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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1849.

Augusta:
WM. T. JOHNSON,.....PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1850.

THIRD REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF EDUCATION

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1849.

Published agreeably to Resolve of March 22, 1836.

Augusta:
WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.
1849.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

1849.

REPORT.

To the Governor of the State of Maine:

It becomes the duty of the Board of Education, in closing their official labors for another year, to submit to your excellency their annual report. Fully sensible that no more important charge could be entrusted to us than that of watching over the interests of our common schools, we are cheered and sustained by the reflection that we are not laboring alone nor in vain.

From the report of the Secretary of the Board, which is herewith transmitted, it will be seen that the demand for competent and skillful teachers is becoming more and more urgent, and that there is an increasing disposition to afford something approaching an adequate reward for their services. This indication of an awakened interest in the education of our children and youth, the increased appropriations for the support of schools and the improvement of school-houses, are auspicious omens, and afford the assurance that the hopes and expectations which led to the commencement of the educational enterprize, now in progress in our State, are not doomed to disappointment.

If called upon to designate the instrumentality which is, in our estimation, the most important in carrying on the work of improving the condition of our common schools, we should answer—*money;* not from the treasury of the State, but from the voluntary taxation of the inhabitants of towns and plantations. The minimum amount required by law, to be raised and expended in the maintenance of common schools, is forty cents

to each individual inhabitant, according to the census of 1840. This amounts to eighty-six cents, annually, for each child in the State between the ages of four and twenty-one, or to the sum of $14.62 for the education of each child from the age of four years to that of twenty-one; a sum less than that which is expended, annually, in the education of his child by many an inhabitant of the State. If knowledge is power, and that knowledge is to be acquired in the school-room, is there not reason to fear that the distance between the extremes in society will increase rather than diminish, so long as the intellectual capacities of one class are developed by a generous liberality, and those of the other stinted and dwarfed by a sordid parsimony. We do not advise nor ask the State, to compel, by legal enactments, the raising and expending of a larger amount of money in the support of common schools, but we do desire to present, distinctly, to the people, our convictions that the present appropriations, increased in amount as they have been within the two past years, are as yet inadequate to the attainment of the object we have in view—the thorough education of every child in the State.

As one of the means of inducing towns to make improvements in the construction of school-houses, and thereby improve the condition of the schools, we have to ask the legislature to appropriate a sum of money, sufficient to furnish every town and incorporated plantation in the State—three hundred and seventy-nine in number—with a copy of Barnard's School Architecture. It is a work of great value, containing the information most needed in the construction and arrangement of school-houses, and an amount of information to be found in no other work of a similar character, within the knowledge of the Board. In several States, a recommendation similar to the one we make, has been adopted by the legislature; the expense of carrying it out will not exceed four hundred dollars. We believe it would be a judicious and profitable investment.

We refer to the accompanying report of the Secretary, for a full account of what has been done the past year. To the

views and suggestions contained therein, we accord our full and entire approbation, and we gladly bear testimony to the industry and success with which he has applied himself to his arduous duties. We would invite attention particularly to the recommendation with regard to the revising and codifying the school laws, as a matter which we trust will receive the early attention of the legislature.

Justice to the Secretary of the Board, requires us to say, that we are convinced that the compensation now paid to him is not adequate for the services rendered. Although he may not ask for an increase of salary, yet we are satisfied that, so long as it is made his duty to make an annual circuit of the State, thereby incurring heavy expenses, and the duties of his office require so entire a devotion of his time, he should be more liberally paid. We are so well convinced that his salary is inadequate to his support, that we would respectfully recommend that, in addition to that already received, the Secretary of the Board be allowed such sum as will defray his traveling expenses and postage, necessary to, and inseparable from the discharge of the duties of his office.

If, indeed, in our efforts to increase the utility and efficiency of our public schools, all has not been accomplished that we could have wished—if many and serious difficulties still remain to be overcome, and incite to new efforts in the future, yet remembering, as we all do, the infancy of our enterprize, we find much of encouragement in the awakened interest in this great subject. Let us realize that the object in view cannot be accomplished without the zealous co-operation of all our citizens, a consecration of time, effort, and money—to all of which the strong ties of parental affection, patriotism and humanity urge us. The extent of the interests involved in the work of education, no human mind can limit or fully comprehend. Its influence over the character and destiny of individuals and of a people; its power to redeem from degradation and crime; its works of beneficence in all that is valuable, useful and good among men; its ennobling and elevating tenden-

cies, bearing onward and upward the *human* towards the INFINITE MIND; these should commend its cause to the hearts of all men. That the people of Maine, while they are seeking to develop the rich natural resources of the State, are becoming conscious of the inestimable riches of *mind* within her borders, and are resolved on seeking to develop these also,—the richer elements of her future prosperity and honor,—justly entitles her to an enviable standing among her sister states.

STEPHEN EMERY,
R. H. VOSE,
ARTHUR F. DRINKWATER,
DAVID WORCESTER,
AARON HAYDEN,
WILLIAM REED PORTER,
STEPHEN COBURN,
SAMUEL ADLAM,
HORACE PIPER,
JOTHAM DONNELL.

Augusta, May 1, 1849.

NOTE. The members of the board, for the counties of Lincoln, Waldo and Franklin, were not present at the meeting at which the foregoing report was adopted.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

1849.

REPORT.

To the Board of Education:

GENTLEMEN:—I have the honor to present to you my THIRD ANNUAL REPORT.

A review of the educational events of the past year presents nothing of a startling character,—nothing to enrapture or amaze. No miracles have been wrought, and none were to be expected where human instrumentalities alone were to be employed. The evils which were found to exist in the practical operation of our Common School system, at the time this Board was organized, have not yet been wholly eradicated. Enough remain to gratify the morbid appetite of the desponding, to encourage the gloomy forebodings of the skeptical, and to stimulate to renewed effort all true friends of the cause. The results of the labors of the past year, may have come so far short of the hopes and anticipations of the enthusiast and the visionary, as to seem trifling and disheartening; to the superficial observer they may be imperceptible; but, I am happy to have it in my power to say, that I can find in them much cause for encouragement and gratitude. Self-deceived I may be,—so prone is man to accept as true that which he wishes to be true,—but I believe that an impulse has been given to the cause of popular education in this State, within the last two years, such as it has never before received. The agencies employed, like the noiseless messengers of light and life to all around us, may have been unnoticed or unregarded, yet, like them they have silently and faithfully performed their work; like them, too, their mission of beneficence must be daily, hourly recurring, or the la-

bors of this our seed-time will fail of their reward in the ripened fruits of harvest.

All experience teaches that improvement, to be permanent, must be gradual. No great, lasting results ever follow from a single spasmodic effort, while patient, persevering labor, directed to the attainment of a single object, seldom fails of success. It is in the light of this familiar, although too slightly appreciated truth, that the educational movement, now in progress in this State, should be regarded. The expectations which look for a sudden regeneration of our schools, will be certainly disappointed; and even were this possible, were it in the power of this Board to speak into existence a corps of skillful teachers, sufficient in number to meet the wants of the entire State; to convert every ill-constructed or dilapidated school-house into a temple worthy the ministrations of learning, and crowd them with devoted youthful worshipers; their mission,—emphatically the mission of the Age,—would even then be but partially fulfilled. Indeed, I go farther, and hazard the assertion that such a result would be as undesirable as it is impracticable. The natural consequence would be a relaxation of effort; the consciousness of victory achieved would lull to a fatal repose; and in that repose, the enemy who scatters tares while men sleep would not be idle. While it becomes the friends of popular education to be grateful that so many obstacles have been surmounted, they should not be forgetful that there are yet others in their path. Neither should they be disheartened by their number and magnitude; nor by the conviction that the period will never arrive, when it can be said, with safety, that their warfare is accomplished. Generation will succeed generation upon the battle-field of life, and each, in its turn, must be trained and educated for the conflict. Each, in its turn, must furnish its recruits to fill up the broken ranks in the army of Progress. Each, too, must keep its watch-fire burning, and rest only upon its arms. Eternal vigilance is the price of Universal Education, as it is of Liberty,—for the one is the offspring of the other.

I propose, in this Report, to lay before the Board a brief statement of what has been done during the past year to promote the interests of education, together with such information as I have obtained in relation to the present condition of our common schools, and some suggestions of ways and means by which their welfare and usefulness may be still farther promoted.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

By the Board and its Secretary. A report of what has been done which embraced no statement of the individual action of the members of this Board, would seem to be incomplete; yet a single allusion to the nature of the service they have rendered, is all that I deem necessary. The law imposes upon them arduous duties, for the performance of which it provides no compensation. This feature in the law, although it enables the State to speculate upon the philanthropy of a portion of its citizens, is not an objectionable one. It divests the office of all attractions for those who seek office for pecuniary gain, and thereby secures the services of those only who are actuated by higher motives. Sundered as it now is, and as it is hoped it ever will be, from all political and sectarian associations, it cannot be made a stepping-stone to political advancement, or an instrument for the promotion of sectarian interests. The strongest possible testimony that the individuals who have occupied this responsible position for the past year, have neither abused nor neglected the trust committed to them, is to be found in the fact of their re-election, in every instance, except where a re-election was declined. In this renewed expression of public confidence, and in an approving conscience, will be found all the reward they have sought, and the highest for which man should ask or hope on earth.

