, instead of four as previously, must be persons actively engaged in teaching in this State. Three of the members were to serve for a term of three years and the remainder for five, but as any term expired the new appointee was to serve for five years.

This arrangement continued until 1913 when the law was<sup>22</sup> changed to permit the appointment of either public school people or persons engaged actively in teaching in state educational institutions at the time. This plan for the membership of the commission is the one in use today.

The reader is referred to the tables on the next two pages for a summary of the changes in the membership of the commission.

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21. Op. Cit. p. 46-53

22. Op. Cit. p. 269-76.

**EVOLUTION OF THE SELECTING AND ADOPTING AUTHORITY**

BODY	MEMBERSHIP	DATES	AUTHORITY
Supt. of Pub. Instruction		1870	Could select but could not enforce
Territorial Legislature	Members of the Legislature	1881 to 1884	Made selection and adoption
Textbook Commission and the Legislature	Supt. of Public Instruction and two public school teachers appointed for two years Members of the Legislature	1885 to 1886	Textbook commission made recommendations to the Legislature, which made adoptions and contracted with the publishers
Textbook Commission	Seven members, four ex-officio, Supt. of Pub. Inst., Attorney General, Pres. of State University and Pres. of State College. Three other members (active teachers) appointed by the governor.	1897 to 1903	Empowered to make selections and to contract with the publishers
Textbook Commission	Seven members appointed by the governor, four of whom must be actively engaged in teaching.	1903 to 1907	Same as above
Textbook Commission	Seven members appointed by the governor, five of whom must be actively engaged in teaching.	1907 to 1913	Same as above
Textbook Commission	Same as above, except five must either be active school teachers or instructors from State institutions of higher learning.	1913 to 1916	Same as above

## COMPOSITION OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE TEXTBOOK COMMISSION

YEAR	EX-OFF- FICIO	SUPT. OF PUB. INST.	ACTIVE TEACHERS	SUPTS. PRINS.	LAYMEN	FROM STATE ED. INST'S.
1881 to 1896	1 *			2		
1897 to 1903	4 **			3		
1903 to 1907	No record Available					
1907		1		5	1	
1910		1		5 ***		
1912		1		6		
1914		1		5		1
1916		1		5		1
1918			1	6		
1920		1	1	4	1	
1922		1	2	3	1	
1924		1	2	3	1	
1926		1	1	4	1	
1928		1	1	4	1	
1930		1	1	3	2	
1932		1	1	3	2	
1934		1	1	4	1	

\* During the interval from 1881 to 1896 the ex-officio member was the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

\*\* From 1897 to 1903 the ex-officio members were the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Attorney General, the President of the State University, and the President of the State College.

\*\*\* Ex-Governor H. B. Smith had died leaving a vacancy on the commission.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this study would hardly be worthwhile unless cognizance of present tendencies in textbook selection and some evaluation of our present plan for adoption of textbooks in this State were not taken. To secure the information needed on these two phases of the study a questionnaire was prepared and sent out and a considerable amount of research was done in the way of a good many magazine articles and texts on the subject.

The questionnaire, which is to be found in the appendix, was made up with the idea of getting a fair degree of returns on really pertinent questions. Every effort was made to make it brief without destroying its purpose. To make certain that it would be representative of all classes of schools in this State and particularly of the schools whose heads are most active in determining the educational policies of the State, it was sent out to all six of the first class districts, to ten of the nineteen county high schools, to forty nine of the second class districts, and to thirty-five of the third class districts. Care was taken to secure replies from every county in the State as well as from the four different classifications of schools.

All six of the first class districts replied, thirty-six, or seventy-five per cent of the second class districts, twenty-three or sixty-six per cent of the third class districts, and eight or eighty per cent of the county high

schools replied. Of the one hundred questionnaires sent out to all the schools selected, seventy three were answered.

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first has to do only with elementary school textbooks and the second only with high school textbooks.

The purpose in asking for the approximate amount spent for textbooks during the last completed school year and what the enrollment was for the same period in both high school and elementary school questionnaires was to determine the per capita cost for textbooks in each case for the last year since this would not otherwise be possible to determine until the Superintendent of Public Instruction issues the biennial report during the year 1936. In a good many cases it is admitted the amounts given are estimates since in most schools the clerk's books are not immediately available to the principals or superintendents.

Question number 3 in the elementary school questionnaire, asking whether the present plan of textbook selection in this State is satisfactory is such that if it was answered

DISTRIBUTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES  
AND PERCENTAGE REPLYING

Classification of Schools	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	County High Schools	Total
Number of questionnaires sent to each	6	49	35	10	100
Number of replies received from each	6	36	23	8	73
Per cent replying	100	73.5	65.7	80	73

"yes", no further explanation would be necessary, while if it was answered "no", question number 4 provides opportunities to indicate in what way or ways the system is not satisfactory. Seven suggested changes in our present textbook law are given. If the person answering had other objections, sufficient space was provided for him. The seven suggested changes were decided upon after reading the bill for a new textbook law presented at the last session of the legislature, reading several textbooks in Education and treatises on the subject of textbook selection, and from opinions of schoolmen that have expressed themselves on the subject.

Question number 5 was asked for the reason that if any law should be passed doing away with the present plan for uniform textbooks over the State, either in part or entirely, it would be desirable to know what the opinions of these educators were as to whether pupils transferring from one school to another would be affected much, provided the State course of study were carefully followed.

In asking what glaring faults (question number 6) could be pointed out as applying to our present system of adopting textbooks it was hoped that a more voluntary type of response might be had than in answer to question number 4. In this respect the expectations of the author were more than justified.

Feeling that many were heartily in favor of the present State textbook system, question number 7 was provided to



permit them to state what features they particularly approve. This was needed to make the questionnaire as fair to the people who wish to retain the present plan as to those who feel a need for change.

## CHAPTER VII

### EVALUATING THE ANSWERS TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

Fifty-seven elementary schools were represented in the answers to questions 1 and 2. For these schools the average cost per capita for textbooks was \$1.86 for the year 1934-35. The median cost was \$1.815. The highest per student cost was found in a school of 98 students and a total expenditure of \$400.00, or a per student cost of \$4.08. The minimum cost was found in a school of 156 pupils, where no money at all had been spent the previous year for textbooks. However, the lowest actual expenditure for textbooks per pupil was \$.58 in a school of 345 pupils with a total cost of \$200.00. A total of 35,468 pupils and an expenditure of \$53,689.69 for textbooks were represented by the answers from the fifty seven schools.

The figures would seem to indicate that the cost per capita for 1934-35 was somewhat below the average for normal times. A study made in 1930 shows that the average cost for Montana for 1928 was \$2.03. During the same interval the cost for nine free-textbook states averaged \$1.45.<sup>36</sup>

#### COST OF TEXTBOOKS IN MONTANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FOR 1934-35

Highest per pupil cost	4.08
Lowest per pupil cost	.00
Average per pupil cost	1.86
Median per pupil cost	1.815
Number of schools reporting	57
Number of pupils represented	35,469
Total expended for books by the 57 schools	53,689.69

<sup>36</sup>. Nelson B. Henry, The Cost of Textbooks, in the Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, Ill., 1931, p. 231.

Sixty elementary school principals or superintendents made replies to question number 3. Fifteen indicated that the present plan of textbook selection in this State is satisfactory to them, while forty-five, or seventy-five per cent, said "no".

Practically all of the forty-five who stated that they were not satisfied with the present plan of selection made known in what respects they were not satisfied by underlining one or more of the responses under question number 4 or wrote in the space provided a statement of their opinions in this respect. Five of the six first class districts in the State felt that first class districts should be permitted to select their own books. Seventeen underlined the statement that first and second class districts should be permitted to select their own books. Only five felt that all districts ought to be allowed this privilege. There were but three who approved of the plan of having the textbooks selected by a committee representing a county or other convenient unit of administration.

The suggestion that the State Textbook Commission adopt several basal texts for each subject, permitting the individual school or teacher to select from the recommended list, met with the greatest approval of any. Twenty-nine of forty-five voted for it. Only one favored the idea of making the adoptions for a longer period than at present and only four thought it should be for a shorter period.

## SUGGESTED CHANGES IN THE STATE TEXTBOOK LAW

Changes Suggested	Number Voting for
Permit all first class districts to select their own textbooks	5
Permit first and second class districts to select their own textbooks	17
Permit all districts to select their own textbooks	5
Have a county or other convenient unit committee select the books for that particular area	3
Have the present textbook commission adopt several basal texts for each subject, permitting the individual school or teacher to select from the recommended list	29
Make the period of adoption for a longer time	1
Make the period of adoption for a shorter time	4

There was one comment on the matter of permitting first and second class districts to select their own books that makes one wonder as to the extent of the practice that is intimated. Let us quote:

They do now. We do. Suppose a second class district adopts a certain textbook not listed by the State Textbook Commission; What is to be done about it?

While it would be very much worthwhile from the standpoint of the textbook commission and the school people in general to know how many schools do select their own elementary school textbooks, it is doubtful if a questionnaire sent out asking for information along that line would bring forth the truth, because anyone admitting that he was not using the texts prescribed by law would be guilty of a misdemeanor and be subject to a fine of not less than twenty-five nor more than one hundred dollars as provided in sec-

tion 1196, Chapter 96, of the State school law. However, the<sup>37</sup> fact that some schools do is significant. It would seem to indicate that there is not general satisfaction with the present plan.

Asked as to whether the use of different textbooks in a subject would make much difference to students who transfer from one school to another, provided the state course of study were carefully followed, six state that they believed it would, three were doubtful, while forty-nine stated that it would make no difference. Some comments, as "Of course", "Obviously no", etc. accompanied their answers. This would indicate that even if the textbooks were permitted to be selected by first class districts, or by first and second class districts, that the lack of uniformity of textbooks would not be a hindrance of any importance to students transferring during the year.

