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JOSEPH LANCASTER AND THE PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS

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ONE hundred years ago last June, the legislature of Pennsylvania released the public schools of Philadelphia from the obligation, imposed upon them by the law of 1818, of using the Lancasterian system of instruction. Recent research has made it possible to shed considerable new light upon the activities in Philadelphia of Joseph Lancaster, the man who had devised in his school near London this famous method of teaching.

Previous investigations have been somewhat hampered by a lack of knowledge of the facts of Lancaster's sojourns in the Quaker City. James Pyle Wickersham states that the controllers of the Philadelphia schools invited Lancaster to come from London to help them, and that "he remained in the employ of the Board of Controllers as Principal of the Model School, for several years, teaching and expounding his system of instruction."[1] Both of these statements, however, deviate somewhat from the facts revealed in Lancaster's heretofore unexamined letters, notably to the Philadelphia educator, Roberts Vaux. David Salmon, the standard biographer of Lancaster, points out the weaknesses of earlier works,[2] but he relates very little about the

[1] J. P. Wickersham, *A History of Education in Pennsylvania* (Lancaster, Pa., 1885), pp. 284, 285, 610.

[2] David Salmon, *Joseph Lancaster* (London, etc., 1904). In a more recent work, the introductory account of Lancaster's life stops with his departure from England in 1818: David Salmon, ed., *The Practical Parts of Lancaster's Improvements and Bell's Experiment* (Cambridge, 1932).

educator's life after his arrival in America in 1818. Dr. Charles Calvert Ellis, taking his facts chiefly from the Minutes of the controllers of the Philadelphia public schools, from contemporary newspapers, and from the scanty and unreliable references in Lancaster's own *Epitome of Some of the Chief Events and Transactions in the Life of Joseph Lancaster,* is able to give a more complete and accurate account of Lancaster's first sojourn in Philadelphia;[3] but there are several points on which he also finds his information insufficient. Where, for instance, did Lancaster go when he temporarily left the city shortly after the Philadelphia school board had engaged him? Why did he remain only a few months in the employ of the controllers? When did he return to Philadelphia? What was he doing there in 1834, and what ungranted request did he make of the controllers in that year? These questions, and others, may be answered in good part from recently disclosed source material. For the first time also, the story of the generous and enduring friendship of Roberts Vaux for Joseph Lancaster is revealed.

The earlier history of Joseph Lancaster is well known. He had opened a school for poor children near London in 1798, at which there were soon about 1,000 pupils in attendance. Unable to afford paid assistants, Lancaster had governed and taught his school through pupil monitors. The organization was so carefully planned, the routine so economical of time, the discipline so mild—for that day and age—and yet so firm, the cost per student so low, and the instruction so effective in spite of the stupendous pupil load per teacher, that Lancaster's school had soon attracted wide attention and patronage. But fame had turned his head. Financial difficulties had ensued, bringing estrangement from the British and Foreign School Society—an organization formed to spread his methods. In 1818, his friends had helped him to leave England to try a new life in the New World.

Lancaster arrived in New York late in August, 1818,[4] and was well received there. In Philadelphia, meanwhile, a public school system on the Lancasterian plan had been getting well on its feet. Organized under a legislative act of March 6, 1818, with Roberts

[3] Charles C. Ellis, *Lancasterian Schools in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1907), pp. 52-54.

[4] *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), Aug. 27, 1818, p. 3, col. 1, and Aug. 28, 1818, p. 3, col. 1.

Vaux as president and William Birnie as secretary, the board of controllers had promptly chosen a committee to find a building and a teacher for their Model School.[5] The Minutes of the controllers record the negotiations involved in renting a room for this school, in engaging a teacher, erecting a permanent building, and purchasing fixtures and other supplies. They do not, however, carry any notation which would give support to Wickersham's statement that the controllers had invited Lancaster to come to their city. On the other hand, they show that the controllers had entered into an agreement early in May, 1818, with Edward Baker,[6] who was endorsed by the British and Foreign School Society and had previously conducted a private Lancasterian school in Philadelphia;[7] Baker was now to conduct the Boys' Model School at a salary of $100 per month. The controllers apparently had not anticipated employing Lancaster when they made this contract.

