Menasha's City Schools.

No city can have a better certificate of character than a well-supported, well-regulated and well-conducted system of schools. In this respect Menasha makes a showing to the world that compares favorably with that of any community in the West. Within the past ten years, notwithstanding that five of them have been years of wide-spread commercial and industrial depression, nearly $100,000 has been expended in Menasha for schools, school grounds, school furnishings, etc. in 1896 the magnificent high school building—the pride of the city and the equal of any high school in Wisconsin—was erected and furnished at a cost approximating $40,000. Prior to this, in 1894 and 1894 respectively, two handsome brick ward schools were built—one for the Fourth ward and the other for the Third ward—at a cost of about $10,000 each. These three buildings stand today as noble monuments to the city's bounty and broad public spirit towards the cause of popular education. But in recounting the improvements along this line it should not be forgotten that in 1893 the people of St. Mary's church under the leadership of Father Seubert built a beautiful three-story brick parochial school on its property on Third street which cost with furnishings between $10,000 and $20,000.

In addition to these buildings there are three other denominational schools—St. Patrick's on the Avenue; the Polish school on Fifth street and the Lutheran school on Broad, all three substantial buildings of brick.

THE THIRD WARD SCHOOL—BUILT IN 1894.

Menasha's total school population, according to the census of 1897 was 2151, and of these not less than 1400 attend either the public or denominational schools.

In the public schools there are twenty-one teachers employed, as follows:
FIRST WARD.—HIGH SCHOOL.
W. C. Hopkins, Jr., Principal.
H. C. Verbeck, First Assistant Principal.
Miss Jean Anderson, Second Assistant Principal.
HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING.
W. C. Hopkins, Jr., Latin, Greek, History, Science, English.
H. C. Verbeck, Mathematics, Political Economy, Geology, English.
Miss Jean H. Anderson, Latin, German, English Literature, History, English.
Nellie Shea, Eighth Grade.
Fannie Cavanaugh, Seventh Grade.
Adele Heckel, Sixth Grade.
Mayme Kelly, Fifth Grade.
Anna Lloyd, Fourth Grade.
Millie Nugent, Third Grade.
Clara Schubert, Second Grade.
Catherine Paul, First Grade.
Mary Whipple, Kindergarten.
Maud Mericle, Kindergarten Assistant.
THIRD WARD.
Emma Heckel, Sub-Principal, Sixth and Fifth Grades.
Katherine O’Malley, Fourth and Third Grades.
Alice Nugent, Second and First Grades.
Amy Grandine, Kindergarten.
FOURTH WARD.
Lenora Donohue, Sub-Principal, Fifth and Third Grades.
Cora Wheeler, First Grade.
Mrs. Delia Gallagher, Kindergarten.
SPECIAL TEACHER FOR GRADES.
Mr. L. L. Summers, of Milwaukee, Drawing.
Total number of teachers—Men, 3; women, 18.
The board of education consists of a superintendent and four commissioners as follows:
BOARD OF EDUCATION.
John Rosch, Superintendent.
John Payne, Clerk.
MEMBERS.
First ward, John Payne; term expires, 1899.
Second ward, John Planner; term expires, 1900.
Third ward, F. D. Lake; term expires, 1899.
Fourth ward, John Schreibels; term expires, 1900.

Each of the Catholic parochial schools is in charge of sisters who are thoroughly competent to teach in all the branches up to and including eighth grade work and the results obtained are alike gratifying to teacher and pupil. The Lutheran school is in charge of Rev. Helms, a gentleman thoroughly qualified for his responsible position.

The public schools, under the administration of Prof. Hopkins, rank with the best-conducted in the county or state. Last year, during Prof. Dunlap’s final year of service, a class of twenty-three was graduated, and this year the senior class numbers fourteen. In the junior class there are ten; in the sophomore, twenty-five, while the freshmen number thirty.

Since 1876 a total of 124 scholars have been graduated from the high school, or an average of about six a year.