So many comments were offered in reply to question number 4, that are pertinent to the popularity of the present textbook law, that they are given herewith.

Permit districts to select their own books through a committee representing the county or other convenient unit.

Have a county unit select texts for rural schools and let first and second class districts select their own.

That there is dissatisfaction with the personnel of the  
37. School Laws of the State of Montana, 1931, p. 23.

textbook commission may be gleaned from the following comments:

More classroom teachers should be included on the committee. High school teachers should have little voice in the selecting of textbooks for the elementary schools.

A committee of leading school men in the State should be appointed from the various large schools to report a list of recommended texts to the Delegate assembly.

Present commission should be required to appoint committees of subject matter experts to report the offerings in the different fields.

. . . A commission designed to select textbooks for the elementary schools should be appointed from among those who are actively engaged in elementary school education--not high school or college. There should be no lay members. The Superintendent of Public Instruction should be an ex-officio member of this commission and as such serve as the secretary of the commission.

Considerable comment came in the way of criticizing the way in which the textbooks are selected at present. For instance:

Before the textbooks are adopted state-wide they should be used and rated by experts and school men. Books should be used that have proved to be good--possibly in first class districts.

Books should be rated according to a scale.

I believe that schools should be given the option of adopting the new book chosen by the commission or using the new edition of the book then in use. Just because a book has been used is no reason that another book should be used. However, new editions should be used whenever available.

Textbooks should be on trial for a year before adoption.

Selection of one basal text for a subject does not fit in well with the new methods of instruction. No rigid body of subject matter works to best advantage.

As regards the length of time for which a textbook should be adopted we have the following:

Make the adoption for a shorter period of time and repeat in the case of especially good books. This would be better and more economical. We either have to discard many good books now, or use books unfit and unsanitary.

Make the adoption for the average length of life of a book -- used an average of 160 days a year.

Question number 6 asked "In addition to the suggestions above (in 4), what glaring faults would you point out as applying to our present system of adopting textbooks?" There were a total of 42 statements offered in answer to this, and the charge that there was "too much politics" involved was the most prevalent, being mentioned directly in twelve of the statements and insinuated in several more. Just to what extent politics is a factor in textbook selection the author is not in any position to say, no evidence in any of the records that have been perused would indicate anything of the sort, of course.

The statements charging politics follow:

Too much politics. Discourages study of textbooks with view to selecting best. There should be a suggested list and no adoption.

Method of adoption is political instead on a basis of merit. Lawyers employed who have the greatest influence.

Too much politics and trading in the selection of books. The plan is not so bad.

Politics. Witness switch in writing systems for no apparent reasons.

**Favorite textbook companies - politics.**

Too political. Possible for such a commission to be dominated by one or two strong members.

I firmly believe that as a State there should be a professional committee which would receive its appointment in a non-political way and be absolutely free from any political biases or influences in adopting the best books available for the use of the children.

. . . I am distinctly opposed to a politically appointed commission or to lay members selecting professional books.

Charges that the commission was influenced by "high-pressure" salesmen, that it "passed the business around", that some companies were favored over others, etc. were frequently made. Just how much truth there is in these charges is very hard to say. Whether they come because it is possible that they could exist or the school people answering the questionnaire actually know that such was the case cannot be easily ascertained. Naturally the commission would be subjected to the most effective sales methods that the various companies bidding for contracts had at their command. Many of the commissioners are approached months before the scheduled time for a meeting by salesmen from the publishers. Undoubtedly some of the members have favorite textbook publishers, very much as we have favorite stores, car manufacturers, etc. To what extent this may influence them in their selection of textbooks we are in no position to state. However, here are the charges:

Textbook commission members are biased and influenced other than by merit.



### Opportunity for graft.

Favoritism toward companies rather than toward quality of material in text.

There is always the suspicion that the book was not adopted on merit, that "passing the business around" to various companies may have had something to do with it.

Poor selections many times - undue pressure, not real merit, leads to some selections.

Favorite textbook companies.

It seems that certain leading publishers must be favored.

Too much high pressure salesmanship; not enough scientific analysis and evaluation.

The usual faults. Agents lobbying to have their books adopted.

Members of the commission allowing personal feelings to enter into selection.

Commission appears to be subservient to the State department.

Probably the most prevalently mentioned criticism was that relative to the membership of the commission. The inclusion of laymen on the commission is a frequent cause for comment. Many believe that there should only be active elementary school teachers eligible for membership. The following comments are typical:

It would seem that laymen have little right on the commission.

All members should be educators; no laymen.

More classroom teachers should be included on the selecting committee, high school teachers should have little voice in the selection of textbooks for elemen-

tary schools. Give us more men like \_\_\_\_\_  
of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Need more school men and women on the commission.

I am distinctly opposed to laymembers selecting professional books.

The suggestion that I would like to make as to the textbook commission is that it should be filled by professional educators with no laymen on the board.

Textbook selections, I believe, should be in the hands of a committee of schoolmen.

Not the method of selection of textbooks, but the selection of the commission members is at fault. They should all be active school people representing all kinds of public schools.

The textbook commission is not always made up of those qualified to select a book.

Quite a number of those answering the questionnaire felt that the selections were not always of the best or that the system itself was not such as to permit the commission to have the time to study the books carefully enough to make a good selection. Others felt that the plan of having one or two basal books was too limiting, but those persons had evidently overlooked that part of the law which states that there are to be no restrictions on the number of additional books that may be used, so long as the required texts are used as basal. Comments relative to these phases of the textbook question follow:

Commission hasn't time to make a thorough study.

Can't see any merit in a plan where any small group selects texts for an entire state - especially when only one text in each subject is adopted.

Emotional factors enter into a selection because human beings are influenced by emotions as much as by cool judgment.

The present plan denies any independent judgment to be exercised on the choice of best books; it limits the number of books properly available at a time when unit instruction and problem teaching calls for many books and selection of material from them.

Poor selections many times - Undue pressure, not real merit, leads to some selections. Needs in a large city are not the same as in rural schools.

Some adoptions are not very desirable. Some adoptions could be used two or three years longer than at present permitted.

Members of the commission allowing personal feelings to enter into selection. . .

Many books selected by the commission do not meet the needs of the different schools and the different communities.

At the present time we have forced upon us for the next six year period a book which the publishing company believes needs revision. They have already brought out a revised edition of the old book which was sold to Montana, through its commission, only a year ago.

Wastefulness and inelasticity are charges made by some.

The system is not elastic. An excellent history may be shown to me today. However, we are unable to use it for five years.

It hampers any attempt at progressive education if schoolmen follow the course of study and basal texts entirely.

It does not fit in well with the new methods of instruction. No rigid body of subject matter works to best advantage.

The expense. If a text requires replacement in four years, you are stung for one year's use.

Difficulty seems to be in discarding of books which are in fair shape.

We teach books instead of subject matter, present method wasteful and uneconomical.

Many of the complaints made by those who are not satisfied with the present plan for textbook adoption are answered by those who feel that it is a good plan. Many of those who indicate their satisfaction with the plan, however, do so with qualifications and suggestions for improvement. The answers will be given as much as possible under group headings indicative of the phase of the question treated.

#### Economy

The plan for partial adoption does not permit a complete turnover in any one year.

Low cost. Ease in ordering.

Usually a trifle better price.

#### Ability of the Commission to Select

On the whole the textbook commission has not done such a bad job of it.

Members of the textbook commission are certainly better judges than most of us. Certainly better qualified than Montana county superintendents.

#### Value to Teachers and Administrators

Probably the most favorable factor of our present law is that it frees the local superintendent from the pressure of book companies for selection of certain books. The pressure is often exercised in a manner dangerous to the school man who occupies, as he does, a public position depending on a semi-political support for security.

Gives the beginning administrator a reliable list of which he can be sure the state department will approve. Helps an administrator explain why he needs books. Brings up the question of which is the best book for a particular subject.

It saves a lot of bother in selecting texts and dealing with textbook companies.

### Value to Rural Schools

May be best for rural schools.

I think uniformity the safest policy for rural and small schools.

Its greatest value is in giving guidance to rural schools.

I believe that somewhat uniform textbooks for the smaller, especially rural, schools is desirable.

It does tend to unify to some extent work carried on in the rural sections of the state.

There is need for some form of adoption where there is no effective supervision.

Rural schools have little supervision and such great and rapidly changing individual differences in personnel that our present uniform adoptions appear necessary. This opinion applies to the materials of instruction, but not to the method of selection.

### Value of Mandatory Changes

The fact that changes must be made is a good feature. If this were not mandatory some school boards would be reluctant about allowing textbook changes.

Up-to-date textbooks

Does not sanction old editions.

Forces some districts to get books as needed.

It is progressive.

Textbook adoptions for a specific number of years. N tice to schools that a particular book has but another year to run.

The balance of the comments purporting to support the present plan of adoption could not be easily classified and so are presented here in order of occurrence.

Has some unifying influence. Brings weaknesses of certain books to more universal notice, and hence, dis-

approval.

I have in the past approved of the idea of state adoption because it should mean a more searching analysis of the text. The commission, however, should avail itself of the group judgment of the leading teachers of the state.

Centralization of responsibility. Any textbook commission members who care will be careful. Not much influence brought to bear without knowing it.

Textbook will always be an important factor of teaching until we rewrite our course of study.

Standardization of our textbooks.

A unity for the state for moving pupils.

Opinions in the selections of texts would vary. Different teachers would have favored texts. The texts would have to change often with expense. This is not true under the present system.

Some answers or statements that were not in approbation were inserted in the questionnaire where it was asked that the person answering would state what features of the present plan he approved of. The follow:

We are allowed to choose our own high school books.

All but the selection.

None.

None.

Not much to commend.

(F) for flunk.