Moreover, the controllers must have known of the disfavor in which Lancaster was at that time held abroad. Benjamin Shaw, a prominent member of the British and Foreign School Society, was residing in Philadelphia in 1818, and was a school director for the first section. Furthermore, on October 15, 1818, while Lancaster was en route to Philadelphia, the eminent Quaker, Samuel Emlen, had sent to his friend and kinsman, Roberts Vaux, a long message from Burlington, N. J., which read in part:

> I understand that Joseph Lancaster, who has this evening given one of his Lectures to a pretty numerous auditory for this place, intends going to your City tomorrow and I suppose will soon make himself known to some of you who are interested in the system of general School Education. . . .
>
> I suppose it is no secret to thee that he is unconnected with our religious Society, or the British Foreign School Society and therefore now stands independent of both. . . . Whilst we carefully avoid throwing anything in the way to prevent his regaining the ground which he has lost and making a provision for himself and family, it may also be best to exercise a care not to bestow too much

[5] Minutes of the Board of Control of the first school district of the State of Pennsylvania, 1818-1821, pp. 18-20 (April 6, 1818). Seven MS. volumes of these Minutes, covering from 1818 to 1841, are kept at the warehouse of the Philadelphia Board of Education, as are the early Minutes of the various school sections into which the city and county of Philadelphia were divided.

[6] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 35.

[7] C. C. Ellis, *Lancasterian Schools in Philadelphia,* pp. 27-36.

> attention, lest by inflating a mind which has been represented as but too susceptible of vanity, the benefit which he may have derived from the experience of the events of the few last years, be lost to himself and produce inconvenience to others as I suppose it has heretofore; in short I think it may be best to consider him as a Noun Substantive, independent, and standing pretty much on his own Ground.[8]

This warning, which was strictly confidential, probably hit its mark, for the controllers, while receiving Lancaster with honor, were from the first cautious not to give him too much authority or power.

On October 15, 1818, the directors of the first section, which comprised the city of Philadelphia, chose a committee to wait on Lancaster "when he shall have arrived in the City" to acquaint him with the school law of 1818, and to arrange for the other sections to get advice from him, if they so desired.[9] This committee consisted of three directors: Robert Wharton, then mayor of Philadelphia; Joseph Reed, the recorder of the city; and Clement Cornell Biddle, a lawyer and political economist. On October 19, 1818, the controllers chose of their own number Joseph Reed, Reverend George Boyd, and Ebenezer Ferguson, an inspector of lumber and a justice of the peace, "to accompany Joseph Lancaster in visiting the schools."[10] Roberts Vaux, a founder and the president of the entire school system, may be assumed to have been an ex-officio member of this committee.

Years later, in describing his arrival in Philadelphia in 1818, Joseph Lancaster made this statement, which has since been several times repeated or paraphrased: "Robert Wharton, the Mayor, the Recorder of Philadelphia, Roberts Vaux, the benevolent president of the board of control for public schools, whose life has been devoted to benevolence and public usefulness, gave him a generous welcome to Philadelphia."[11] There is nothing in this phrasing by Lancaster to indicate that Wharton and Reed were there merely as school officials.

[8] This letter, and others of Lancaster to Vaux mentioned below, may be found among the Vaux Papers at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
[9] Directors of the First Section, Minute Book, I, 10 (Oct. 15, 1818).
[10] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 58.
[11] Joseph Lancaster, *Epitome of Some of the Chief Events and Transactions in the Life of Joseph Lancaster* (New Haven, 1833), p. 11.

Lancaster seems to have reached Philadelphia on October 19, 1818.[12] The following day the controllers delegated Thomas Stewardson and Ebenezer Ferguson "to confer with Joseph Lancaster on the subject of his superintending the Model School till the same be brought to strict conformity to his system."[13] On October 23 this committee reported that Lancaster was willing to organize the Model School and instruct sectional teachers at $120 per month, and the board agreed to employ him for a time at this rate,[14] a munificent one in the light of the then-existing salary schedules. At the same time, the old Model School was to be closed, as the new building was approaching completion and the furnishings had to be moved from the rented room to the permanent school. Edward Baker, the original teacher of the Model School, whose contract had not yet expired, remained on the payroll of the controllers upward of three months after the engagement of Lancaster.