The High school alumni association is a flourishing organization and is officered as follows:
Edward Nussbicker, President.
Jennie Heckel, Secretary.
Lenora Donohue, Treasurer.
A banquet is held annually during commencement week.

The total attendance at the public schools is between 700 and 800.

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The Park City.

THANKS to the munificent gift of its leading citizen, Menasha will in a few years have a park the equal of anything of its kind in Wisconsin. Last year Mr. Elisha D. Smith, president of the Menasha Wooden Ware Co., presented to the city nearly thirty acres of as beautiful park land as can be found in the state, situated in the eastern part of Doty Island, famous for its beauty all over the Northwest. The park was given on the condition, among others, that the city expend $1,000 annually in improving it for a term of ten years, and at least $500 thereafter annually in maintaining it. A board of park commissioners was appointed by Mayor Pleasant consisting of Messrs. E. D. Smith, P. V. Lawson, John Schreibels, A. J. Tuchscherer and L. J. Noble, and these gentlemen have already begun the work of beautifying the tract. Olaf Benson, of Chicago, a landscape architect who ranks with the very best in his profession in the United States, has already prepared plans which when put into execution will give Menasha one of the most beautiful and attractive public parks in the Northwest. The land is admirably situated for park purposes, lying on Fox river, so that slips may be dredged in to admit of the landing of passenger boats directly in the park. Some parts of it are already beautifully wooded, while the skill of the landscape gardener will not be lacking to make the entire tract a charming variation of beautiful groves, grottoes, lakes, rivers, islands, with rustic bridges, seats, swings for the children and all other acces-
sories that are to be found in parks of the first class. The park is bounded by four residence streets which will be macadamized and otherwise improved, while macadam driveways will be run through the grounds in various directions.

There are a number of smaller parks in and about the city which make delightful picnicking grounds for small parties.

The city, in common with Neenah, also has a driving park, located at the east end of Doty Island almost opposite the city park, and provided with an excellent half mile track, stables and other appurtenances. This track is also admirably adapted for bicycle, foot and other races, and as the wheelmen of Menasha and Neenah number between 500 and 1,000, wheeling events are of frequent occurrence.

THE FOURTH WARD SCHOOL.—BUILT IN 1891.

The Elisha D. Smith Public Library.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
   When wealth accumulates and men decay."

So sang Goldsmith of whom it is said that "he wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll." But where man grows in intelligence, in culture and in refinement the accumulation of wealth loses much of its menace, and cannot be said to be an unmixed evil. Menasha is indeed fortunate in having men who while they grow in wealth also grow in public spirit. An illustration of this is afforded by the gift last year to the city of Menasha by its wealthiest citizen of a bequest that is destined to make an impress for great good on the city for all coming time. Reference is made to the Elisha D. Smith public library, for which the sum of $25,000 was given by the citizen in whose honor the institution was named. Two years ago the Menasha Free Library association was formed and the sum of $2,000 raised for the establishment of a free public library, one-half of the sum being donated by Mr. Smith. Rooms were rented in the Tuchserer block, and in a short time a collection of over 1,000 books was the result of the faithful work of the promoters of the enterprise. Miss Lucy Lee Pleasants was installed as librarian, a position which she has filled continuously since to the complete satisfaction of the public. But this was only a beginning of the good things in store. In the summer of 1897, at a special meeting of the common council, the announcement was made that Mr. Smith had supplemented his first gift of one thousand dollars by the princely bequest of $25,000, of which sum
$15,000 was to be expended on a public library building and the remainder to be used for the increase of the library already under way. At the preceding municipal election the people of Menasha had voted to accept the offer of the Menasha Free Library association to turn over the library gratis to the city on condition that thereafter a one mill tax should be levied annually for its maintenance. Under this act of the people, and pursuant to law, a board of library directors was appointed, with Mr. E. D. Smith as president, and in the fall of 1897 it was decided to accept the further generous gift of Mr. Smith of the property on the corner of Mill and Water streets and erect the interior of 27x50 feet with alcoves for reading tables. The upper story is devoted to a lecture room 40x50 feet in dimensions, and several smaller rooms.