Of the services rendered by the Secretary of the Board during the past year, it does not become me to speak, farther than this:—he has given to the subject committed to him, his earnest and anxious consideration; he has availed himself of all the means within his reach, to collect and diffuse information upon the various topics to which his attention is directed by the law

creating the office; he has endeavored, to the best of his ability to discharge the duties devolved upon him. Although a review of the past serves but to strengthen in his own mind the conviction of his own deficiences, it is unembittered by the reflection that he has omitted to do what he could to promote the welfare of a cause, which, to his apprehension, is assuming a new importance with every succeeding year, and which is worthy of the best efforts of men and nations.

By School Officers. The prosperity and usefulness of our schools must depend very much upon the fidelity with which Superintending School Committees and School Agents, to whose supervision and management they are more immediately entrusted, perform their duties. The observation of the past year has convinced me, more than ever before, of this fact. In those towns where there has been a co-operation between committees and agents, with a view to the employment of qualified teachers, there has been a visible improvement in the schools; while in those where there has been no united effort, but rather a determined opposition, or, what is still worse, a *masterly inactivity* on the part of one or both, schools have not improved, but, on the contrary, have rather deteriorated; and for this very obvious reason, among others, that they have become the refuge of those teachers who are unable to procure employment in towns and districts where a correct public sentiment prevails as to what constitutes a good school, and where the qualifications of teachers are subjected to a severer scrutiny.

I regret that duty requires me to place upon record the disreputable fact, that, notwithstanding the efforts which have been made, and the light which has been scattered far and wide, during the past two years, the towns in our State are not few, in which there is as great a degree of apathy on the part of school-officers, in regard to schools, and in which as gross darkness and indifference prevail, as in former years; that there are still school districts, in which parents and children are to be found, who are as literally in a state of heathenism, so far as the appre-

ciation of the importance and value of school education is concerned, as are the wild horsemen in our newly acquired territory on the Pacific; and who, alike unconscious of their value, trample upon golden fragments, which, gathered up, would make them rich indeed. This may seem strong language. It may subject him who utters it to the censure of the self-convicted, and the denunciations of the smooth-tongued caterer to popular passion and prejudice; yet it must be spoken. Gentle emollients may soothe and restore to health the diseased limb which is still quick with life and sensation; but for the gangrene there is no remedy save the cautery or the knife.

In striking contrast with the dark picture, the outline of which I have faintly sketched, is the scene presented in those towns and districts where an impulse has been given to the cause of popular education, and a new interest awakened in the Common School, by the well-directed efforts of intelligent and faithful school officers; and the number of such, I am happy to add, is not small. The information I possess, though not sufficiently accurate to enable me to state the exact number, is sufficient to justify the belief, that a very respectable proportion of the school committees throughout the State, have not been inactive during the past year; that they have made their office something more than a sinecure; that their labors in the various departments of their official duty, have already been productive of much good, and have effectually opened the way for the introduction of much more. I refer, more particularly, to the increased fidelity with which the examination of teachers and the supervision of schools have been conducted,—the former having become a reality rather than a mere form, and the latter, practical rather than theoretical.

In my Report of last year, I recommended to committees two changes in the mode of examining teachers, one of which was, that all the teachers to be employed in a town should be examined in public, and, so far as practicable, at the same time; the other, that the examination should be conducted by written questions, to be answered by the candidates in writing, instead

of the usual oral method. The communications which I have received from the committees in a large number of the towns where the recommendation was adopted, apprise me of the result of the experiment, and as this constitutes a portion of what has been done by school officers, I submit it under this title.

The attempt to secure the attendance of the whole, or even the majority of the teachers employed for the winter schools in any one town, at the same time and place, for the purpose of examination, has almost uniformly failed; and the cause assigned in every instance is, the neglect of Agents to employ teachers until almost the last moment before the day fixed for the opening of the school. This neglect, and the circumstance of the schools commencing at different times, frequently several weeks apart, have rendered it impossible for the committees to fix a day when any considerable number of teachers could be found who were conditionally engaged, and waiting for examination. They have consequently been compelled to yield their own convenience, and the benefits which it is believed would result from adopting the mode recommended, to the convenience, or, rather, the negligence of Agents. The attempt to secure a general attendance of those engaged in the summer schools has been more successful, from the fact that those schools usually commence in all the districts at about the same time in the year, and the teachers employed are therefore ready for examination together. From the committee in one town, containing fourteen school districts, I learn, that by the mode recommended, the examination of all the teachers employed for the fourteen summer schools, was completed at two sessions; the examination of the same number of teachers, the year preceding, in the usual, and, perhaps, the more popular mode, occupied a portion of ten several days. The saving, in time, to the committee, under the new system, was eight days, and to the town, in money, the sum of twenty-four dollars; a sum, which, at the rate of wages paid in the town, if expended in the support of schools, would have added ten days in length

to every school taught. "Our tax-payers," says the gentleman from whom the communication containing the foregoing statement of facts comes, "entertain a very exalted opinion of the new mode." It is not singular that they do. It is time that tax-payers begin to take a deeper interest in the management of school affairs, and in the disbursement of school funds.

In relation to the other change proposed, the partial substitution of written for oral examination, I am also in receipt of communications from numerous towns in which it has been adopted. Committees speak of it as a "sore affliction" to a certain class of candidates, but as "very satisfactory" to themselves. I have heard the objection made to this mode, that where it is adopted it is difficult to procure the requisite number of teachers to supply the schools. I am unable to discover the connection between the cause and its effect, unless it be that incompetent teachers shrink from submitting themselves to the searching examination which this method contemplates, and that the number of competent teachers is not yet sufficient;—no competent teacher would fear it. The fact, if it be one, I regard as a recommendation rather than an objection. If the method proposed will answer no other purpose than to deter those who are unqualified from engaging in the calling, it is well worth the trial.

Much has been done during the past year, through the agency of school committees, in bringing about a uniformity of text-books. Should the same efforts be continued, and in the spirit of moderation which has thus far characterized them, there is reason to hope that one of the most serious obstacles to the improvement of our schools, the multiplicity of text-books in use, will be, in a great measure, overcome. In the whole range of their official duties, there is no one the performance of which calls for more patience and discretion on the part of committees than this. They have authority to direct "what books shall be used in the respective schools," but the exercise of that authority has always been regarded with a jealous eye, and, when attempted with a strong hand, has almost

uniformly been resisted; unfortunately for the welfare of the schools, too often successfully resisted. The moderate and discreet exercise of it has not in every instance been attended with any better success. In view of the progress which has been made within the last year, towards the attainment of an object which is regarded by all who are conversant with the subject as of the first magnitude, I cannot withhold the expression of the high estimation in which I hold those committees in every section of the State, who have done so much to allay, without alarming, old prejudices, and who, without arousing a spirit of hostility, have brought about a result which rashness, indiscretion, or the arbitrary exercise of their authority, must have inevitably defeated.

In this brief recapitulation of what has been done by superintending school committees, I would not omit to make mention of the essential service which has been rendered by many of their number, by personal appeal and lectures in the several school districts under their jurisdiction, and by exerting their influence in forming Teachers' and Town Common School Associations. I regret that this influence and these efforts have not been exerted throughout the State; but, as I have before remarked, there are yet many dark places into which light has not broken. We may be permitted to cherish the hope, and the belief, that the noon-tide rays of that sun whose rising we are permitted to witness, will ere long penetrate the darkest recesses of ignorance, and that all will yet rejoice in its light.

I wish it were in my power to make an equally favorable report of the doings of School Agents, but the complaints and facts, which are continually brought to my knowledge, will not justify it. Favoritism in the selection of teachers,—the employment of those who are destitute of the certificates required by statute,—omission to make suitable provision for the comfort and convenience of teacher and scholars,—refusal to co-operate with school committees,—all go to make up the catalogue of derelictions of duty with which too large a

proportion of this body of school officers have been, for a long time, and still are charged; with how much justice, the people, to whom they are amenable, must decide. The correction of the evil, wherever it exists, is in their hands. School districts may remedy it, by electing to the office disinterested, high-minded men. Towns may remedy it, by availing themselves of the statutory provision, and investing their Superintending Committee with the rights, powers and obligations pertaining to the office of School Agent. When the mode of escape from a difficulty is so obvious, and may so easily be resorted to, those who neglect to avail themselves of it have no cause for complaint if they meet with little sympathy.