There now intervened a carpenter's delay of about two months in getting ready the new school. Lancaster, meanwhile, spent his time during late October and much of November in lecturing on his system in Philadelphia.[15] On November 19, Thomas Stewardson, William Fry and Ebenezer Ferguson were chosen a committee to confer with him regarding the lessons in his possession, to see which of them might be used in the Model School.[16] But Lancaster's chief concern seems to have been to secure an advance of two months' salary, for a letter from him to Roberts Vaux, dated "20th of 11 mo. 1818," reads thus:

> . . . Had I not objects essentially connected with the desire of our hearts—I should not have staid in Philadelphia, to ask that has [as] a favor which ought to have been stipulated for as an arrangement; when by going South or north receipts equal to the best Philadelphia Lectures depend only upon the act of my will or the stroke of my pen. I have therefore felt that I have not been kindly attended to, when to forward an object so interesting to us all.—I have really asked an advance of an amount really trifling, when I am for moderation sake purposely charging you with a sum not equal to the value

[12] Charles C. Ellis, *Lancasterian Schools in Philadelphia,* p. 43.
[13] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, pp. 58-59.
[14] *Ibid.,* p. 60.
[15] Charles C. Ellis, *Lancasterian Schools in Philadelphia,* pp. 43-48.
[16] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 64.

> of half my services to the cause either in Lecturing, or in organizing schools—an amount very little above the value of the salary of a common Teacher. . . .
>
> No *official* notice has been taken of the application I made to thee yesterday . . . [a fact which is] both unpleasant and painful to my feelings. . . . The mode of payment I have proposed will be expected by me from every committee I may engage with, if I should ever engage with another. . . .[17]

Later, the same day, Lancaster addressed himself again to Vaux, assuring him that he held him in high regard and wished to remain his friend, and that he intended to discharge his duties faithfully and make "this school the most perfect thing of its kind in the world." A few days later, since the board had taken no action on his application, he wrote again to the president, Roberts Vaux, asking to see him. Then the board took notice; at a meeting of November 26, 1818, it resolved to advance Joseph Lancaster two months' salary, or $240, and immediately issued an order for the payment of that sum, dating the commencement of the salary from the 25th of November.[18] An interesting feature of this resolution is that it formed the occasion for the first divided vote recorded in the Minutes, a vote insisted on by Ebenezer Ferguson, who had been a member of every committee appointed to confer with Lancaster and who had acquired an opposition to the latter which was to persist long after Ferguson's defeat on the resolution just cited.

A letter from Lancaster to Vaux on the day this resolution was passed shows the former in a somewhat more tractable frame of mind. He laments that only nine persons to date have applied for admission into the Boys' Model School and that the project of the girls' school is still in the air. He discusses details regarding lesson books, apparatus and class lists. He proposes, in this letter of November 26, 1818, to lecture to the parents of the pupils shortly after the school opens. Two days later, however, he was offended again. He complained to Vaux that the visiting committee had neglected to see him, that there were hardly any applicants for the proposed school, and that nothing had been arranged about the girls' school.

[17] The punctuation, spelling, etc., characteristic of Joseph Lancaster's epistles to Roberts Vaux are faithfully reproduced above.

[18] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 66.