### Conclusions

Conclusions to be drawn from a study of the elementary school questionnaire will be found on pages 114-15.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions number 1 and 2 have been discussed along with the elementary school questionnaire. Question number 3 was used to ascertain what differences in costs, if any, existed per capita in the different plans of high school organization. It is doubtful if the answers given have any significance.

Question number 4 was asked to determine if textbook purchasing suffers along with other supplies and salaries during a period of depression. Question number 5 is really supplementary to number 4 and answers to it were expected to indicate the extent to which the providing of textbooks was affected by the hard times of the last six years.

Anxious to know what prompts school executives and department executives to want new textbooks, often in courses where the content hardly ever changes, question number 6 was asked with a wide choice of responses offered. An analysis of the answers will prove most interesting. It will be noted that the subjects mentioned are not of the type that change rapidly, if at all, in content.

Some of the questions asked are for the purpose of finding out what the determining factors in making a choice between several textbooks are. Questions number 7, 15, 16, and 17 are of this type.

Some subjects are such that the content is rapidly being changed or added to. Question number 8 was asked prin-

cially to determine how much aware of this fact the people who select our high school textbooks are. Question number 9 would discover about how often changes in such courses should be made.

In some schools, because of lack of funds or a hope that money may be saved, old books are kept in use as long as they are in good physical condition and are supplemented with a few up-to-date texts covering all new material not found in the old books. Question number 10 would discover how prevalent this tendency is.

Question number 11 might well be explained by reference to the discussion on number 4 and number 5. It is further important in that it is valuable to know if this practice is very extensive and, if it is, the answers to question number 12 would determine the effects.

Nine possible answers are provided for question number 13 asking by whom the textbooks are selected. Curiosity as to the degree of co-operation that exists in our schools in the selection of our textbooks, the evident faith that principals and superintendents have in their teachers or lack of it, and the extent to which any attempt is made to do a real job of selecting textbooks were some of the things that were hoped to be learned from the answers.

Number 14, too, would indicate how much care was exercised in attempting to find the best book for any class.

There are schoolmen who would like to have their books



selected for them by a state commission for all subjects or for a part, while others would like a suggested list of textbooks. To discover the extent of this feeling questions number 18, 19, and 20 were included.

One of the most important parts of the study would be to learn what criteria are used by schoolmen in making their selections. Question number 21 was designed to elicit this information.

It was hoped that some of the schools had attempted something along the line of a score card for evaluating textbooks and there is a request in number 22 for a sample if any are in use in the schools questioned.

Questions number 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 are designed to get information on the effectiveness of salesmen, advertising, briefs, etc. in influencing a selection. Three of these questions were adopted from a questionnaire sent out<sup>41</sup> by Frank A. Jensen, Superintendent of Schools, Rockford, Illinois. A comparison of his results and the author's will be found on pages 101-106.

It may be debated that questions number 28, 29, and 30 have no direct bearing on the problem of this study. However, while no one can dispute the fact that they would

indicate some highly interesting answers, they have a very  
 41. Frank A. Jensen, *The Policies of Publishers in Marketing Textbooks*, in the *Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II*, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, Ill. 1931, p. 165-69.

decided bearing on textbook costs, utilization of much valuable material, and the issue as to whether the practices of schoolmen in handling these matters are entirely ethical.

## RESPONSE TO THE HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

Replies were received from sixty high schools in the State ranging from the largest with 2,200 enrolled to one with only thirty pupils. The average enrollment of the high schools responding was 329 while the median high school had an enrollment of 145. The largest expenditure for textbooks was \$7,025.69 and the smallest was \$75.00. The average expenditure was \$303.67, and the median expenditure was \$318.50. The average per capita expenditure was \$2.358 and the median expenditure was \$2.425. This is somewhat lower than the per student cost found by Nelson B. Henry for <sup>36</sup> Montana for the year 1928-29. The cost for that year was \$3.02. His report includes a total of 23,300 students and a total expenditure for textbooks of \$70,200.00. The present study includes 19,765 students and an expenditure of \$46,612.90. With about the same number of students reported in each study it would be reasonable to assume that for the entire State the per student cost at present is approximately sixty cents less than it was in 1928-29.

So few high schools reported their organization to be any other than the 8-4 plan, that any significance to be derived from the comparison of textbook costs for 6-6, 6-3-3, or 8-4 plans would be questionable. Thirty-eight schools reported that they used the 8-4 plan, thirteen, the 6-6 plan, four, the 6-3-3, and two, the 6-2-4.

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36. Op. Cit. p. 231.

## EXPENDITURES FOR TEXTBOOKS IN MONTANA HIGH SCHOOLS

Highest per student cost	\$5.08
Lowest per student cost	.89
Average per student cost	2.358
Median per student cost	2.425
Largest high school enrollment reported	2,200
Smallest high school enrollment reported	30
Average high school enrollment reported	329
Median high school enrollment reported	145
Total number of high school students reported	19,765
Largest expenditure for textbooks reported	\$7,025.69
Smallest expenditure for textbooks reported	75.00
Average expenditure for textbooks	803.67
Median expenditure for textbooks	318.50
Total amount spent by 60 high schools for books	46,612.90
Number of high schools reporting	60

An equal number reported that they had or had not found it necessary to exercise severe retrenchments in the amount spent for textbooks in their high schools during the last three or four years. It is probable that the word "severe" might not have been interpreted the same by all of the persons answering, but had a word indicating "some" amount of retrenchment been used, the chances are that practically all would have answered in the affirmative.

Twenty-three schools indicated that they were using

## EFFECT OF THE "DEPRESSION" ON TEXTBOOK PURCHASING

CONDITION	NUMBER ANSWERING	
	Yes	No
Exercising severe retrenchments in textbook purchasing	30	30
Using books old in content, but in good physical condition*	23	27

\*All twenty three schools reporting that they are using books old in content are among the thirty finding it necessary to exercise severe retrenchments in textbook purchasing.

books that were still in good physical condition though the content was out of date. Thirty-seven stated that they used no book with obsolete content. All twenty-three schools answering this question in the affirmative were among the thirty schools replying that they had had to exercise severe retrenchments during the last three or four years.

The responses to the question number 6 are tabulated below. The question was

REASONS FOR CHANGING TEXTS IN ALGEBRA, PLANE GEOMETRY,  
LATIN, FRENCH, SPANISH, OR ENGLISH

REASONS	Number of Responses
Change in content	40
Improved binding	1
Improved type style and size	6
Improvement in presentation of material	55
Desire for a text more adaptable to unit or project method	29
More adapted to students' needs	36
Tired of old book and want a change	2
New teacher wants text she is used to	1

All of the above answers are about as one would expect, except the first. Unquestionably improvement in the presentation of material would be the most important reason for making a change of textbooks in any subject. It would seem that in algebra, plane geometry, Latin, French, Spanish, and English that it would be practically the only reason for adopting a new book. However, forty of the sixty persons replying to the questionnaire felt that a change in content in these courses also was a good reason for a new text.

It is altogether possible that many of these replying do not distinguish carefully between content and a change in the material utilized to bring about a new or better method of presentation. Obviously plane geometry, algebra, Latin, French, and Spanish, especially, have not changed materially in content since their introduction into the curriculum of high schools. They have changed radically in method of presentation. Most Montana educators evidently appreciate this fact and we find that fifty-five of the sixty principals and superintendents replying have so indicated.

The "Desire for a text more adaptable to the unit or project method" is closely related to "Improvement in presentation of material"; in fact is but a special phase of the latter. Twenty nine schoolmen voted for it. The probable reason that a larger number did not underline it as one of the reasons for making a change in textbooks is that the unit method or the project method are not in wide use in the State.

Thirty-six of the sixty schools indicated that one of the principles used in making changes in textbooks is whether it is adapted to the students' needs. It seems ironical that methods of presentation and content should be regarded as of greater importance than students' needs, unless one could safely go on the theory that no matter what text was selected, the needs would be cared for anyway. The objective of our educational system would seem to be primarily the preparation

of the students for meeting the problems of life. If such is the case, (Could it be otherwise?) then students' needs would naturally be first in importance when it comes to the selection of a textbook but unfortunately many of us are still teaching books instead of children.

Only one principal or superintendent would change books because of improved binding, two, because they were tired of the old book and wanted a change, and one, because the new teacher wasn't acquainted with the old textbook and wanted a new one she was used to. These answers were about as numerous as one would expect and indicate little or nothing, unless it is that there are other reasons than those which are usually regarded as the primary ones for desiring a change in textbooks.

Nothing conclusive can be determined from the responses to question number 7, "In deciding upon a new text does price play any part in your decision?" Twenty-six admit that price is a factor, while thirty-four deny that it is. It is altogether probable that with most administrators the difference of a few cents would not sway us from the book we thought was the best, while on the other hand, most of us would hesitate if the price was much greater. Some schoolmen with budgets which have been cut to the very marrow have been forced to take cognizance of the price of the texts they are considering if they are to be able to buy the books

they need. "aturally in a system where funds are plentiful the matter of cost of textbooks isn't a vital problem, for even if there was a considerable difference in price the effect on the total expended for all school purposes would be negligible. A survey by the National Education Association<sup>37</sup> indicates that less than one cent of the educational dollar in 1934 was spent for textbooks.

Question number 8 was answered as one would naturally expect it to be. Fifty five stated that texts in the social and natural sciences needed to be changed so that books might be had that are up-to-date in content. Three said "No". Two were noncommittal. Any student or teacher of either the social or physical sciences knows that his science is alive and constantly changing, that new facts are discovered, that even theories, once accepted, are no longer tenable, and new ones must take their place. Hence any textbook in chemistry, physics, sociology, biology, economics, etc. three or four years old may present ideas contrary to what is accepted today, with the consequent result that it should be changed for one whose content is up-to-date.