By Teachers. In the review of what has been done during the past year, an agency so important as that of the teachers of our common schools, is not to be overlooked. Much as may be done by legislators, philanthropists, parents and school officers, to improve the condition of our schools, unless teachers become co-operators with them, but little progress can be made in the work. Laws may be enacted, school-houses erected, moneys appropriated,—all these are but means, and useless for the attainment of the end, except through the instrumentality of competent, faithful, devoted teachers. These means, to a certain extent, are already furnished, and thereupon arises the important inquiry, "Are our teachers prepared or preparing to perform their portion of the work with credit to themselves, and with profit to their employers and their children?" A statement of what they have been doing will furnish the most reliable answer to this inquiry.

To what extent the work of preparation has been carried on in private, we have no means of judging, except in individual cases; and our information upon this point must, necessarily, be limited. If the public demonstrations furnish any criterion by which we can form an opinion, there is ample cause for the belief that the teachers of our common schools are impressed with a becoming sense of their duties, and are ready to avail themselves of every facility afforded for a more thorough

preparation for the discharge of them. The Teachers' Institutes, which were established for the immediate purpose of qualifying teachers for the practical part of their professional duty, were as fully attended as was, or ever will be, desirable, at least, under the present appropriation for their support. The number attending was not far from one half the whole number engaged in teaching during any portion of the year; of the non-attendants, I shall speak hereafter. When the fact is considered that a large number of those employed in teaching are but *annuals*, commencing and closing their professional life in the same year, and, therefore, feeling but little if any interest in establishing a professional reputation, or making extensive professional acquirements, the attendance at the Institutes was, certainly, indicative of a very commendable degree of interest in our teachers, as a class. And the attendance, so far as I can form an opinion from personal observation and the representations of gentlemen constituting the several Boards of Instruction, was not merely nominal. There was a manifestation of interest in the exercises, a fixedness of attention, and a spirit of investigation, furnishing the gratifying assurance that profit, rather than pleasure, a desire for knowledge, rather than the gratification of an idle curiosity, were the motives which prompted the attendance. This interest was not momentary, nor limited to a few days, but continued unabated, or, rather, became more and more intense, to the last hour of the sessions. This attendance of teachers, it will be remembered, was voluntary, involving an expenditure of time and money, which, to a large portion of them, was a matter of no trifling importance. Can any other inference be deduced from the premises than the one I have before stated?

The organization of Town and County Teachers' Associations constitutes a part of the doings of our teachers during the past year. The objects of these associations are mutual improvement and the elevation of the professional character and qualifications of their members. Associations of this character have been organized in ten of the thirteen counties. In

two of the remaining three, Common School Associations, having more particularly for their object the improvement of schools, but in which teachers have been active participators, have been formed, leaving but one, the county of Aroostook, destitute of any such organization. The sparseness of the population in that county, and the remoteness of teachers from each other, rendered such a movement impracticable, or, rather, the expediency of it questionable. No other causes, I am satisfied from what I know of the people and teachers of Aroostook, would deter them from any undertaking which could, by possibility, promote the welfare of their schools. Annual, semi-annual, and, in some of the counties, quarterly sessions of these Associations have been held, at which various questions pertaining to the duties of teachers,—the best modes of instructing in different branches of school education,—school government and discipline, and kindred subjects have been discussed with an ability and earnestness highly creditable, and, without doubt, profitable to all participating in them. It is true, there has not been the same manifestation of interest in this work in some counties, that there has been in others; for which a satisfactory apology, although not a very substantial reason, might be assigned. But I refrain from censure, in the hope that the omissions of the past year may be more than compensated by the earnest activity of the present.

In this brief review of what has been done by teachers, it will be understood, of course, that I speak of a portion, a respectable portion, of that numerous class. Of the remaining portion, I have no words of commendation or encouragement to offer. I regard the case of that teacher as hopeless, who, under the existing state of public feeling, through willful obstinacy or indifference, refrains from uniting with his fellows in the noble work of self-culture. The experience of the past year has established the fact that there are many such within the borders of our State. I have had the curiosity to make somewhat extended investigations, with a view to an analysis of the motive by which they are actuated, and have arrived at

a result, which, although satisfactory in a philosophical, is far from being so in a moral point of view. Self-conceit, ignorance, parsimony, indifference,—these are the elements which, combined in different proportions in different cases, make up the motive by which too many of the professed teachers of our common schools have been controlled and directed. It is this which has kept them away from our Institutes and Associations; which has attached them, by a species of magnetic influence, to antiquated text-books and modes of instruction well-nigh obsolete; closed their eyes against the light of the day now dawning, and wrapped them closer and closer in intellectual darkness, which they have made more hideous with their senseless hootings against, what they arrogantly style, visionary schemes and innovations. What have they done during the past year, to promote the interests of education? Nothing,—worse than nothing. They have hung like a dead weight upon every effort which has been made to raise the standard of the teacher's qualifications. They have clung to the noble profession to which they have attached themselves, as the lichen clings to the forest tree, neither strengthening nor beautifying, but defiling it.

By Parents. What has been done by parents,—those at whose hands duty and interest demand the most, and yet demand no more than they have the ability to perform? While some, by wise parental discipline and faithful home preparation, by liberality in the expenditure of money, by employing all the means which a generous philanthropy could suggest, by precept and example, have done much to increase the usefulness of schools, others, regardless of the sacred charge committed to them, reckless of consequences to themselves and their children, have coldly kept aloof, passed by with indifference, or, with a folly which finds its only similitude in the madness of those who have eaten of the *insane root*, have striven to neutralize every good influence and to paralyze the arm stretched forth for their deliverance. In view of the parental indifference and recklessness which prevail, in various classes and conditions in society,

the faith which trusts only in an arm of flesh, may well exclaim, in doubt and despondency, "Will the time never arrive when the fathers and mothers of this land will awake to a consciousness of the momentous truth, that the great work of the parent's life should be the education of his children?" I would not concede that the creature is unequal to any burthen which his Creator may impose, but in the wide range of man's duties I know of no one, the performance of which seems to call more imperiously for superhuman aid than this.

In this view of the subject, it is gratifying to take an account of what has been done, although the sum total be but small compared with what it should be, in the way of parental effort. In another part of my Report, I shall treat more particularly of the increased liberality which has been manifested in voluntary appropriations for the support of schools, to which I have before alluded. But I would here note, as a cheering indication of an awakened interest and of the prevalence of correct views among parents, the readiness with which pecuniary sacrifices have been made in the change of text-books, on the recommendation of School Committees,—the obviously increasing disposition to sustain teachers in the enforcement of rules and regulations necessary to secure the orderly conduct of scholars, and the more frequent visiting of schools. There never has been a year, in the history of our common schools, in which so radical a change of text-books has been effected, and so large an amount of money expended in accomplishing that object, as the one last past; and yet, so far as I can learn, that change has been produced with but an inconsiderable amount of decided opposition, and that opposition, with a few exceptions, of a character for which parents were not, primarily, responsible. By those conversant with the many difficulties and embarrassments which have, heretofore, attended this department of school economy, this change in parental sentiment and action will be regarded as highly auspicious.

I am not prepared to say that there have not been as many scholars expelled from school for disobedient and disorderly

conduct; that there have not been as many schools broken up, or temporarily suspended, by reason of difficulties growing out of the misconduct of such scholars, during the past, as in any preceding year; but I am authorized to say, upon the strength of facts within my personal knowledge, and representations in the correctness of which I have the fullest confidence, that the violators of the peace and order of the school have found little sympathy except at their own firesides. There we might expect to find it, for insubordination at school implies insubordination at home; and community of crime,—and the neglect of wholesome parental discipline is crime,—begets a community of interest and feeling. But public sentiment, which has, heretofore permitted the disorderly, rebellious scholar to disturb the harmony of the school, and merely noted the fact as unfortunate, or to be regretted, has begun to assume a more decided character,—to utter itself in tones of severe condemnation, and to act as well as speak. Parents have begun to understand that every infringement of the rules and regulations prescribed for the government of the school, is an encroachment upon their rights; that interest requires them to discountenance every such infringement, whether it be the act of their own children or the children of others, and to resist every attempt at interference with the conduct of the school under the pretence of seeking redress for wrongs committed by the teacher. Where milder measures have failed, the aid of the law has been invoked for the protection of the school and its teacher, and the calendar of the county gaol shows that it has not been invoked in vain. We may lament that the necessity exists for legal proceedings, but have reason to rejoice that when they become necessary, public sentiment bestows upon them its full, unqualified sanction. That it does so, I regard as an additional indication of the desire and determination to render our schools more useful and profitable, by discountenancing all insubordination, and sustaining the teacher in his efforts to maintain order and good government.