These must have been trying days for the controllers. With high idealism and enthusiasm that was abundant they had set out a few months before to build up a system of publicly-controlled schools, the first of its kind in the history of the Commonwealth, which should afford to all Philadelphia's poor children the means of acquiring the fundamentals of an education. They had to practice the strictest economy, inasmuch as the taxpayers were not yet accustomed to the thought of building and maintaining large schools out of the public treasury. On the other hand, they were anxious to raise the business of teaching to the level of a profession, and they desired the very best in the way of teachers, educational techniques and equipment for their schools. Now, in November and December of their first year, they found themselves with their temporary schoolroom closed and dismantled and their permanent building not yet ready because of the remissness of the carpenter; their pupils had been scattered and were failing to reregister; they had to pay during these months of non-service the $100 monthly which they had contracted to grant as salary to Edward Baker, the original teacher, and also a salary in advance to the renowned educator, Joseph Lancaster, who was to help them to organize the new school, although during the first month he did little but register a few pupils and complain that he was not receiving enough attention. Under the circumstances, it is surprising that the controllers tolerated as far as they did Lancaster's failure to coöperate with them.

Finally, in the latter part of December, 1818, the upper room of the new Model School was declared ready for occupancy,[19] and, although that room had been intended for the girls' school, it was decided to open the boys' school there at once. This was accordingly done, on December 21, under the direction of Joseph Lancaster.[20] Within a few weeks, the school had a registration of 413 boys.

The difficulties of the controllers, however, were not all solved. On the last day of 1818 they chose Thomas Stewardson, Ebenezer Ferguson, William Fry and James Ronaldson to confer with Lancaster on the subject of opening and organizing the girls' school with the assistance of his daughter—a girl about fourteen years of

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[20] Controllers of the First School District of the State of Pennsylvania, *First Annual Report* (Feb. 11, 1819), Philadelphia, 1819, p. 5.

age—and to make such contract with him as they deemed reasonable. At the same meeting, they appointed Ferguson, Ronaldson and Fry to visit the Boys' Model School in a supervisory capacity.[21] According to a letter written by Lancaster to Vaux under date of "2nd of 1st mo. 1819," an agreement was reached on January 1 as to his salary for organizing the girls' school, but on January 2 he reconsidered, and withdrew the assent he had previously given, because the remuneration was not sufficient. Under date of "4th of 1st mo. 1819," he wrote again to Vaux, stating his position unequivocally:

> I have seen Thomas Stewardson and have at his desire communicated the terms on which I can act, but am perfectly indifferent whether I am accepted or not. . . .
>
> They are the same as for the Boys School—it will be double trouble—and ought to be the same remuneration.
>
> It is unjust for me to be expected to qualify a single mistress without a remuneration fee—unless I do it of choice. I have done too much as to masters to go beyond the line of financial prudence with the other sex—I am grieved that there should be any controversy or discussion on subjects of finance. It is not my wish to make the system expensive. I think had I estimated *my* services at twice the salary received by any teacher in the United States I should not have overated [*sic*] them. . . . If there is a wish for unamity [*sic*] on measures for promotion of [the] system—the way is open before the board. . . .
>
> We have had 225 children this day present. . . . If I can have that cordial support and just remuneration which is all I ask to proceed with confidence and energy—working double tides would soon bring the ship out of dock with colors flying and general satisfaction around. . . .
>
> Wishing the work of Love to proceed in peace, I remain . . .

Obviously, Lancaster was willing to coöperate only as long as every one did as he wished.

Eventually, the controllers capitulated to his demands in regard to the Girls' Model School. The original committee appointed to contract with him on this subject was discharged on January 3, and Joseph Reed, George Boyd and James Ronaldson were selected

[21] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, pp. 74-75.

for the same purpose on January 7.[22] This committee, from which, we note, Ferguson was omitted, was more successful than the earlier one. On January 12, 1819, it reported the following proposals from Joseph Lancaster:

> 1. To open and organize the female School, and establish the teacher thereof, including the instruction of female teachers for the Sectional Schools in the same way as the Masters,—
> 2. To visit and superintend the Sectional Schools after the teachers have been instructed in the Model School.
> 3. To receive a compensation of five hundred dollars.[23]

The controllers resolved on January 12 to agree to a contract on these terms.