Many schools find that they are financially unable to make the changes when needed in the social and natural sciences. They have found it expedient to resort to supplementing their old texts with a few new ones to be used  
37. Advertising circular, The John C. Wintson Co. 1935.



as reference material. Forty-two schools have found that this is a satisfactory remedy, while eighteen state that it is not. Just what basis one would use to determine whether the supplementing of old books with a few new ones is satisfactory is debatable. Probably the effectiveness of inculcating the new ideas presented in the new books might be deduced through tests running over a period of years, but the more likely theory is that the conclusions reached by those answering, either pro or con, are based on their satisfaction with results obtained, and as such, largely subjective.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD TEXTBOOKS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES BE CHANGED?

Interval of Time	Responses
Every three years	9
Every four years	15
Every five years	11
Every six years	3
Every seven years	none
Every eight years	2
Every nine years	none
Every ten years	1
Total Number of responses	41

Average number of years, 4.54

Only forty-one felt they were in a position to state about how often textbooks in the social sciences and natural sciences should be changed. There were nine who believed that they should be changed every three years; fifteen, every four years; eleven, every five years; three, every six years; none, every seven years; two, every eight years; and one, every ten years. Seeking an average we find that in

the opinions of the forty-one, who ventured one, that the books should be changed every 4.54- years. It is more than likely, too, that this would represent about the average length of time that the physical condition of the book would continue to be satisfactory. Eight expressed themselves as unable to state definitely.

It has been the author's experience that to be enabled to have new books in some courses it was necessary to assign one textbook to two students. The prevalence of this in the State prompted the eleventh question, "Have you found it necessary for economic reasons to assign one textbook to two or more students?" Only ten schools had been forced to do this. The other fifty stated that they had not. Of the ten which had found it necessary to give one book to two or more students five replied that the work had not suffered appreciably while the other five stated that it had. Two of those who had not tried the scheme replied that in their opinion the work would suffer. One of the principals who stated that they had assigned one textbook to two or more students remarked, "Why should a text be used only for 20 to 40 minutes a day?"

Eleven of those who had not resorted to giving one text to two or more students stated that they had not observed that the work had suffered appreciably under those conditions. The intent of their answers was probably that they had not had a chance to observe, rather than that they had observed

that the work had not suffered.

One of the most important factors in textbook selection is, "Who does the selecting?" Seven principals or superintendents replied that it was done by the high school principal, twelve replied that it was performed by the superintendent, and five that the teacher or head of the department did the selecting. In no case did the school board do the selecting. Fourteen stated that the books were selected by the principal with the advice of the teacher or the head of the department while thirty-eight superintendents selected the textbooks with the advice of the teacher or the head of the department. No school reported that the school board selected the books with the advice of the superintendent, principal or teacher, nor was the selecting done in any school by a textbook committee. In five schools textbook committees recommended, but the actual selection was left to the superintendent or principal.

WHO SELECTS THE TEXTBOOKS?

Selecting Agency	Responses	Per Cent
High school principal - - - - -	7	8.6
Superintendent- - - - -	12	14.8
Teacher or head of department - - -	5	6.2
School board- - - - -	0	0
Principal with advice of teacher- -	14	16.05
Sup't. with advice of teacher - - -	38	46.9
School board with advice of sup't., teacher, principal, or dep't. head	0	0
Textbook committee- - - - -	0	0
Principal or sup't. with recommenda- tion of textbook committee.	5	6.2
Total Responses	81	99.75

Who shall select the textbooks? What shall be the procedure? Much has been written on the subject and while there is little agreement among those who profess to know, there is even less agreement in practice. In New York State on the<sup>38</sup> one extreme the textbooks are selected by a two-thirds vote of the legal voters present and voting at the annual meeting. On the other hand in Cincinnati, Ohio, a very thorough and<sup>39</sup> most painstaking process is followed which involves the reading of the books under consideration by expert readers from the teachers' college, principals, and active teachers. Reports are made on special blanks to a special textbook committee of teachers, who in turn report their findings and tabulations to the superintendent and to a special textbook committee of the board of education. After a review of the material submitted to it this committee then comes before the full board for final approval, having in the meantime submitted the textbooks to the publishers for bids. Such a way to select textbooks is obviously too involved for schools as small as the most we find in Montana.

The practice in 148 cities was found by Jensen to be<sup>40</sup> that the boards of education would act on the recommendation

38. N. F. Henry, "Can Politicians and Laymen Select Our Textbooks?" in Nations Schools, XIII, No. 1, January 1934. p. 23.

39. A. L. Hallquist, The Textbook, How to Use and How to Judge It. New York, 1920. p. 80-83.

40. Frank A. Jensen, Current Practices in Selecting Textbooks the Elementary Schools, in Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, 1931, p. 128-134.

by the superintendent, while in 13 the board acted without the superintendent's recommendation. In 172 cities studied he found that in only 33 cases did the superintendent have the authority to select, in seven cases a committee of the board had this authority, while in 132 cases the final authority lay with the board of education. As indicated above the practice, even where the authority lies with the board, is for the superintendent's recommendation to be followed.

In ninety per cent, or 156 of the 172 cities, special textbook committees made studies that were the basis for the superintendent's recommendation. These committees were made up of teachers, 50.6 per cent; principals, 25.1 per cent; supervisors, 15 per cent; superintendents, 8.7 per cent; and board members, 0.6 per cent. The average committee was composed of four teachers, two principals and one supervisor. However, a majority of the superintendents replying indicated that they believed a committee of five members would be about the right size.

Finding even five teachers, principals, and supervisors in the average Montana school qualified to evaluate textbooks for any given subject is problematical, but it would seem that even an attempt along this line would be better than the current practice of having a teacher look over several books and perhaps have the superintendent or principal glance through them for fifteen or twenty minutes without a score card or any definite standard for the evaluation.

There are several reasons for the apparent lack of a more scientific method of textbook selection in Montana high schools. In the first place most of our high schools are so small that one teacher may teach several unrelated subjects and there would, of course, be no head of a department in such cases. Teachers in this category find it difficult to know what the needs are for each of her different subjects. Furthermore, a textbook committee in a school of this size would experience similar troubles. In the second place there has been until quite recently a rapid turnover of personnel in most of the smaller schools and under such conditions it is practically impossible to build up a textbook committee that would be able to know the needs of the community and its students well enough to function on a very high plane. Finally, with a rather rapid turnover of the entire teaching personnel in the State we have had until recently a large proportion of the teachers and administrators with a minimum of experience; certainly many of them have not been qualified to pick the good from the bad among the variety of textbooks on the market.

In spite of the difficulties presented above, if a committee with little experience and new in the school system undertook the task conscientiously and took the trouble to study some of the better texts on textbook selection, it would seem safe to predict that a better job of selection could be done than that which obtains the present hit and

miss method.

The thought occurs to one as he contemplates the methods of textbook selection in vogue in the high schools of this State that perhaps the amendment of the textbook law to permit local schools to select their elementary school books might not be so desirable as we would be led to believe.

How many books are reviewed with the intention of selecting one as the text to be adopted would indicate probably the degree of importance that the superintendent or principal attaches to the work of selecting a suitable text. In reply to the question of how many books are examined before a selection is made fifteen stated they examined three, sixteen examined four, nine examined five, five examined six, one examined ten or more, and seven had no definite number that they examined.

NUMBER OF THE BOOKS EXAMINED BEFORE SELECTION IS MADE

No. of books	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Indefinite
Responses	15	16	9	5	0	0	0	1	7
Average number of books examined, 4.2									

As far as the actual number of books that should be examined when contemplating the purchase of a new text for a class in high school we realize that there can be no hard and fast rule. It must be borne in mind, however, that where a considerable number of samples are asked for for examination that the publishers are obligated to pass on the cost

of sending out the free copies to the charge that they make for the books that they sell. In the small schools, particularly, the examination of six or seven books when only a dozen or so will be purchased appears to be somewhat out of proportion. That this abuse of the free sample or examination copy is prevalent may be found in the following, a letter<sup>41</sup> from a publisher:

" . . . It is not unusual for a teacher of a one room school with ten pupils to ask for ten dollars worth of samples from one publisher."

An editorial in the Ohio School makes the following<sup>42</sup> comment:

"But publishers are sometimes thoughtlessly imposed upon by teachers, and a word needs to be said in this connection. The bane of the business is the terrific drain in the giving of free samples of textbooks. Perhaps publishers were originally at fault in encouraging this practice, but in fairness to them, teachers ought now aid in checking the practice. Textbooks would be sold at lower figures if this item of selling expenses were materially reduced. And the teacher does hold much of the power of improvement in her own hands."

It might be asked in this connection, "How many superintendents and principals have not literally been begged by textbook salesmen to be permitted to send a sample of this or that book?" It has been the author's experience that

with the exception of a few the publishers or their agents  
41. Frank A. Jensen, The Policies of Publishers in Marketing Textbooks, in Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, 1931, p. 171.

42. Editorial, Textbooks, Ohio School, June 1929, quoted in Frank A. Jensen, The Policies of Publishers in Marketing Textbooks, in Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II, of the Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, 1931, p. 171.



tend to issue more free sample copies than are asked for.

Question Number 15 as to whether or not selections are influenced by the prestige of the name of the author or authors indicates that without a doubt most schoolmen are swayed in their opinions by the argument that the book under consideration was written by an author of note in that particular field. Thirty-five answered in the affirmative and twenty-seven denied that they were so influenced. There is a tendency for all of us to wish to appear independent in our thinking and so circumspect in our judgments that a textbook is selected entirely on the basis of merit. It is consequently hard for us to admit in many instances that the author's name was an important factor in the decisions we make. In all probability the twenty-seven who denied that they were influenced by the prestige of the author were in many instances unwilling to admit their lack of independence in this respect.