The importance of visiting schools, as a stimulus to teachers

and scholars, has been urged upon parents, here and elsewhere, so often and so long, as to render the topic tedious, if not absolutely painful. I allude to it merely for the purpose of remarking, that the arguments which from long and constant use might well be supposed to have lost their point, are beginning to take effect. The interdiction which parents have, heretofore, voluntarily imposed upon themselves, is at last removed, and the light of their countenances has been reflected from those of their children, within the precinct of the school-house. It is indeed the breaking in of light upon dark places. We may be permitted to indulge the hope that it will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, when, through the length and breadth of our State, there shall not be found a school-room unvisited by parents, nor one which they may not enter with a conscious pride that the workmanship of their hands is a fit temple for the idols of their hearts.

By the Press. During the past year the publication of two Educational Journals, the "Maine Common School Advocate," and the "Scholars' Leaf," has been commenced, and I am happy to add that the patronage they have received is sufficient to justify the expectation of their continuance. The Press generally has lent its influence to the advancement of the work we have in hand, and contributed largely to the diffusion of correct views upon the importance of education to the welfare of the individual and the State. This is what the history of the past authorized us to expect. The Free Press of New England has ever been, and to be consistent with itself ever must be, the advocate of universal education. As the most powerful of all the agencies employed in moulding and shaping public opinion, we must continue to look to it, and we may with confidence, for co-operation in this and every other effort to promote the moral and intellectual welfare of our race.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

During the last autumn a Teachers' Institute was held in every county in the State, under the supervision and tuition of experienced and accomplished instructors, to whom much credit is due for the fidelity and ability with which they discharged the onerous and responsible duties devolved upon them. The number of teachers attending the Institutes was twenty-three hundred and fifty-five; the aggregate exceeding that of the year preceding by six hundred and seventy-one. The public evening lectures were well attended, and a laudable degree of interest manifested in the daily exercises, by the community at large. I am happy to believe that the impression left upon the minds of teachers and the community was good, and that an influence was exerted highly favorable to the interests of popular education.

You are not unaware of the fact, that when the act making provision for the support of Teachers' Institutes passed the legislature, two years ago, there were not a few who were disposed to look upon the movement with a jealous eye, regarding it as indicative of an intention on the part of those recommending it to build up an *aristocracy of teachers*, who were in due time to monopolize the honors and emoluments of the profession, to the exclusion of equally worthy but less highly favored individuals. So entirely unfounded, so diametrically opposed to the theory of the institution was the objection, that it was hardly deemed deserving a formal refutation, and, so far as I am informed, it has ceased to be entertained. Others were openly and avowedly opposed to the movement, upon the principle of State policy, as they termed it. They denied, or, to use the mildest term, doubted, the expediency of State interference in the matter of educating or improving the educational qualifications of the teachers of our children and youth, thus calling in question the wisdom of our predecessors, who, from the earliest period in the history of the Common School, have deemed the character and qualifications of teachers the proper subjects of legislation. Perhaps they were not aware that in

so doing they were aiming a blow, indirectly, at the whole system; for upon the same principle that they would deny the expediency of any action on the part of the State for rendering more effective the means employed for the education of the people, they might question, and deny even, the expediency of any action which contemplated the employment of any means. A slight acquaintance with the history of the past, even of a recent date, might well justify the fear, that a general diffusion of the advantages of education can be adequately secured only by the exercise of the sovereign power of the State. And if if be, as it is made by our Constitution, the duty of the State to provide for the education of the people, is is difficult to conceive of any mode by which that object can be more effectually answered, than by providing ways and means for the education of those by whom the people are to be educated. It was also urged, in connection with this matter of expediency, that the appropriation of the public money for the benefit of one class in the community would be an act of injustice to all others. The argument was more than plausible; it was, in the abstract, sound. But its sophistry, in the matter under consideration, consisted in this; that although the money appropriated to this object was apparently expended for the benefit of one class, the teachers, it was in reality for the benefit of all; for it is difficult to perceive how their qualifications could be improved, without improvement in their schools as a natural and necessary consequence;—and every improvement in them is not only a social but a pecuniary benefit to the community at large. With as much propriety might the charge of injustice be brought against the Infinite Goodness which withholds from the great mass the inventive genius bestowed upon an Arkwright, a Fulton, or a Morse, which in their hands is made the instrument of countless benefits and blessings to the human race. But the time for this argument has gone by. It is barely possible, that, at some future day, some fledgeling demagogue may attempt to resuscitate it, but, unless the intelligence of the people is extinct, it will prove the merest shadow in his grasp.

There was still another class, who, admitting the sincerity and disinterestedness of the friends of the movement, entertaining no suspicion of any sinister design, and not questioning the propriety of State interference, nor the authority of the legislature to make appropriations for the support of the Institutes, were disposed to look upon them as totally inadequate to the attainment of the object in view; as little better than the honest but fruitless schemings of visionaries and enthusiasts. These were the doubters; less formidable, but more disheartening obstacles in the path of any reformatory movement, than open and avowed opponents. The latter may be silenced, if not satisfied, by argument; the former, like their prototype the incredulous disciple, refusing to be satisfied with any evidence except that of ocular and tangible demonstration, chill, and sometimes paralyze the energies of those who, with a more ardent faith, believe because they hope. But we can well afford to spare all reproach, for the *experiment* has been tried and its friends have ample cause for congratulation in the result. The success which has attended the Institutes, and which has manifested itself in the improved character of many of our schools and their teachers, has furnished abundant testimony to their utility, and removed all reasonable doubts as to the expediency of sustaining them. The experience of the first year was sufficient to justify a strong presumption that they might be made of great practical benefit to the teachers attending them, and, through them, to our common schools: that of the second has reduced the presumption to certainty. Of this fact, those who were most skeptical must be satisfied, if they have but taken the trouble to examine for themselves; if they have neglected to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded for personal inspection of the practical operation of the system, they may fairly be regarded as subject to the imputation of willful blindness.

I indulge the belief that the support of Teachers' Institutes may now be regarded as the settled policy of the State, at least, so long as the State continues to perform its functions of

protecting and providing for the best interests of the people. Legislators act wisely and well in making liberal appropriations for the development of the natural resources of the State; but upon the development of its intellectual and moral resources depends its true and lasting welfare. Without it, our boasted rights and privileges are of factitious value and uncertain tenure.

The following Table, compiled from the catalogues published by the members of the several Institutes, exhibits the time and place of each session, the names of the gentlemen constituting the Board of Instruction, and the number of teachers attending.

Counties.	Where.	When.	Instructors.	No. of pupils.		Total.
				Male.	Female.	
York,	Alfred,	Aug. 28,	Mr. Horace Piper, member of the Board of Ed., Rev. Wm. Warren, Hon. E. M. Thurston.	81	65	146
Cumberland,	Gray,	Sept. 12,	Rev. William Warren, Hon. E. M. Thurston, Geo. C. Swallow, A. M.	54	56	110
Oxford,	So. Paris,	Sept. 25,	Rev. William Warren, Dexter A. Hawkins, A. B.	136	119	255
Somerset,	Skowhegan,	Sept. 25,	Hon. E. M. Thurston, Rev. H. P. Torsey, G. D. L. Palmer, A. B., David S. True, A. B.	93	101	194
Franklin,	Farmington,	Oct. 3,	Mr. B. C. Fernald, A. H. Abbot, A.M., Rev. H. P. Torsey, Mr. R. A. Rice.	143	123	266
Aroostook,	Houlton,	Oct. 3,	Milton Welch, A. B., Mr. Obed Foss.	17	31	48
Hancock,	Ellsworth,	Oct. 10,	Hon. E. M. Thurston, Mr. Wm. B. Fowle, Horace Silsby, A. B.	55	106	161
Washington,	East Machias,	Oct. 10,	Rev. William Warren, Joseph Dow, A. M.	52	101	153
Lincoln,	Wiscasset,	Oct. 10,	Rev. R. Woodhull, Dexter A. Hawkins, A. B., George C. Swallow, A. M.	53	101	154
Waldo,	Belfast,	Oct. 24,	Rev. William Warren, Hon. E. M. Thurston, Mr. J. E. Littlefield.	76	109	185
Kennebec,	Augusta,	Nov. 6,	Wm. H. Seavey, A. B., Rev. H. P. Torsey, Mr. J. W. Tuck, Mr. R. A. Rice.	103	127	230
Penobscot,	Bangor,	Nov. 14,	Mr. D. Worcester, member of Board of Ed., Rev. Wm. Warren, Rev. H. P. Torsey, Mr. J. E. Littlefield.	108	139	247
Piscataquis,	Dover,	Nov. 20,	William H. Seavey, A. M., Hon. E. M. Thurston, D. L. True, A. B., S. F. Humphrey, A. B, Mr. Luther Chamberlain.	103	103	206
				1,074	1,280	2,355

I believe that the impression exists in some parts of the State, although not extensively, that the Institutes are not producing the results which were expected from them; that they have not operated to improve the qualifications of our teachers. It is true, the results may not have been such as to meet the expectations of those who look upon every dollar invested as lost, unless returned with usury at the expiration of the shortest term of credit known in the business community, or of those who, without investigating the nature and object of the institution, looked for results little less than miraculous. It is equally true, that there is still ample room for improvement in the qualifications of the teachers of our common schools; that for every one who can be found thoroughly competent for the work, there are many others far better qualified to discharge the duties of some other calling. It need not be matter of surprise to any intelligent mind, that expectations based upon the supposition that an attendance upon a Teachers' Institute was to produce an effect which can only follow from patient, long continued application, should be disappointed. Wherever entertained they have, as matter of necessity, failed to be realized. We do not claim for the Institute the creative power which belongs to Him alone who spake the Universe into being. We claim for it no higher attribute than that of being an instrumentality, by the patient and faithful use of which a good end may be ultimately wrought out; and we hold it to be unreasonable to expect from its agency, during the space of two brief sessions, of ten days each, results which are the legitimate fruits only of years of labor.