The $500 which Lancaster was to receive for organizing the girls' school was, of course, in addition to the $120 per month which he earned for his work with the boys' school. In the middle of January, 1819, however, we find the school building still not in condition to accommodate both the schools, and Edward Baker still technically in charge of the boys' division as its day-to-day teacher. Lancaster, meanwhile, was lecturing on his system in Wilmington, Baltimore, Washington and Georgetown, and hobnobbing with Congressmen.[24] The jaunt was from his point of view an outstanding success; the lectures were well-attended; high officials, from the President of the United States down, did him honor; and he wrote glowing accounts to Roberts Vaux of his triumphs.[25] From the point of view of the controllers, however, Lancaster's tour must have been an unfortunate episode. The Boys' Model School was ready to be shifted to its own quarters on January 21, and the controllers were anxious to get the girls' school started at once;[26] but the founder of the Lancasterian sys-

[22] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, pp. 76, 78.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[24] Vaux Papers, Joseph Lancaster to Roberts Vaux, "Washington, 23rd of 1st mo. 1819." His letters to Vaux during this time imply that Richard M. Jones was substituting for him in the Boys' Model School. If this were the case, the occupation during this time of Edward Baker, who received his final salary check from the controllers on Feb. 4, 1819, is not clear.

[25] *Ibid.*, "Washington, 26th of 1st mo., 1819" and "Washington, 27th of 1st mo. 1819."

[26] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 87. It is probable that the controllers were spurred on in their desire to hasten the opening of the Girls' Model School by the fact that their first annual report was to be written early in February, and they were anxious to make as good an impression with it as possible on a still very critical public.

tem, whom they had engaged to pay $500 for the task of opening that school, was winning glory in the nation's capital, and was setting his own date for coming home, saying that he would open the school in about two weeks, and that the controllers would do more harm than good if they proceeded hastily![27]

A second way in which this tour by Lancaster reacted unfavorably upon the controllers was in the effect it had upon Lancaster's easily inflated vanity. With each new audience that swelled the halls to listen to his lectures, with each new handshake or compliment from a prominent politician, he came to look down more than ever upon the local business men and small office holders on the Philadelphia board of controllers,[28] and to become more than ever convinced of the importance of his mission. His letters to Vaux while on the road make this abundantly clear. For instance, on January 25, 1819, he wrote:

> In the way things go on I seem unable to be responsible for your success—*party measures* destroy my hopes. But the moment I arrive I intend to request to *meet* the whole board—I must be explicit—or you will not even now succeed.
>
> I do not want to intrude my services on Philadelphia—but as Keyser [one of the controllers] and some others are proposing unqualified teachers for your notice for the model school I shall be careful of my *character* and *responsibility*. . . . [Italics in this and the other citations in this paper represent Lancaster's underscores.]

The next day Lancaster wrote again to Vaux, describing his successes in Washington, and saying in part:

> I only wish the whole board of Comptrol at Philadelphia could have been present and seen the spirit and feeling which prevailed and the crowds of assembled representatives of their country who . . . were crowding round to congratulate me, or the universal satisfaction they enjoyed—For my part I am lost in thankfulness at the mercy and goodness which crowns my days—which qualifies me for the most arduous undertakings. . . .

[27] Cf. various letters from Lancaster, January, 1819, in the Vaux Papers.

[28] Of the first board of controllers, one member was a clergyman, one a printer, one a typefounder, one a victualler, one a lawyer and recorder of the city, and one a justice of the peace; two members were merchants; and the president, Roberts Vaux, was a "gentleman" who had retired from business before the age of thirty and devoted his life to philanthropy.

> My respects to the Gentlemen of the Board—and tell them they may have confidence, that the polar Star of Education in Pennsylvania will not be eclipsed by any Star in the union.

Another letter, dated "30 of 1st mo. 1819," shows Lancaster still enjoying a "delightful train of success," but distressed because he could not have a vacation as well: "Some rest would have been a personal accommodation before I commenced the *arduous* and weighty work of organizing a new School—*to me* a *weighty* work for I find something there *to do* than introduce a system." Lancaster indicates in this letter that Vaux himself was taking over the task of organizing the Girls' Model School during the first week of its existence; and instead of being grateful, he hoped the experience would do the president of the controllers some good. These are his words:

> However as you have kindly undertaken the care for *one week*—the *weight of it rests upon you.* I wish you have it truly and fully *it will* add to your sympathies—in future.