The same might apply to a limited extent to the answers to question number 16. Fourteen stated they were influenced by the name of the publisher of the text, while forty-eight denied that this had anything to do with their selections. In the more common branches in school work the textbook business is pretty well divided between all of the publishers, but in the more special subjects in the curriculum we also find specialists in the publication of the texts required. This is particularly true in the commercial subjects and industrial arts. Undoubtedly any of the larger publishers

produce excellent texts in accounting and yet the majority<sup>43</sup> of schools in this State are using the "20th Century Bookkeeping and Accounting" published by the South-Western Publishing Company. Their typing texts, commercial law books, and other texts in the commercial field enjoy probably a better sale than those of any other publisher. It would seem that no one could deny that the name of this company has not some influence if he is considering a commercial text.

#### FACTORS INFLUENCING CHOICE OF TEXTBOOKS

FACTORS	YES	NO
Prestige of author's or authors' name	35	27
Prestige of the name of the publisher	14	48
Name of author long associated with subject	9	50

The answers to question 17 were rather surprising when compared with number 15. Only nine stated that they were influenced in their choice of a book because it bore the name of an author long associated with the publication of a text. Fifty stated that they were not prejudiced by such knowledge. It may be said that this is a healthy sign. Certainly we should not wish to have a condition where we would still be adopting Baldwin's readers, Wentworth and Smith mathematics, etc. unless the authors (if living) were producing texts as

43. From a report received from the South-Western Publishing Co. in which they give statistics showing that they furnish commercial textbooks to 200 Montana High School, of which number 159 use their 20th Century Bookkeeping and Accounting.

good or better than those of the newer authors in the respective fields.

In reply to the question, "Would you approve having a state textbook commission adopt the texts for all high school subjects?" we find only five favoring, one doubtful, and fifty-two opposed. One stated that he would be in favor of this plan if the commission was "properly composed." However, so few favored that idea that there were no other favorable comments. On the other hand many "No's" were emphasized with underscoring and exclamation points. Several expressed themselves as against the proposition with the following:

"I see no reason why any should be so selected."

"I don't believe the textbook commission should select any high school book."

"I feel school alone (teachers) best qualified."

"I feel that they should not adopt any."

The matter of selection of high school texts by the textbook commission has come up from time to time in the past, but has never been seriously considered. When the commission met in 1898 the question as to whether they were also to select high school texts arose and upon submission to the attorney general no opinion was rendered and the commission was guided by the authority of the superintendent of public instruction.

"High school books were not adopted, there being<sup>18</sup> some doubt as to the authority of the commission in this particular. No specific opinion on this question has been rendered by the Attorney General, but since

18. Steere, Op. cit., p. 6.

the adjournment of the commission this office has held that the commission had no authority to select high school books."

No mention was made in the annals of the commission again until December 30, 1908, when a resolution was made to the incoming legislature as follows:

"Be it resolved, that the incoming Legislature be<sup>34</sup> requested to authorize the State Textbook Commission to select an advisory list of high school textbooks, together with contract prices from which the several high schools of the state may select their texts."

The author was unable to find out that the Legislature paid any attention to this plea or that the matter was ever taken up subsequently. On the basis of the replies to the questionnaire and the lack of any serious attempt to put it into practice it would seem that this is one prerogative that schoolmen wish allocated themselves exclusively.

Asked, if they did not believe that the textbook commission should select all of the books for the high schools of the State, to name any that they believed should be so adopted we find four who agree that this might be a good idea, and, while no space was provided for an affirmative or negative answer, twenty-three said "No" or "None". The subjects for which textbooks should be selected according to the four who approved of the plan varied so that there may be said to be no particular significance. Two mentioned English; two, social sciences; and physical education, manual training,

home economics, civics, history, health, algebra, plane  
 34. Minutes of the Montana State Textbook Commission for  
meeting held December 30, 1908. Minutes on file in  
the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Geometry, and Latin were mentioned once each.

An alternative to the plan of requiring that certain books be used in high school courses was offered in question number 20, "Would you approve having a state textbook commission adopt several texts for each subject, permitting the individual schools to select which of the adopted texts they might wish to use?" Twenty-four felt that this would be a good plan, one was doubtful and thirty-one were opposed. One made the comment that this would be a good plan for second and third class high schools and two agreed that the plan would be all right provided that the list was only advisory. One superintendent remarks:

"Yes, better than the present system in grades."

Others:

"Several recommendations for several subjects, yes. Enforced use of any, no."

"Textbook commission could make careful evaluation of all high school textbooks - making recommendations."

While more superintendents and principals voted against this plan, the closeness of the voting would indicate that there is a possibility that it might be put into practice, but not unless it had some real value. Are there any arguments for it? Probably for the very large high schools with their department heads, teachers with more experience, and better trained superintendents and principals, there is no need for it, but certainly many of the small high schools with teaching staffs that are both inadequate in number of teachers and

in experience would benefit from some scheme where the books would be reviewed by a qualified group of school men and women and a recommended list made. Ten states already have such a scheme for all the high schools within their respective jurisdictions.\* Nine other states have laws requiring that the high schools use the adopted texts and in one state, Georgia, the board of education may prescribe the high school books.<sup>29</sup>

One of the most interesting group of responses came in answer to a request for what each principal or superintendent used as criteria in the selection of high school textbooks, question number 21. The responses have been classified and arranged in order of frequency in the following table. In some cases a slightly different wording of the statement was given, but for the sake of condensing the data as much

CRITERIA USED IN SELECTING MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL  
TEXTBOOKS

RA. K	FREQUENCY	CRITERIA
1.	26	Content
2.	23	Organization of subject matter
3.	14	Type, style of type, etc.
3.	14	Binding, durability, etc.
4.	13	Presentation of subject matter
5.	9	Arrangement
5.	9	Authors, their reputation, experience, etc.
6.	8	Illustrations, cuts, charts, graphs, etc.
6.	8	Newness of content (up-to-date)
7.	7	Date of publication (recency)
8.	6	Style (literary)
8.	6	Teachability

<sup>29</sup>. Keesecker, op. cit., p. 10

\* States having adoptions of two more texts for each subject are Cal., Del., Ida., Ky., N. C., S. C., Tenn., Texas, Utah, Va. States Adopting only one text for each subject are Dist. of Col., Fla., Kans., La., Miss., N. M., Okla., Ore., Ind.

9.	5	Completeness
9.	5	Vocabulary
9.	5	Arranged for modern teaching methods (Unit or problem method, etc.)
9.	5	Supplementary materials, work books, tests, etc.
9.	5	Price (also exchange rate)
10.	4	Student appeal
11.	3	Quality and kind of paper
11.	3	Accuracy (also authenticity)
11.	3	Teacher aids
11.	3	Ability of average pupil to comprehend
11.	3	Difficulty
11.	3	Suitability to local school program
12.	2	Publisher
12.	2	Size of book
12.	2	Attractiveness
12.	2	Composition and rhetoric
13.	1	Richness of subject matter
13.	1	Sample problems given
13.	1	Chapter summaries
13.	1	Materials for activities
13.	1	I like to try out several lessons on the class and observe the reactions.
13.	1	Lasting value in the future
13.	1	Index and glossary
13.	1	Outstanding books in their field
13.	1	Reference material
13.	1	Point of view of the authors
13.	1	Set-up for self activity
13.	1	Useability, as evidenced by trial
13.	1	Originality and brightness of content
13.	1	Methods and devices agreeable to State Course of Study.
13.	1	Recommendations by experts who have tried out the book
13.	1	Relation of subject matter to objectives of school through organization of content material in units that form translation from knowing into doing.
13.	1	We confer with teachers who have been successful in teaching. Their opinion is valuable. On my vacations I visit big cities, I study the texts used by the bigger high schools. By these methods I manage to obtain the best.
13.	1	Information of subject matter given by National Society for the Study of Education.

as possible the author to take the liberty to combine the criteria cited when it would not detract from the sense intended.

It would be wrong to say the the above criteria and systems used in selecting high school textbooks are not all somehow of value. Each of them in some way may be used and more than likely would be a help. On the other hand it is questionable if one could rightly say which of them is the most important. Content or subject matter and organization of the subject matter were mentioned most often, but we are inclined to challenge type-style or size and binding as being more important than presentation of the subject matter and several of the criteria that follow. Perhaps the study was not undertaken in such a way as to get the feelings of the principals and superintendents in the matter of the relative importance of these criteria, and so it would be better to regard these data from the standpoint of their being an accumulation of the things that these men have in mind when they select books for their schools. Almost invariably we have some one idea that predominates whenever we are called upon to decide what is the best text, automobile, or floor finish and that one idea is the criterion that we pin most of our judgment upon. Some are obsessed with the idea that a textbook must be arranged into definite units and this overweighs such factors as content, presentation, organization, difficulty, vocabulary, or suitability to the needs of students or the community. Thirteen failed to fill out this portion of the questionnaire. Whether this was due to a



lack of having any criteria, uncertainty as to what their criteria were, or laziness may not be known. One expressed what may be the solution of the reason why the thirteen failed to answer by saying:

"I haven't given this matter much thought and so would hesitate to give definite answers."

The majority of the questionnaires returned indicated a fairly well rounded group of criteria, extensive enough in most cases to give a reasonable basis for evaluation of a high school textbook. One or two expressed themselves as using content and binding or content and recency of publication as their only criteria. The chances are that they use more criteria than these, though they may not be entirely aware of just what the other criteria are.

Closely allied with the matter of criteria is the use of score cards in evaluating textbooks. Item number 22 of the questionnaire was a request for samples of score cards used. Not one of the sixty high schools returning questionnaires used score cards and none were forwarded. It had been the purpose of the author to compare any score cards received with those published by such authorities in this field as C. R. Maxwell, John Guy Fowlkes, Franklin W. Johnson, and others.