The assertion that teachers attending the Institutes have received no benefit from them, if made without qualification, is without foundation in fact. That those who attended a few days only of one or both sessions, or who attended the whole of one or both, but were deficient in that knowledge of the elementary branches which is necessary to a thorough comprehension of the instructions there given, or who lacked the disposition to profit by them, may not have improved in their qualifications

as teachers, I readily concede. For the interests of the State and the rising generation I could wish that the number of such were less. But, on the other hand, that there were hundreds of intelligent young men and women, who attended the first or second sessions, or both, and devoted their time and attention to the work of self-improvement, and who were thereby materially benefited and improved in their qualifications as teachers, I feel called upon, in justice to them and the system, to assert. And I do it authoritatively; upon the strength of numerous representations from school committees, individuals of intelligence and integrity who have carefully watched the results, and in almost every section of the State. I am constrained to believe that the impression to which I have alluded, if it now exists, is the result of a very limited and partial observation of the practical operations of the Institute, or is derived from an acquaintance with teachers of the least moral and intellectual worth, those who may fairly be set down in the class of *incurables;* or, perhaps, more properly, *impracticables.* The assertion, which, unless most materially qualified and restricted, I undertake to contradict, originated, most probably, from the last named source, or, unpleasant as may be the reflection, is the offspring of that jealousy at whose unholy baptism ignorance and prejudice stand sponsors.

The allusion which I have made, although reluctantly, to the moral and intellectual character of some of the teachers who attended a portion of one or more of the Institutes, leads to the consideration of some of the evils incident to them, which, to my apprehension, may and should be avoided in the future. At the Institutes held in eighteen hundred and forty-seven,—and the same remark will apply, to some extent, to those held in eighteen hundred and forty-eight,—I discovered the existence among the members, of no ordinary amount of rivalry, or ambition, on the part of each, to be known as the "banner county." Regarding it as an indication of an awakened professional pride, I was not disposed to condemn it. The gratification of this feeling led to the insertion in the catalogue

published by each Institute of the names of many, who, although nominally teachers, came and departed like shadows. This county pride, in and of itself, is excusable, and harmless. The evil of indulging it consists in this; the individual whose attendance is barely of sufficient duration to admit of his being enrolled as a member, goes out, armed with his catalogue, as a certificate that he has attended a session of the Teachers' Institute, and upon the strength of it claims a reputation, for good intentions, at least, to which he has no right nor title. He is thereby enabled to reap the fruits which belong legitimately to the more honest and earnest hearted teacher, who has devoted no inconsiderable portion of his time and substance to qualifying himself for his calling; he is furnished with the means of practicing a fraud upon the community, and if he fails in making himself useful and profitable in the school in which he may be employed, the failure is forthwith laid at the door of the Institute. In justice to themselves, teachers attending the Institute in good faith, should adopt such regulations as will protect them from the odium which justly attaches to the unworthy and incompetent of their profession, and secure to themselves the full benefit and credit which are their due; and for the reputation of the system, the members of this Board should co-operate with them. The most obvious method would be to enroll in the catalogue the names of none excepting those who attend a given number of days, or, and perhaps this may be most advisable, to affix to each name the number of days attendance. Thus, School Agents in selecting their teachers would not be misled by the catalogue, teachers would receive the credit to which they were entitled, and the Institutes would be saved from unjust reproach.

Somewhat akin to the evil which I have been considering, is that of permitting those who are not, in the language of the act establishing Teachers' Institutes, "teachers of public schools," to become members and participators in the exercises of the Institute. In their construction of the law, the members of this Board have regarded all who intended or expected to be

employed to teach during any portion of the current year as embraced within its provisions; and I think the construction the only true one. A more rigid construction would virtually defeat the object of the law; for the number actually engaged in teaching, or under contract to teach, at the time of the sessions of the Institute, must, almost necessarily, be very limited; too limited to furnish the *reasonable assurance that a suitable number desired to assemble*, &c. But beyond this limit the provisions of the Statute should not be extended, and for various reasons; the most obvious of which is, that it would be a violation of the law, a diversion of the bounty of the State from the channel in which it was intended to flow.

It is essential to the complete success of an Institute that the same conveniences be provided, and the same quiet and order maintained, which are desirable, if not absolutely necessary, to ensure success in the school-room. If the doors are thrown wide open, and all who desire to avail themselves of the privileges of the Institute, but without the remotest idea of ever being employed as teachers,—and there are many such,—are permitted to enter and take their places as members, there is danger that the portion of the community for whose immediate benefit it was intended may find themselves so straitened and stinted in their accommodations as to render their attendance uncomfortable and, consequently, unprofitable. That the more staid and diffident of their number might find themselves forced into the back-ground, almost beyond reach of the instructor's voice, by the more ardent and impetuous energy of their younger brothers and sisters, is not at all improbable. It will not unfrequently happen, also, that those who are not attending with a view of qualifying themselves for the business of teaching, taking less interest in those exercises which are especially adapted to the teacher's improvement, and feeling that they are not, strictly speaking, members of the school, will fill up what will be to them the tedious and uninteresting intervals, with conversation, changing positions, and those thousand little acts which annoy the instructor and distract the

attention of the scholar. Punctuality in attendance is another requisite in the successful conduct of an Institute: every interruption occasioned by the tardiness of its members is a detriment. But punctuality in attendance at the hour of commencing the daily exercises, can hardly be expected from those who attend for any other than its legitimate purposes. To relieve the Institute from these incumbrances and obstacles to success will be the pleasure, undoubtedly, of the members of this Board; and I know of no method by which it can be done effectually, except by adopting that construction which will admit to the privileges of membership none save those who are teachers, or who have a reasonable expectation of being employed as such within the current year. The infringements upon this rule have not, heretofore, been of sufficient magnitude to require the adoption of a strict construction and a rigid adherence to it; but the indications are such as to lead to the belief that it may be required hereafter. By anticipating, we may avoid the evil.

I would not be understood by the foregoing remarks as designing to place any restrictions upon the presence of those who do not come within the foregoing description. On the contrary, I would wish that the attendance of such might be larger and of longer duration than it has heretofore been; especially of parents, school committees, school agents, and all who are uninformed as to the character and object of the Institutes. I would court investigation; not such as can be made in a few hours,—but thorough, strict, minute; from such an investigation I should have no fear of conclusions unfavorable to the system, but should hope and expect much of benefit to all concerned in the employment of teachers and in the supervision of schools. But I do intend to recommend, and would enforce the recommendation for the reasons before stated, that none but teachers and those intending to teach be admitted to participate in the exercises, or to any of the privileges of membership. The time of the session,—the attention of the Board of Instruction,—belong to teachers, exclusively, and neither should be infringed upon by those who are not. A

diminution in the length of the Roll may be one consequence of adopting the recommendation, but an increase of benefit to those whose names are rightfully upon it will be another and far more important one. The danger to be apprehended is that the attendance upon the Institutes will be larger than is profitable, or desirable, rather than smaller.

In concluding this portion of my Report, it will not be amiss to allude to an erroneous opinion which I have found to exist, and which may, possibly, prevail to some extent among teachers, but which I deem it important to correct; and that is, that the exercises of the Teachers' Institute may be substituted for the more tedious, but indispensably necessary preparation for the business of their profession, in the Common School, the High School, or the Academy. In some one of these must the foundation be laid, by the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the elementary branches; for the want of this knowledge, aptness to govern, to interest, to teach, although it may do much towards it, cannot wholly compensate. An ignorant teacher,—if there be not a contradiction in the terms,—cannot be a good teacher, and the expectation of any such, that attendance upon the Institute will supply the deficiency in intellectual acquirements, will prove as idle as the search for the philosopher's stone. In the laboratory of the school-room, he who would be a teacher must mould and fashion the weapons of his warfare; in the arena of the Institute he may be taught to use them skillfully and successfully. It is gratifying to learn that education with special reference to the profession of teaching, is beginning to receive a larger share of attention than heretofore in many of our private High-Schools and Academies; and it is most ardently to be hoped, that the increase in numbers of those who may desire to avail themselves of the privileges and opportunities thus afforded, will be such as to justify the dedication of a still larger amount of time and money to the furtherance of this object.