We wonder how Roberts Vaux, the serious-minded, benevolent young Quaker, responded to this message!

It was February 8, 1819, before Joseph Lancaster returned to Philadelphia to resume his duties there.[29] His superior attitude toward the controllers, which had become badly exaggerated during his tour, continued to stand in the way of any harmonious collaboration between him and those gentlemen. The Girls' Model School had been opened early in the month, and the *First Annual Report* of the controllers, dated February 11, 1819, was able to record a registration of 320 girls in that establishment.[30] Lancaster was angry that the board had proceeded without him in this and other matters. On February 9, 1819, he wrote to Vaux, complaining that the girls' school had been opened precipitately, with a novice in charge, and *"a set of lessons—the worst adapted to the Lancasterian system of any in the world by the most stupid ignoramus breathing* are placed in the school." He desired more *"professional courtesy,"* stating that the board ought to consult him in the choice of teachers and lessons. The next day he wrote

[29] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 91.
[30] *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

again, pleading for more control over the purchase of supplies and lessons. The controllers yielded to the extent of granting him $50 for the purchase of premiums and sewing materials for the Girls' Model School.[31]

It appears that Lancaster now had complete charge of both the male and the female divisions of the Model School for two or three months. There is no record that anyone was paid to assist him, and the *First Annual Report* of the controllers names only Lancaster as the teacher of the Chester Street School. This gave him the stupendous pupil load of over 700 children; but attendance was very irregular and Lancaster had often boasted that one teacher could easily handle 1,000 pupils on the monitorial plan. The Lancaster-to-Vaux correspondence during this period shows that, while Lancaster felt pleased with the progress of his schools, he continued to have trouble with the other members of the school system. Ebenezer Ferguson, especially, showed dissatisfaction with his work, and was a constant thorn in his side, so that Lancaster threatened, rather half-heartedly, to resign.[32]

One difficulty that developed was in the matter of instructing sectional teachers. Lancaster's contracts, both for organizing the Boys' Model School and for setting in motion the Girls' Model School, had specified that he instruct masters and mistresses for the sectional schools. This part of the agreements, however, had not been carried out to the satisfaction of the board, which on March 4, 1819, adopted a set of "Rules and Regulations" which included the following provisions:

> 8th. . . . All sectional teachers are required to conduct and organize their schools, upon the plan exhibited in the model schools; and no teacher can be permitted to substitute any method essentially different therefrom.
> 9th. Every sectional teacher is to be instructed in the principles and operations of the Lancasterian system of education by attendance at the model school; to be admitted by an order from the Board of Control.[33]

The following week, on March 11, the controllers instructed their president to find out on what day Lancaster would "be ready

[31] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 92.
[32] Vaux Papers, Lancaster to Vaux, "83 Wood St., Phila., 3rd mo. 3rd. 1819" and "4th of 3rd mo. 1819."
[33] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, pp. 114-115.

to receive the sectional teachers into the model school for instruction in the principles of the system."[34] To this resolution Lancaster replied, in a letter of March 12:

> I have received the minute of the board and feel every disposition to second their desires—for which matters are ripening apace—and one school will soon be ready.
>
> But before I name a day for that school. . . I wish to have a conference with thee and hope to open the way for a conference with the whole board on the subject. . . .
>
> Now is the moment when most of the financial difficulties and minutes [?] are over—to harness yourselves as much to the work of Education as you have done to the Legislative amendment, and to consider how you can carefully open my way to bring all the Schools to the same standard—the teachers to the one principle—the parents to a due estimation of its blessings—the public to a feeling of gratitude for its introduction in all which however determined I am never to be the hired servant of any man or men I am yet happy to render any voluntary service to every child and friend of the system in my power.

In this letter he demanded that the sectional school teachers be made to know their subordinate position, that the board consult him before adopting measures, and that no attention be paid to the efforts of Baker, his predecessor in the Model School, to defame him. For the time being, no day was set for beginning the instruction of the sectional teachers.