In answer to the question, "What is your reaction to magazine advertising, circular letters, salesmen, etc. as used by publishers in bringing their books to your attention?" thirty-seven stated they were a positive help in making a

selection, one felt that they were detrimental, and twenty stated that they had no effect on the selection. Some of the comments which were made voluntarily are of interest. One principal who stated that these efforts on the part of publishers had no effect on the selection writes:

"I have the finest relationships with these men and I am always ready to listen to their presentations. We never select books by "signing on the dotted line", but make selections by ourselves. I have no restrictions on salesmen visiting teachers."

One superintendent stated:

"Sample copies from publishers best advertising."

Another:

"Often calls attention to special features."

A superintendent of one of our largest school systems feels:

"There can be no set "rule". All depends on the specific case. Each applies to some cases."

Probably there can be no set rule, but there could possibly be a general rule. Almost two-thirds of those reporting felt that they were helped in making a selection through these agencies. Since this is a definite majority, may we not conclude that this is a general rule?

REACTIONS TO THE CIRCULAR LETTERS, ADVERTISING,  
AND SALESMEN

Evaluation	Responses
A positive help in making a decision	37
Detrimental to making a good selection	1
Have no effect on the selection	20

Question number 24 is in a similar tenor. Forty-five felt that publishers' briefs have some value in helping to make a selection, two were doubtful, and fifteen indicated that they didn't believe they had any value. Similar results were obtained by Jensen in a study in which he asked the same question of 167 superintendents. 113 stated that they had some value, 47 that they had no value and seven were doubtful. In the present study 75% were in the affirmative as compared with 67.7% in the study by Jensen. This would probably make it possible for us to say that "as a general rule publishers' briefs have some value in influencing textbook selection."<sup>36</sup>

OPINIONS OF ADMINISTRATORS OF PUBLISHERS BRIEFS  
IN INFLUENCING TEXTBOOK SELECTION

Evaluation	Responses
Have some value	45
Have no value	15
Of doubtful value	2

Question number 25 is divided into three parts. Part (a) asks what the experience of the people answering the questionnaire has been with publishers' representatives as to their ability to give worthwhile advice in making a selection. The answers are such as to give us no significant conclusion. Twenty-nine felt that the salesmen had excellent ability in this respect, twenty-three that they were mediocre, and five that they were poor. Just how to place an interpretation on these results is difficult to decide, but may we not

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<sup>36</sup>. op. cit., p. 165

reason that generally the salesmen have from fair to excellent ability along this line and that they are seldom poor?

Most representatives nowadays are experienced schoolmen who have good selling ability and who measure up to a required educational standing. Ninety-five per cent of them today are college graduates. Most of them are competent to present the outstanding features of their books.

Asked to state what their experience had been as to the evident understanding of salesmen in the needs of the subject twenty-eight rated them as excellent, twenty-four as mediocre and four said they were poor. In the matter of evident training for their work, thirty-seven rated the salesmen as excellent, thirteen as mediocre, and four stated that they were poorly trained.

MONTANA EDUCATORS' OPINIONS OF PUBLISHERS' REPRESENTATIVES

EVALUATION		Number	Per Cent
Ability to give worthwhile advice	Excellent	29	50.9
	Mediocre	23	40.3
	Poor	5	8.8
Understanding of needs of subject	Excellent	28	50.0
	Mediocre	24	42.9
	Poor	4	7.1
Evident Training for their work	Excellent	37	68.5
	Mediocre	13	24.1
	Poor	4	7.4

Many qualified their answers by statements to the effect that some salesmen were excellent, while others were poor in the three evaluations given. Some felt that the salesmen were often too biased for their own products to be able to

36. op. cit., p. 167-68

give worthwhile advice. On the contrary one reports that

I have found them very frank in stating that they do not know about a certain subject.

Following are comments on this evaluation. Since these were not solicited they represent spontaneity and may be said to come more "from the heart".

They vary much.

Most of them. (Excellent)

Often excellent in fields where they are experienced as teachers.

Mediocre, because they have an axe to grind.

I have met all types of them. Generally excellent in all three respects.

Prejudiced. Good in some subjects, not in all. Field too broad.

Prejudiced. Great variation.

The charge of prejudice may not be denied. An unprejudiced salesman might be a boon to the superintendents and principals, but it is doubtful if he would be appreciated by the firm that pays his salary and expenses. A good salesman believes that he sells the best goods in the world. How else could he sincerely tell you how much better this text was than the competitor's?

In spite of the charge of prejudice or bias most schoolmen are glad to have the help offered by these salesmen. Our evidence of this fact may be found in the replies to question number 26, "Are you glad to avail yourself of the help offered by the representatives of publishers in making a selection?"

A total of fifty said, "Yes". One was undecided, and only eight said, "No". There were a few voluntary comments:

I am glad to hear and consider the points they make.

Yes, but use my own judgment finally.

Yes, to have his information, etc.

No. Too biased.

Explaining their books, yes.

Glad to have points presented, but all such presentations are biased.

Certainly, if it is a help.

Yes, some of them.

ARE MONTANA EDUCATORS GLAD TO HAVE HELP OFFERED BY PUBLISHERS' REPRESENTATIVES?

Evaluation		Number	Per Cent
Are you glad to avail yourself of the help offered by the representatives of publishers in making a selection?	Yes	50	84.7
	No	8	13.6
	?	1	1.7

A further evaluation of the publishers' representatives is attempted in question 27. The results may be readily found by reference to the accompanying table.

HOW DO MONTANA EDUCATORS REGARD PUBLISHERS' REPRESENTATIVES?\*

Evaluation		Number	Per Cent
Would you regard these representatives when making a selection as	an asset?	41	67.2
	a liability?	5	8.2
	neither asset or liability?	15	24.6

\* Discrepancies in number answering different parts of questionnaire are due to some failing to answer occasionally and one grade school superintendent answering part of the high school questionnaire.

Only one superintendent commented on this question and he made the observation that since the representatives varied so much, no rule could be made as to whether they are an asset or liability. Judging from the answers given we are justified in stating that schoolmen are usually glad to have salesmen call and assist them in their selections. Jensen's study, (already referred to) answered by 167 superintendents, lists 59.3% as classifying the salesmen as assets as compared with 67.2% in this study; 22.7% rating them as liabilities, compared with 8.2% in our study; and 3.6% as neither an asset or liability, while we found 24.6% answering thus. The discrepancy existing here is probably due to the fact that Jensen included one more item in his questionnaire, "Would you regard the publishers' representatives as both an asset and a liability?" This accounts for 24, or 14.4%, of the replies he received. More than likely some of the answers received for the evaluation "neither an asset or a liability" in the present study would have been given in reply to such a statement as Jensen included. In spite of the difference the correlation is close and we may safely say that schoolmen as a rule feel that the representatives are an asset.

In the long run purchasers of school textbooks pay for the samples sent them by publishers, as their cost is added to the selling price as selling expense by the publishers. It would seem proper and fitting then that they become the  
41. op. cit. , p. 168

## WHAT IS DONE WITH SAMPLE COPIES AFTER SELECTION IS MADE?

DISPOSITION	NUMBER	PER CENT
Placed in the school library as reference	37	50.7
Given to teacher of subject	29	39.7
Placed in superintendent's own library	4	5.5
Sold to second-hand book dealers	1	1.37
Left in office sample book shelf	1	1.37
No particular disposition made	1	1.37
	73	100.01

property of the schools to which they were sent. However, only 50.7% of the samples are placed in the library according to the replies received. This seems to be a small proportion, we may assume that majority of the books given to the teachers of the subjects for which the texts were selected and those in principals' or superintendents' personal libraries eventually reach the school library. In the latter case we may suppose that probably 75% of the samples are somehow made available to teachers and students as reference books.

Those left in the office sample book shelf and those for which no particular disposition is made may also get to the library as reference books finally and we cannot say that they have been lost to the school from the standpoint of usefulness. Those sold to second-hand book stores are a dead loss to the school if the principal or superintendent pockets the money received. If the cash is received by the school, it may be used for other purposes. However, a question of ethics is involved here. In a study made by J. B. Edmonson replies<sup>44</sup>

were received from 323 persons, including 83 representatives  
 44. J. B. Edmonson, *The Ethics of Marketing and Selecting Textbooks*, in the *Thirtieth Yearbook*, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, Ill., 1931, p. 206.



of textbook companies, 198 school administrators, and 42 others engaged in educational work. Seventy-nine per cent of replies to the question as to whether it would be ethical for superintendents to sell sample copies were "No". Six and two-tenths per cent felt that it was ethical, 7.5% said that it depends, and 6.8% felt that it was unimportant. His conclusion was that a superintendent was not justified in selling sample textbooks as private property.

ARE SAMPLE COPIES REQUESTED IN SUBJECTS IN WHICH NO SELECTION IS INTENDED?

QUESTION		NUMBER	PER CENT
Do you have samples sent you of textbooks for other subjects that those in which you anticipate making a selection for ?	YES	14	24.5
	NO	35	61.4
	Occasionally	8	14.1
		57	100.00

A perusal of the above table will show that 40% of the schoolmen of this State do ask for samples in subjects in which they contemplate making no selection, if we consider those answering "occasionally" along with those who said "Yes". In this connection we wonder if such action on their part is justifiable. If they are asked for for the purpose of using as reference, they should be bought and paid for. If they are asked for to fill the superintendent's or principal's library, they should also be paid for. Some superintendents stated that their purpose in asking for the books was to look them over with the idea of introducing a new course. It might not be out of place to quote what one in-

investigator found to be the general situation as regards the sample question.<sup>45</sup>

. . . The value of gift copies of school books sent out by the publishers is estimated by one representative at from 3 to 10 per cent of the value of the books sold. Another states that for every 15 college texts sold, one is given away. The number of samples sent out by one company last year is given out as 192,850 copies, and the writer adds that "we are considered by some teachers as stingy."