SCHOOL HOUSES.

If it be true, as I hold it to be, that a well constructed, commodious school-house is indispensable to the constitution of a good school, the number of good schools in our State is yet far less than it should be. Much has been done, it is true, within the last two years, in the way of improvement,—many school-houses have been constructed upon the most approved models, and many remodelled and essentially improved in their interior arrangement. But we have still to lament that a large majority of them are far behind the time, and totally unfit for the uses for which they are occupied. A description of such is unnecessary; there are few towns in the State which do not afford a specimen,—some of them of a character which baffles all attempts at description.

The whole number of school-houses in the State, belonging to towns and districts from which returns have been received, is three thousand two hundred and ninety-one. Of this number one thousand four hundred and ninety-nine are represented in the returns as being commodious, well constructed, and in good repair, and it is not improbable that some of these, even, are susceptible of considerable improvement, without thereby being entitled to any higher rank than that assigned to them. The remaining portion, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, are of all the varieties which are to be found by the road-side in every section of the State. Taking for data the returns referred to, and the observation which every one who has given any attention to the subject cannot have failed to make, the inference is irresistible, that the present condition of a large majority of our schools, so far as relates to the houses in which they are taught, is unfavorable to the development of the physical, moral, and intellectual capacities of our children and youth.

TEACHERS AND TEACHERS' WAGES.

Although there may be a diversity of opinion as to the relation which the condition of the school-house sustains to the welfare of the school, all unite, I believe, in accepting as true, that so far as we are destitute of good teachers we are destitute of good schools. The extent of that destitution I do not propose to define. I have prepared the following tables, compiled from the returns, for the purpose of exhibiting the extent to which the liberality of the public has gone in compensating teachers for their services. The facts which they present may lead to the conclusion, that the want of sufficient pecuniary inducement to engage or continue in the calling, is the reason why we have not so large a corps of competent and experienced teachers as our necessities require. The sums set down are the average wages, per month, of male, and, per week, of female teachers, exclusive of board.

Counties.	Males.	Females.
Washington,	20·47	1·82
Hancock,	18·94	1·49
Lincoln,	18·12	1·39
Penobscot,	18·02	1·55
Waldo,	17·67	1·28
Cumberland,	16·71	1·42
Kennebec,	16·29	1·29
Piscataquis,	15·79	1·39
Aroostook,	15·55	1·57
Somerset,	15·43	1·38
York,	15·20	1·57
Franklin,	13·56	1·13
Oxford,	13·11	1·22

The average rate of wages of male teachers, for the State, is $16,52 per month, exclusive of board, and of female teachers, $5,68 per month, or $1,42 per week.

The whole number of male teachers employed in public schools the past year, in the towns from which returns have been received, was	2,727
Number who received $50, or exceeding that sum, per month, exclusive of board,	9
Number who received $40, and less than $50,	11
Number who received $30, and less than $40,	37
Number who received $25, and less than $30,	84
Number who received $20, and less than $25,	423
Number who received $15, and less than $20,	1,387
Number who received less than $15,	776
The whole number of female teachers employed as above, was	3,830
Number who received $4, or exceeding that sum, per week, exclusive of board,	29
Number who received $3, and less than $4,	49
Number who received $2, and less than $3,	485
Number who received $1, and less than $2,	3,200
Number who received less than $1,	67

A comparison of the above tables with those presented in my last Report will show a very decided advance in the compensation of teachers during the last year, but it is equally apparent, that it has not yet reached the point at which we can be justified in demanding, in return, the qualifications and experience which are necessary to render our schools productive of the benefit which we desire and hope to realize from them.

LIBRARIES AND APPARATUS.

There are but seventeen School District Libraries in the State, containing, in all, four hundred and fifty-two volumes; six of them have been formed within the last year.

There are still seven hundred and sixty-four school-rooms destitute of a Blackboard. Some progress, however, has been made within the last year; the number so destitute at the date of my last Report, was nine hundred and thirty-five. Thirty-

eight school-rooms are supplied with Outline Maps, thirty-six with Globes, and twenty-one with other school apparatus of various kinds.

ATTENDANCE.

The whole number of towns and plantations incorporated for municipal purposes in the State, is three hundred and seventy-nine; from three hundred and thirty-eight, School Returns have been received. The number of children in these, between the ages of four and twenty-one, is two hundred and twelve thousand six hundred and thirty-four. The whole number attending private schools, and not attending any public school during any portion of the year, according to the Returns, is twenty-three hundred and fifty-three. But the Returns are not so full and accurate in this particular as could be desired. I am inclined to the belief that the number is much larger; probably not far from five thousand. Upon these data I base the following calculations:—

Whole number of children between ages of 4 and 21,		212,634
Deduct number attending private schools, say	5,000	
Deduct number usually attending public *summer* school,	98,376	
		103,376
Absentees from *summer* school,		109,258
Whole number of children between ages of 4 and 21,		212,634
Deduct number attending private schools, say	5,000	
Whole number attending public *winter* school,	146,784	
		151,784
Absentees from *winter* school,		60,850

Thus far the conclusions are gratifying, showing, as they do, a decided improvement in school attendance, especially at the winter term. But another, and in one view a still more important inquiry, remains to be made.

Whole number of children attending winter school,	146,784
Average number so attending,	111,101
Irregular in attendance,	35,683

The magnitude of this evil is recognized by few, save teachers; it is the greatest obstacle to success in the management of the school, and is of itself the frequent and sufficient cause of their failure. Arguments apparently unanswerable have, thus far, failed to remove it. For how much longer time the well disposed portion of the community will tolerate it, is a question already asked, and yet to be answered. When long experience shall have made certain that argument is powerless and the consciousness of parental obligation extinct, the sovereign power of the State may be interposed for the protection of its citizens, and its own rights and institutions.

SCHOOL MONEY.

The Statute requires that every town and incorporated plantation shall, annually, raise and expend for the maintenance of public schools, a sum of money which shall not be less than forty cents for each inhabitant; the number to be computed according to the last census of the State under which the representation in the legislature shall have been apportioned. The sum required to be raised and expended, under this provision, in the towns and plantations from which returns have been received, is $183,838. This sum, apportioned among the children between the ages of four and twenty-one in those towns and plantations, according to the returns, would amount to eighty-six cents to each child. The amount actually raised and expended the last year, exclusive of voluntary contributions

in fuel and teachers' board, was $241,462·48, being one dollar and thirteen cents for each child of the school age in the towns and plantations referred to.

The following Table exhibits the amount required by law to be raised, and the amount actually raised, by tax, for the support of schools, in the several counties, so far as returns have been received:

Counties.	Am't required to be raised.	Amount raised.	Excess.
Penobscot,	17,467·20	29,523·26	12,056·06
Cumberland,	25,235·20	33,861·34	8,626·14
York,	18,958·80	27,510·92	8,552·12
Kennebec,	21,530·40	28,859·20	7,328·80
Washington,	9,706·80	16,713·48	7,006·68
Hancock,	10,373·60	12,945·66	2,572·06
Lincoln,	23,090·00	29,248·54	6,158·44
Waldo,	16,256·00	19,504·80	3,248·80
Somerset,	13,127·20	13,928·40	801·20
Piscataquis,	4,916·80	5,413·00	496·20
Oxford,	14,665·20	15,113·88	448·68
Franklin,	7,308·40	7,531·00	222·60
Aroostook,	1,202·40	1,309·00	106·60
	$183,838 00	$241,462 48	$57,624·48

The Graduated Table which I herewith submit, shows the comparative amount of money appropriated, by the several towns and plantations enumerated, for the education of each child between the ages of four and twenty-one.

SCHOOL LAWS.

Although, in view of what has been done within the last two years, it might seem that further legislation upon the subject of schools was unnecessary, a careful observation of the practical operation of the laws now in force, has led my mind to a different conclusion. I will not encumber this Report

with a detail of the amendments, which, in my estimation, are called for. The laws relating to public education are to be found in sixteen different Acts, many of them containing important amendatory and repealing clauses, furnishing frequent occasion for difference of opinion in construction, and giving rise to questions which are, oftentimes, embarrassing to those who are called upon to administer the laws. Involving, as they do, the rights and duties of every town and school district in the State, of three hundred and seventy-nine Superintending School Committees, thirty-six hundred School Agents, and sixty-five hundred Teachers, they should be so simple and intelligible as to admit, if possible, of but one construction; and they should be brought within the compass of a single Act. To effect these objects, there should be an entire revision and codification of all the laws relating to public education. With our present experience in this State, we may so legislate upon the subject of schools, as to render it very probable that no further legislation will be necessary for many years. This is exceedingly desirable. The administration of our school system requires the action of so many officers, and those officers are so continually changing, that instability in the law renders the uniform observance of its requirements, if we may be permitted to judge from the character of the official returns, almost impracticable. And it is not strange that it is so, where questions are continually arising as to the meaning and intention of apparently conflicting statutory provisions, the solution of which requires more of legal acumen than is usually to be found, out of the legal profession.