A few days later, Lancaster apparently asked whether his contracts would be renewed after their termination on May 24, and the board on March 18, 1819 passed a resolution "that the board consider that from and after the 24. May next ensuing the further services of Joseph Lancaster will not be necessary."[35] At the same meeting a committee of four was chosen to see to "the immediate introduction of sectional teachers into the model schools for instruction in the system" and to "attend with the sectional teachers at the model school." Later on in the month Lancaster was paid in advance the sum of $490, which represented his salary for the next two months for work with the male and female schools.[36] On the question of this payment, the board again di-

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[35] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, p. 120.
[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123

vided for the second recorded occasion in the entire fifty-two meetings it had held since its inception. We recall that the first division had been on a similar question regarding Lancaster. The controllers elected as the next teacher of the Boys' Model School John Ely, whom Lancaster considered intolerable.

Now that his time was getting short, Lancaster seems to have made something of an effort to instruct the sectional teachers, but in so doing, he rubbed those ladies and gentlemen the wrong way, and they decided that they could not give half-holidays to their own schools while they themselves attended the Model School. On May 6, 1819, he again addressed his complaints in writing to Roberts Vaux:

> When I wrote to thee last I requested the board of controllers to make a written minute which should be handed to all the sectional Directors and teachers respecting their being placed under my instruction at *all* such times as I may call for them—owing to this request not being complied with I find, a number of teachers have taken a notion that their local directors will not allow their schools *to be* broken up for them to attend. . . . I hope the board will make such a minute as will prevent the thing being misunderstood a second time. I presume having seen their schools and being no stranger to the practice of training teachers I am the best Judge of what line of process I am to take as best adapted to promote my object. . . .

The same day, the board sent written instructions to the sectional directors to have their schools dismissed at the time assigned for the training of the teachers at the Model School.[37]

There are three more small incidents which should be noted here as tending to show that at the very end of his engagement by the controllers, Lancaster seems to have repented somewhat for his irresponsibility and arrogance. One was a series of brief essays on such subjects as "Library Rules," "Rewards," "Medals," "Needle Work," and "Economy," which he addressed to Roberts Vaux as president of the controllers during May.[38] Another was a letter he wrote to Vaux on his last day as teacher in the Model Schools, in which he said: "This afternoon Joseph Lancaster takes

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 134, 138.

his last leave of those who have provisionally been 'plants of his hand and children of his care'."[39] Whatever his faults, Lancaster seems to have had a way pleasing to children. The third incident is an offer he made two days after the termination of his contract, when the illness of the newly appointed mistress of the Girls' Model School left that institution without a suitable teacher. Lancaster proposed to serve "for Ten or Twelve days, in conjunction with such female teacher as the Board of Control may approve of," and the board accepted the offer of "such gratuitous aid as Joseph Lancaster can furnish until otherwise directed."[40] But Ebenezer Ferguson, arriving after the meeting had voted on this resolution, could not resist taking a final blast at his enemy by having this protest recorded:

> I therefore am under the disagreeable necessity of protesting against Joseph Lancaster's being employed any longer either for pay or to do it gratuitously and I do most solemnly protest against the foregoing resolution.[41]

On this bitter note closes the record of Lancaster's service to the Philadelphia public schools during 1818-19. It is hardly necessary to point out that the controllers had treated him generously, although the foreknowledge they had had of him and their natural caution had prevented them from giving him all the leeway that he demanded. On his part, Lancaster had proved singularly uncooperative and hard to handle. Of his actual classroom management, there seems to have been little complaint; but he was overbearing in his attitude toward other adults and unreliable in the fulfilment of his obligations. There is no reason to believe that, if he had been given the wider authority which he considered his due, he would have done more than he did for the Philadelphia schools.[42]

[39] Vaux Papers, Lancaster to Vaux, "25th of 5th mo. 1819."
[40] Minutes of the Board of Control, 1818-1821, pp. 141-142.
[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.
[42] The story of Lancaster's sojourns in Philadelphia subsequent to the events recorded above will form the subject of a later article.