To secure reasons why free samples were requested when no adoption was expected, question number 30, "What is your purpose in sending for the above sample textbooks if you do not intend making a selection for those subjects?", was asked. The replies are all given herewith:

We don't send for such books, but we sometimes receive them without asking.

Matter of education and preparedness. Never know when the curriculum will change.

We pay for them if we keep them. Used for supplementary class room library. We never ask for more than one copy or set when adopting.

I never send for samples. I prefer not to be under any obligation to the textbook firms or representatives.

#### Interest

Occasionally a book appears which is a curriculum departure and want to see it.

If the company wishes to send books - we accept them. There are no subjects in which a selection is not always potential.

To keep in touch with all new texts.

Noting change of content - new material available, advisable to change books.

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45. Nelson B. Henry, The Problems of Publishers in Marketing Textbooks: A Symposium, in the Thirtieth Yearbook, - Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, Ill., 1931, p. 191-92.

To use as a reference

Salesman trying to interest me in them. Did not request copy.

I rarely ever send for a sample copy. They usually come in battalions.

For use as reference

Supplies additional material for use. We usually buy these.

Possible change - possible reference.

To keep posted on the best possible work, having in mind an adoption of any particularly outstanding.

I do not send for them. Salesmen offer to do so - hoping to have book adopted.

I do not send for them. They are occasionally sent anyhow.

Keep up.

To serve as a guide in choosing proper books for reference and to keep teachers familiar with new works in the field.

I sent for samples of junior training texts as I thought that I might sometime want to put in this course.

Possibility of new courses. Knowledge in other fields.

Question has no place here ! ! !

Superintendents from the larger school systems in the State were almost unanimous in their statements that they did not send for the books, but that they came anyway. If we were to criticise any of these schoolmen, those who would have to bear the brunt of the criticism would be those who make no bones about the fact that they ask for the books as a matter of securing reference books. Unquestionably if we

wish the book as a reference book, it should be bought. On the other hand, if the book is to be used for the purpose of acquainting the superintendant or the teachers with what is new in the field, should they not buy these books the same as we buy books for the teachers' professional library? However, we may conclude that the large majority of the school administrators in this State have a conscience in this respect and few of them may be characterized as being unethical.

### Conclusions

Conclusions to be drawn from a study of the high school questionnaire will be found on pages 116-19.

CHAPTER X  
CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM A STUDY OF THE REPLIES TO THE  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The average cost per pupil for textbooks in the elementary schools of the State for 1934-35 was about \$1.86 and the median cost per pupil was \$1.815.

2. The average school superintendent or principal is not satisfied with the present plan of textbook adoption, forty-five disapproving, while fifteen approved.

3. There is a widespread feeling that the first and second class districts should be permitted to select their own textbooks, with the State Textbook Commission adopting books for third class districts and rural schools. Twenty-two indicated that either first class, or first and second class districts, should be permitted this privilege.

4. The plan for county or other unit type of adoption meets with little favor, only five of forty-five voting for this idea, though it has been sponsored for the past year by several organizations within the State.

5. There is a feeling that the present plan of textbook adoption is too restrictive and that it would be better to have the Textbook Commission adopt several basal texts from which each school might select the one best suited to its needs or desires. This was the most popular suggestion made, twenty-nine out of forty-five voting for it.

6. The present adoption period of six years is generally satisfactory. Five indicated that they wished a longer or a

shorter period.

7. Most schoolmen feel that using different textbooks in the schools throughout the State would not cause any particular difficulty to students transferring if the state course of study is followed.

8. The consensus of opinion is that the State Textbook Commission should be made up entirely of schoolmen or schoolwomen actively engaged in elementary school work.

9. Many feel that there is too much politics involved in the appointment of members of the State Textbook Commission and that politics play an important part in the selections made. However, nothing was offered to substantiate these charges or the charge that certain textbook companies are favored.

10. One of the most valuable features of the present law is that it makes changes mandatory, forcing schools to change books that are out of date and worn out for newer and better texts.

11. Some sort of central selecting body is needed for the large number of rural schools and third class districts of the State and the present plan meets this need admirably.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM A STUDY OF THE REPLIES MADE TO THE HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The cost per high school student of this State for textbooks for the year 1934-35 was an average of \$2.358 and the median cost was \$2.424, which is lower than the per student cost for Montana of \$3.02, found by N. B. Henry for the year 1928-29.

2. At the present time the large majority of the high schools in Montana still use the 8-4 plan.

3. About one-half of the high schools in the State have found it necessary to exercise severe retrenchments in the amount spent for textbooks during the last three or four years and the majority of these are using books that are old in content, though still in a fair physical condition.

4. The most important reasons for changing to a new text for a course in Montana schools are in order of number of time listed, (a) improvement of presentation of material, (b) change in content, (c) more adapted to students' needs, (d) desire for a text more adaptable to the unit or project method.

5. Price is an important item in textbook selection for somewhat less than half of the schools of Montana.

6. Montana Schoolmen are practically unanimous in their belief that social science and natural science texts need to be changed approximately every four years in order to keep them up-to-date in content.

7. Few schools have found it necessary to assign one textbook to two or more students and the school men reporting this were equally divided as to whether the work suffered or not under this condition.

8. Generally the selection of textbooks is made in Montana high schools by the superintendent or principal with the advice of the teacher of the subject or the head of the department. In a few schools the principal or the superintendent does the selecting without advice.

9. In attempting to find a suitable text the average school examines four copies, with the extreme running from three to ten, or as many as were obtainable.

10. Slightly more than half of the schoolmen of Montana are influenced in their selection of textbooks by the name of the author or authors.

11. Few superintendents or principals of Montana schools place much emphasis on the name of the publisher when making a selection.

12. The fact that an author's name has been long associated with a particular field has little or no bearing on the selection of books in Montana high schools.

13. Montana schoolmen are practically unanimous in their opposition to the State Textbook Commission adopting texts for use in the high schools of the State, though there is a feeling among about half of the superintendents and principals of the State that having the State Textbook Commission



select an advisory list of textbooks for high schools would be a good plan, especially for the smaller schools.

14. The criteria most often used in selecting textbooks in this State are (a) content, (b) organization of subject-matter, (c) type style and size, (d) binding, (e) presentation of subject matter, (f) arrangement and (g) authors.

15. Practically no schools in this State use score cards in evaluating textbooks.

16. Most Montana schoolmen feel that magazine advertising, circular letters, and salesmen are a positive help to them in the selection of textbooks and this opinion is even more strongly expressed as regards publishers' briefs.

17. About half of the superintendents and principals of Montana high schools feel that publishers' representatives have excellent ability to give worthwhile advice in making a selection, that they have an excellent understanding of the needs in the subject, and that they have excellent training for their work. Most of the remaining superintendents and principals felt that these salesmen were mediocre in these respects.

18. Practically all superintendents and principals are glad to avail themselves of the help offered by the publishers' representatives.

19. About two-thirds of the superintendents and principals feel that publishers' representatives are an asset when making a selection of a textbook.

20. Practically all sample textbooks received by high schools in this State are placed in the library as reference book or given to the teacher of the subject for which the sample was submitted.

21. Slightly less than half of the superintendents and principals of Montana schools ask for samples of textbooks for subjects in which they do not contemplate a change or introduction.

22. The reasons why schoolmen in Montana ask for free samples, though they contemplate no changes or introductions, are for reference books, to find out what is new in the field, and with the view that at some near future time an adoption may be made or a new course introduced in the curriculum.

CHAPTER XII  
RECOMMENDED CHANGES IN THE STATE TEXTBOOK LAW - BASED ON THE  
REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRES

If the State textbook law is to be such as would be agreeable to the majority of the persons answering the questionnaires, it would have to be changed to include the following:

1. All of the seven members of the State Textbook Commission must be actively engaged in teaching in the elementary schools of the State at the time of their appointments; no laymen permitted.

2. Several basal texts (probably four) must be adopted for each subject so that individual schools may select textbooks better suited to their needs.

3. First and second class districts should be permitted to select and adopt their own textbooks for all grades from one to twelve inclusive.

4. The books adopted by the State Textbook Commission must be used in all rural schools and schools of third class districts in grades one to eighth inclusive.

5. The State Textbook Commission should adopt several basal textbooks or an advisory list of textbooks for the guidance of high schools in third class districts of the State, permitting each high school to select from the basal or advisory list of texts the ones they would use.

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Jensen, Frank A. "The Policies of Publishers in Marketing Textbooks" in the Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, 1931, p. 163-173.

An article that analyzes the methods and policies used by publishers in selling their books. Advertising, training and selection of salesmen, distribution of free samples, the use of briefs and the part played by the authors in selling are discussed pro and con. Material for the paper was secured from questionnaires sent to schoolmen and publishers.

Jensen, Frank A. "Current Practices in Selecting Textbooks for the Elementary Schools", in the Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, 1931, p. 127-142.

An excellent article that through the medium of a questionnaire sent to some 172 city superintendents throws light on what is the usual procedure in selecting, evaluating, and adopting textbooks. The selecting and adopting authority is discussed from the standpoint of whether this be the superintendent and one teacher or a committee.

Johnson, Franklin W. A Checking List for the Selection of High School Textbooks, reprinted from an article in the October, 1925, issue of the Teachers College Record, Allyn and Bacon, Chicago.

A superior checking list that is so arranged that standards are given for evaluating the book under consideration. Fairly complete and yet not so long as to defeat the purpose for which it was intended.

Keesecker, Ward W. Legislation Concerning Free Textbooks, United States Government Report, Department of the Interior, (Bureau of Education of Education Bulletin, 1935, No. 59), p. 1-14.

A brief history of the growth of the free textbook plan in the United States, arguments for and against free textbooks, principal provisions of the free textbook laws of the various states, textbook costs, agencies for selection and adoption of textbooks, and a short annotated bibliography of literature pertaining to free textbooks are given.