A revision of the school laws, to be effectual and possessed of the element of permanency, must be carefully and deliberately made,—thoroughly digested in all its parts. Accurate knowledge of existing defects, experience and skill in the drafting of enactments, should be united in the work; and when completed, it should be placed in the office of every town and district clerk in the State, accompanied with such abstracts from judicial decisions, forms and directions, as would make it

a complete and infallible guide-book for school officers. To this subject I would respectfully call the attention of the Legislature.

WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE.

I have thus laid before the Board such information relating to the present condition of our common schools and the efforts which have been made during the past year for their improvement, as I deemed of sufficient importance to communicate. It has been my endeavor to present things truly; to extenuate nothing, and, surely, not to "set down aught in malice." A knowledge of existing evils, however, is of little benefit, unless it leads to efforts for their removal. To render those efforts effectual in this, as in every case where various agencies are required, there must be unanimity of intention, and concert of action. Each must be made to understand its peculiar duty, and to move in its appropriate sphere. To suggest some of the ways and means to be adopted for the improvement of our common schools, and some of the modes in which the agencies employed for that purpose may operate harmoniously and efficiently, will be my object in the remaining portion of this Report.

The time for argument to prove the importance of education has long since gone by. In New England, at least, it is regarded as a fixed fact, that moral and intellectual culture is a blessing to the individual and to society. So well established is the doctrine, that the denial of it is little less than heresy. The few who have the hardihood in this enlightened age to express a doubt of its soundness, meet with no favor; their motives and their sincerity are the object of a just suspicion. The complaint which, but a few years since, in our own State, uttered itself in the miserly spirit of the false disciple, in the question "To what purpose is this waste?" drowned in the overwhelming flood of public sentiment, has sunk to an almost

inaudible murmur. The statesman and the partisan,—the believer in the dignity of human nature, and in its depravity,—the man of enlarged philanthropy, and the man of expedients,—men of all parties and sects, unite in the opinion,—an opinion which has ripened into a faith,—that the education of the people is the substratum of a government of the people; that without the former the latter cannot exist. A statement of the arguments adduced in support of this opinion would be but a repetition of the most familiar truths. It may be briefly summed up in this: the welfare of every government demands that its rulers, at least, should be possessed of intelligence; in a popular form of government the people are the rulers, and, therefore, the welfare of such a government demands that its people should be intelligent; to be so they must be educated.

How and where shall they be educated? Not in the College and Academy; the masses,—and they constitute the sovereignty,—have not the time to spare for the acquisition of the education which these institutions afford; besides that, it is not of that practical character which they require. Not in the Private School; penury and parsimony would constitute impassable barriers to them, in thousands and tens of thousands of cases. Not in the Charity School; the deep fountain of humanity has not yet been so broken up as to yield an adequate supply for man's animal, much less for his intellectual wants. Not by either or all of these can the great work of educating a whole people be effectually performed. Human ingenuity has thus far failed to discover any other or better mode than that devised by the Fathers of New England,—the Common School.

It may be said, admitting the truth of all which has been advanced, that we have the Common School in this State, and therefore are doing our part of this great national work. True, we have upon the pages of our statute book laws which impose upon towns the duty of raising and expending, annually, a certain amount of money in the support and maintenance of schools, which are free to all the children and youth in the State. Under the provisions of these laws, school-houses are

erected, teachers employed, and children supplied with text books. All this may be, here and elsewhere, and yet the Common School fail to answer the purpose of its institution. And just so far as there are deficiencies, either in the provision made for the health and convenience of children in the school-room, in the methods of discipline and instruction, or in the moral and intellectual qualifications of teachers, it does so fail; its work is imperfectly performed: submitted to the test of examination it is without form or comeliness, and we look in vain for the *mark of the workman* upon it. In the Common School as it too often is, the youthful mind, if not actually permitted to become stagnant, is barely ruffled on its surface; in the Common School as it should be, it is moved to its profoundest depths. In the one, the youthful affections, if not permitted to lie dormant, are barely startled in their slumber: in the other, they are aroused to life and action. In the one, both mind and heart are suffered to lie fallow; in the other, they are cultivated. But these, again, are familiar truths; no more familiar, however, than the no less important one, that in the common schools of Maine the deficiencies referred to still exist, and that there is ample room and necessity for improvement.

This work of improvement has already been commenced. Shall it go on, or stop? Shall the friends of education, gathering strength and encouragement from the past, nerve themselves afresh for the conflict with ignorance, parsimony and prejudice,—content themselves with the victories thus far achieved, or abandon the cause in utter hopelessness? To these solemn questionings there can be but one answer; there is no cause for despondency, and duty to God and man demands of them to go on. Who shall be their co-operators? The parents and teachers of children,—the officers appointed to administer our school laws,—and the State. The part which each is to perform I proceed, briefly, to define.

In the work of improving our Common Schools, PARENTS occupy the most responsible station. With their aid all can

be effected which heart could wish; without it, comparatively nothing. In the constitution of a good school there are three essential elements; a good school-house, good scholars,—I refer to moral and social rather than intellectual qualifications,—and a good teacher. All these are within the gift of parents. The first and last named may be provided by the very simple process of appropriating sufficient money to erect the one and procure the services of the other. There are few school districts in the State, probably, in which the majority of the legal voters do not sustain the relation of parents. They have but to make use of the power which the law confers upon them, to provide all that is necessary for the comfort and health of their children in the school-room. There are few towns, probably, in which parents, and those who may be controlled by their influence, do not constitute a majority of the legal voters. They have but to make use of the same power, to make the same, perhaps, less effort than they usually make to procure a full attendance of voters at the polls when a political contest is in progress, to ensure such an appropriation as shall enable them to procure the services of well qualified teachers. And why, in both instances, will they not so act? Why is it that they are content to confine their own children,—"bone of their bones and flesh of their flesh,"—in cells and dungeons quite as uninviting as those in which they confine their felons? or, if this language seems too strong, why is it that they will so deaden parental affection as to constrain their children to undergo an amount of physical suffering, which, imposed upon themselves by the parental authority of the State, would arouse them to open rebellion? Why is it, that while impressed with a solemn conviction of duty they strive to make their own and their children's home happy, they render, through negligence or indifference, the school-room,—that other home of childhood,—so cheerless, oftentimes so odious? Why is it that they permit all this when it is in their power to prevent it? Are parents fully aware of their remissness of duty in this particular? Do they deny it and demand the proof? I refer them to the

record of their own experience. I refer them to the testimony of their children,—not always uttered in words, but in the mournful reluctance with which the fireside is forsaken for the school-room,—the aching head,—the listless step,—the enervated frame—that language which ever speaks with silent but irresistible eloquence to the heart of the true parent. If still unconvinced, a visit to the school-room,—a single half day's experience within its walls and the evidence of their own senses, will furnish the proof incontrovertible.

Again, I ask, why is it that parents, possessing as they do the almost exclusive control of the amount of money which shall be annually raised and expended in the maintenance of schools, are content to entrust their children, year after year, to the care of teachers utterly unworthy of the name, when the expenditure of a little more would secure the services of those who are qualified for the office? Why is it that they are content, year after year, to mourn over "money thrown away through the incompetency of teachers," when it is so entirely within their power to remove the cause of their lamentations? Is it because *fault-finding* is a natural propensity of the animal, man,—or a luxury which he cannot prevail upon himself to dispense with? Or, is it the manufacturing of an apology for a still further diminution of the amount of school money? Or, is it, and this is the reason usually assigned, because parents cannot afford to tax themselves more liberally than they do for the support of schools? Parents cannot afford to educate their children! They can dare to assume the parental responsibility, but cannot afford to be true to it! They can dare to be, under God, the author of the child's being, but cannot afford to provide him with the means which alone can enable him to answer the highest, noblest, only true end of that being! They can afford to exhaust the energies of a life-time in ministering to the gratification of a sordid appetite for wealth, but cannot afford the gleanings of a single field of labor to enrich the minds of those in whom are garnered up their most precious hopes and fondest affections! The reason is as wicked as it is unsubstan-

tial. It must no longer be permitted to mislead, or furnish an apology for the neglect of duty. Parents must cease to regard wealth as the best inheritance they can leave to their children. They must more deeply realize the importance of training them, by a proper moral and mental culture, for the conflicts of active life,—for the faithful and intelligent performance of duty. I would not encourage wild or wasteful extravagance in the construction of school-houses, or in the employment of teachers; but, if we must economize in the matter of education, I would adopt that wise economy which, in the words of the trite but true maxim, invariably finds the best to be *the cheapest in the long run.*

I have spoken of the social and moral character of scholars as one of the elements of the good school. The formation of that character is in the hands of parents. It is a work which they are performing daily,—hourly, unconscious of it though they may be, for good or evil. The silent influence of their lives, like the hand of the artist, is adding line after line to the delicate engraving, which is to be reproduced and multiplied until the material into which it is wrought is broken into fragments. That influence may make the child a blessing or a curse to them, to himself, to the school and to the world. Surely, then, it is not to be trifled with, nor slightly regarded.