The library now contains between 2,000 and 3,000 volumes, but the generosity of Mr. Smith's bequest for its increase makes assurance doubly sure that within ten years Menasha will have a public library of upwards of 10,000 volumes— one of the most extensive and comprehensive of its kind in the state.

As showing the extent to which the public library is used the following report from the librarian, Miss Pleasant, in May, 1898, is reproduced:

During the month of April there were given out of the Menasha library 1172 books. Of these 110 were German, 63 Polish, 42 history and biography, 42 literature, 5 national science, 2 social science and 2 useful arts. The rest were fiction.

The total cost of the library building, including heating, lighting, etc., will not fall short of $16,000.

The present board of library directors appointed by Mayor Pleasant in 1897 consists of:

- E. D. Smith, President
- F. D. Lake, Vice-President
- Jos. L. Fieweger, Secretary
- P. V. Lawson
- Silas Bullard
- Henry Fitzgibbon
- H. E. Trilling
- L. J. Noble
- John Wons

The contract with Mr. Ehlers calls for the completion of the building not later than July 15, but so far has work already progressed that there is
little doubt but the beautiful structure will be ready for dedication before that date.

In its public library building Menasha has a piece of architecture that is unique in all northeastern Wisconsin. Its chastely beautiful facade—purely classical in its outlines—calls to mind the architectural glories of Hellas' ancient capital, the mother of arts. The stranger within our gates, however little he may be impressed with the city’s great manufacturing institutions or its beautiful schools, perforce pauses before this noble pile and willingly pays his meed of admiration.

The Fire Department.

There seems to be something in the very atmosphere of Menasha that develops good fire fighters. For forty years Menasha has had a volunteer fire department ranking foremost among Wisconsin organizations of the kind. First it was the pioneer bucket brigade; then the old hand engine companies with their showy uniforms, and lastly the consolidated department of the present. Many a disastrous fire has been stayed in its destructive progress by the brave and heroic boys who “ran with the old machine” and fearlessly faced death in the faithful discharge of duty.

The department today is in better condition than at any previous time in its history. It amounts in efficiency to a paid department—in fact the engineer, teamster and assistant are under full pay, while the members receive a yearly salary of $60 each. The fire station is in the city hall, where City Teamster Pankratz has two splendid spans of horses always ready for service. Directly in front of where the Silsby steamer is stationed is arranged a set of drop harness, and another set is suspended in front of the hose wagon on the other side of the hall. A system of electric bells and apparatus is also in evidence, connecting the hall with the engineer's house and also opening automatically the doors leading from the horse’s stalls. So perfect are the arrangements that in less than one minute from the sounding of the first alarm, horses and steamer are on their way to the fire. The fire hall is equipped with two steamers—a Silsby and a Mansfield—as well as a large hose wagon, and a hook and ladder truck. In the second story of the hall is the firemen’s sleeping room from which descends a pole affording the firemen on night duty a quick means of reaching the ground floor in case of an alarm.

The officers of the department are:

Chief Engineer—John Zeininga.
Assistant—Louis Bublitz.
Treasurer—H. Bredendick.
Secretary—Jos. Schmitter.


The department has a general review day each year, at which there is a grand parade, tests of the apparatus and the annual firemen’s ball. The day is regarded as a general holiday in the city, and has been observed without an omission for the past thirty-five or forty years.

The World is its Field.

The products of Menasha’s mills and factories go all over the world. In every country of Europe people drink water from Menasha pails; in Asia, South Africa, Australia and the islands of the sea the Menasha wood split pulley is used in the transmission of power; all over America people wear Menasha suits, skirtings and flannels; many of the prominent newspapers and periodicals of the country are printed on Menasha paper, and so on through the list. Where thousands of cities five times its size are never heard of, Menasha’s name is a familiar one.