Laws of Montana Territory, First Regular Session, 1864, Section 8, Chapter 3, Session Laws of 1864, p. 439.

Section 8 provides that trustees shall endeavor to see that uniform series of textbooks prevail in their respective districts.

Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of the Territory of Montana Passed at the Extraordinary Session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly, August 29, 1887 to September 14, 1887, (1887), p. 79.

Citation refers to law that set up a textbook commission of an advisory capacity.

Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of the Territory of Montana Passed at the Sixteenth Regular Session of the Legislative Assembly, 1889, (1889), p. 209-212.

Citation refers to a law providing for a textbook commission of an advisory nature, the first of its kind in Montana.

Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of the State of Montana Passed by the Eighth Regular Session of the Legislative Assembly, 1903, (1903), p. 275-81.

Citation refers to law providing for the textbook commission which was organized in 1903.

Laws, Resolutions, and Memorials of the Seventeenth Regular Assembly of Montana, 1921, (1921), p. 54.

Citation refers to amendments in law providing for textbook commission.

Session Laws of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, 1913, (1913), p. 268-276.

Citation refers to law providing for amendments to the textbook commission law of 1907. Affects membership and time of meeting.

Session Laws of the Fourteenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana, 1915, (1915), Chapter 94, Sections 1, 2 and 3.

Citation refers to amendment of 1913 textbook law permitting the extension of contracts with publishers.

School Laws of the State of Montana, 1899, (1899), p. 92-97.  
Gives the textbook commission law enacted in 1897.

School Laws of the State of Montana, Sessions of 1903 and 1907, (1907), p. 43-53.

Gives the textbook commission law enacted in 1907, which supplanted the law of 1903.

School Laws of the State of Montana, 1917, (1917), p. 95-102.  
Gives full body of the textbook law with an amendment providing that free textbooks must be furnished in all districts of the State.

School Laws of the State of Montana, 1927, (1927), p. 82-87.  
Gives full text of the textbook law with amendments  
—providing for changes in meeting times of the commission.

Maxwell, R. C. The Selection of Textbooks, Boston, 1921,  
p. 28-30 and 78-83.

The readings include a comprehensive check list for evaluating textbooks and a discussion of the relative merits of the criteria used in evaluating textbooks. Score card or check list is too involved to be practicable.

Minutes of the Montana State Textbook Commission, entire text.

The minute book is on file in the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. There are no extra copies. It gives the minutes of all meetings held by the textbook commission since 1907. They are not very complete, failing at times to mention what members were present, how the members voted (Law provides that this must be a part of the minutes), or what the procedure was in determining a selection. Many things which seemed at one time to be of deepest concern are happily forgotten and no mention made of their disposition. Not nearly as good a source of information on how the commission functions as one would expect.

Montana Constitution, Codes, and Statutes, Sander's Edition, (1895), p. 148 and 1047.

First reference is to penalty for using other than the prescribed textbooks in the schools of Montana.

Second reference is to penalty for influencing any person charged with the responsibility of selecting textbooks, granting teachers' certificates, etc.

Steere, E. A. Fourth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1896, (1897), p. 9.

Recommendations of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the legislature urging the enactment of a free textbook law.

Steere, E. A. Third Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1894, (1894), p. 245-46 and 258.

Mr. Steere's recommendations to the legislature that that body delegate the State Board of Education the duty of selecting the textbooks.

Steere, E. A. Fifth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1898, (1899), p. 6.

An account of the first meeting of the textbook commission created by the law of 1897.



The Textbook in American Education, in the Thirtieth Year-book, Part II, of the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloomington, 1931. Entire text.

Probably the best source of information on the problem of selection, adoption, publishers' problems, marketing and selection; ethics, current practices, score cards, typography, selection of manuscripts by publishers, state publication of textbooks, adoption; authorities, and judicial opinion on textbook selection that may be had. Each phase of the subject is covered by men well qualified to handle the subjects. There is an annotated bibliography covering 51 authorities on textbooks.

Wright, C. Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Years 1877-78, (1879), p. 6.

Mr. Wright comments on the confusion existing in the State because of a lack of uniformity in textbooks.

Wright, C. Third Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Territory of Montana, 1881, (1881), p. 17-19.

Gives a brief summary of the uniform textbook law passed in 1881.

Wright, C. Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Year 1882, (1883), p. 24-25.

Reference to difficulty in getting publishers to sell their textbooks at uniform prices and in each county of the State.

Wylie, William W. Seventh Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Year 1885, (1886), p. 17 and 50.

First reference to requirement that firms furnishing elementary school textbooks under contract would also furnish high school textbooks at same discount.

Second reference to textbook commission created in 1885.

The Cost of New Textbooks, Advertising circular from the John C. Winston Co., 1935.

Shows the cost of textbooks in relation to total cost of education. Based on investigations of the National Education Association.

Welch, W. W. Seventh Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Montana, 1902, (1903), Part II of the Statistical Report.

For information on districts voting for and against furnishing free textbooks and costs of same.

Philipsburg, Montana  
October 19, 1935

Dear Fellow Worker:

When I set out to do the work necessary for a Master's degree in Education I vowed that I would never resort to the use of a questionnaire in securing material for my thesis. A portion of the information I need, however, is impossible to get in any other way and, much as I dislike doing it, I am going to ask you for about five minutes of your time in answering the questions that you will find on the enclosed form. I believe that you will find the questions interesting and that they have a vital bearing on the textbook situation in Montana today. Every effort has been made to eliminate useless questions and to make the questionnaire easily and quickly answered.

You may be assured that I shall appreciate your taking the time to favor me with your answers and returning the questionnaire to me at an early date. If I may be in a position to render you a similar service at any time I hope that you will have no hesitancy in calling on me.

Sincerely

Cleve O. Westby

QUESTIONNAIRE  
THE TEXTBOOK SITUATION  
IN MONTANA

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

1. What is the approximate amount spent for textbooks in your elementary school during the last completed school year? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the enrollment in your elementary school for the year above mentioned? 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is the present plan of textbook selection in this state satisfactory as far as your school is concerned? 3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. If you are convinced that the present method of selecting textbooks in this state is not satisfactory, please underline which of the following suggested changes that you believe should be made. If you have other suggestions, please list them in the space provided below.
  - (a) Permit first class districts to select their own books.
  - (b) Permit first and second class districts to select their own books.
  - (c) Permit all districts to select their own books.
  - (d) Have a county (or other convenient unit) committee to select the books for that particular area.
  - (e) Have the present textbook commission adopt several basal texts for each subject, permitting the individual teacher or school to select texts from the recommended list.
  - (f) Make the period of adoption for a longer time. (The present law makes the adoption obligatory for a five year period.)
  - (g) Make the adoption for a shorter period of time.
  
5. If the state course of study were carefully followed in all schools of the state, would the use of different textbooks in a subject make much difference to the pupil who transfers from one school to another? 5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. In addition to the suggestions above (in 4.), what glaring faults would you point out as applying to our present system of adopting textbooks?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. In addition to the suggestions in 4 above, what features of our present system of textbook adoption and selection do you particularly approve of?

HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

1. What is the approximate amount spent for textbooks in your high school during the year just ended? 1. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was the enrollment in your high school for that year? 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is your high school organized on the 6-3-3 plan, the 6-6 plan, or the 8-4 plan? (Please underline which)
4. Have you found it necessary to exercise severe retrenchments in the amount spent for textbooks in your high school during the last three or four years? 4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are your classes using old textbooks because the books are in good physical condition, though the content may be out-of-date? 5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you change texts in algebra, plane geometry, Latin, French, Spanish, English (or like subjects) for any of the following reasons? (Please underline the reasons which apply in your case)
  - (a) Change in content
  - (b) Improved binding
  - (c) Improved type-style and size
  - (d) Improvement in presentation of material
  - (e) Desire for a text more adaptable to unit or project method
  - (f) More adapted to students' needs.
  - (g) Tired of old book and want a change
  - (h) New teacher isn't acquainted with old textbook and wants a new one or one she is used to.
7. In deciding upon a new text does price play any part in your decision? 7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is it your opinion that texts for subjects like physics, chemistry, general science, American history, world history, civics, economics, sociology, etc. need to be changed to have texts that are up-to-date in content? 8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. If your answer to the above is "yes", about how often should such changes be made? 9. \_\_\_\_\_ yrs.
10. Do you find it satisfactory to supplement out-of-date textbooks in the social sciences and history with a few new books to be used as reference material? 10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Have you found it necessary for economic reasons to assign one textbook to two or more students? 11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Has it been your observation that the work in class has suffered to any appreciable extent under conditions as specified in question 11? 12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. By whom are the textbooks selected in your school? (Underline the answer which best fits your school)
  - (a) By the principal of the high school
  - (b) By the superintendent
  - (c) By the teacher of the subject or head of the department.
  - (d) By the school board
  - (e) By the principal with the advice of the teacher or head of the department
  - (f) By the superintendent with the advice of the teacher or head of the department.
  - (g) By the school board with the advice of the superintendent, principal, or teacher.
  - (h) By a textbook committee
  - (i) By the principal or superintendent with the recommendation of the textbook committee
14. In selecting a textbook, how many different texts as a rule do you, the teacher, or the committee examine before a selection is made? 14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Are your selections influenced by the prestige of the author's or authors' name or names? 15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. Are your selections influenced by the prestige of the name of the publisher of the text? 16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. Are your selections influenced by the fact that the name of the author has long been associated with the publication of any text? (For instance, "Wentworth and Smith, Plane Geometry") 17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. Would you approve having a state textbook commission adopt the texts for all high school subjects? 18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. If you do not believe that the state textbook commission should adopt all high school textbooks, name below any that you believe should be so adopted.

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