The effects of home influence are never more perceptible than in the school-room. So apparent is it there, that it is the frequent remark of teachers, that the demeanor of the child furnishes a criterion by which they can determine, with a remarkable degree of accuracy, the character of its parents. The home where rudeness of demeanor, harshness of language, neglect of wholesome restraint, are the distinguishing traits in the character of parents, seldom furnishes gentle, courteous, orderly subjects for the school-room; "men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles." The teacher looks in vain for respect from those who have never learned to respect their natural guardians, or for obedience from those who have not been taught from their infancy that obedience is a virtue.

The lessons conned at the fire-side are sure to be recited at school, and the *voices of home* find there a faithful echo. These considerations, which cannot fail to command the assent of every reflecting father and mother, should operate as a sufficiently powerful inducement to the exercise of a proper parental influence, for their own reputation, if for no other object. But there is something more at stake,—the welfare of their children. They are sent to school with a view to their mental and moral improvement. They should go there with right views of the object, and of duty; with the conviction stamped deep upon their minds and hearts, that the violation of the laws of the school, disobedience of orders, disrespectful conduct towards their teacher, unkind or uncourteous treatment of their schoolmates, inattention to study, falsehood, vulgarity, profanity, truancy, are morally wrong; that the commission of any one of these offenses will subject them to the rightful infliction of punishment by their teacher, to the displeasure of their parents, and to the rebukes of conscience, which, although slumbering for the moment, will sooner or later awake and assert its right to be heard. This is the *home preparation* for school which is loudly called for; which parents should be willing to make; which it is their duty and their interest to make; which they *must* make, if they would derive that benefit from the school, for themselves and their children, which they profess or ought to desire.

Parents must recede from the antagonistic position which they have been too apt to assume, and become co-operators with teachers. Is it not strange that the necessity should exist of reminding parents of this duty,—their duty to help those who are striving to help them, in the all important work of training their children for lives of usefulness! How shall they co-operate? Most essentially, by inculcating upon the minds of their children the duty of obedience to law, submission to wholesome restraint, and the practice of those virtues which will tend to render them happy in themselves and the source of happiness to all around them. They must cultivate in their

children respect for the teacher by respecting him themselves. They must manifest their interest in the work in which he is engaged, by visiting him in the scene of his labors, and their interest in his personal welfare and happiness by making him a welcome guest at their homes. They must be prompt to sustain him,—slow to condemn him. If their children come home with complaints of ill treatment, they must suspend sentence until the matter is carefully and impartially investigated; if the teacher is found to be in fault, he is not to be proscribed, denounced as a tyrant, or a brute, ex-communicated from all sympathy and charity; he is to be treated like a brother man, erring though he may be; at least, forgiveness upon the terms of repentance and reformation is to be accorded to him. They must sustain him, most especially, in all his efforts to preserve order and decorum in the school-room. For all insubordination in school parents are responsible; it is the fruit which springs from the seed they sow; or, rather, from the tares which they suffer to be sown, and to grow until they are compelled to reap the bitter harvest. It is true, probably, that the number in the community who are disposed to countenance insubordination in their children at school, and resist the employment of coercive measures by the teacher to enforce observance of his regulations, is not large, yet sufficient to affect injuriously, if not to utterly destroy the usefulness of many of our schools. The well disposed are under no obligation to submit tamely to this encroachment upon their rights, to the wanton sacrifice of school funds which it involves. They have the right to speak and to act; and it is their duty to do both. The law of the land provides a remedy where the moral law is powerless, and they must demand that it be applied; and when applied, they must aid and sustain the teacher and the legally constituted authorities in the discharge of their duty.

Finally, parents may do much to increase the usefulness of schools, by enforcing the regular and punctual attendance of their children. All experience and observation furnish incontestible evidence, that regularity in attendance is indispensable

to the successful progress of the whole school as well as that of the individual member. The performance of this duty is within the power of parents. I am aware that there are to be found those who urge in excuse for its neglect, or non-performance, that their poverty prevents; that their necessities require a larger portion of the time and services of their children than the hours of intermission, morning, noon and evening, during the term of the school, afford. Although I have deeply regretted the existence of such a state of things, the validity of the excuse I have, until recently, been willing to admit. But careful observation during the past year has forced upon me the conviction, that in a vast majority of the instances in which this excuse is offered, it is without foundation; that the neglect is the result of ignorance, indolence, or indifference. When I see, as I have seen again and again, the widowed *mother*, with no earthly means of support save the labor of her own hands, sending her children punctually, regularly to school, six days in the week, controlled by the same solemn sense of duty which impels her to lead them to the Sanctuary on the seventh, I have but little faith that there is to be found, through the length and breadth of the State, a *father* whose necessities prevent him from following her example. If there be, his condition must indeed be one of the most abject and hopeless poverty, and should appeal with irresistible eloquence, in behalf of his children, to the humanity of all around him.

Next in importance to parental agency in the work of improving the condition of our Common Schools,—and perhaps it is entitled to take precedence even of that,—is the agency of the TEACHER. It has been fashionable to attribute the failure of our schools to answer the purpose for which they were established, to the incompetency of teachers. The charge preferred has not been without foundation in many instances, although in quite as many, probably, the cause might be traced to dereliction of duty on the part of those who are loudest in the accusation. But be this as it may, the fact that the usefulness of the school depends in a very great degree upon the

character and qualifications of the teacher, is too obvious to admit of question. It follows, then, that the teachers of our Common Schools may contribute to their improvement, and, if so, they have a duty to perform as well as parents, school officers, and the State; which duty may be briefly comprehended in this,—the duty to qualify themselves for their vocation.

I hold it to be incumbent upon every man, whatever may be his condition or calling, to qualify himself to the extent of his natural abilities and the means within his control, for the faithful, intelligent performance of the duties incident to the station which he occupies. If this be true of the agriculturist, who finds his sphere of duty in the cultivation of the soil, of the artisan, who devotes his mind and strength to the moulding and shaping of senseless matter, how much more is it true of the teacher, whose field of labor is the mind and heart of childhood; whose works are destined to outlive the proudest monuments of art.

To qualify himself for the faithful discharge of the duties of his calling, is a duty which the teacher owes to the parents of the children entrusted to his care, to those children, to himself, and his profession.

It is his duty to Parents. I speak not now of his legal obligations, for the statute recognizes no one as a teacher whose qualifications are not such as the requirements of the law demand. It is not to be presumed that any man will undertake to discharge the duties of the teacher's office, without the legal evidence, under the hands of the legally constituted authorities, that he possesses the legal qualifications. But the experience of every intelligent teacher must have taught him, that although the certificate of the Superintending School Committee is the *shibboleth* to the school-room, it is no ægis to protect him in the conflicts through which, once there, he is called upon to pass. It developes no hidden resources of intellectual wealth or moral energy. It is no Urim and Thummim, in virtue of which the inquiring mind of childhood can be satisfied with oracular answers. It may answer the

purpose of its creation in the courts of law, but constitutes no defense in the high court of conscience. There is a code of higher authority than any known to human tribunals,—stamped with a higher sanction than the edicts of kings or princes, the decrees of synods or presbyteries. That code should be the teacher's rule and guide. Looking above and beyond the requirements of the statute law,—regarding them as but types and shadows,—he should recognize in its fullest extent his moral obligation to the parents of his pupils, to qualify himself for the faithful performance of the duties he owes to them.

Does that obligation exist? How is it in the other vocations of life? Can the mechanic, who through his unskillfulness destroys the materials of his employer, exonerate himself from blame by the fact that he served a seven years apprenticeship at his trade? Can the physician, who through ignorance sacrifices the life of the child, stifle the reproaches of the bereaved parent by the exhibition of his diploma from a Medical College? Can the lawyer, who through negligence loses the cause he should have won, justify himself to his injured client by pointing to the records of the courts that he has been admitted a counselor at law? Would not so shadowy a subterfuge merit and receive the indignant rebuke of every honest heart? Might not the aggrieved employer, parent, client, well reply, "I entrusted to your care my property, my child, my cause, not because of your profession, but because I believed you to be skillful and competent, and if you were not, you were bound by the most solemn obligations to decline the trust."

How stands the case with the certificated, but unqualified teacher? He, too, has served his apprenticeship in the school-room,—he, too, has his diploma under the hands of the school committee, and stands upon their records as a legally qualified teacher. The material upon which he undertakes to work is the imperishable mind; the life to which he undertakes to minister, is the undying life of the affections; the cause entrusted to his care is, emphatically, the cause of humanity!

Shall the excuse which fails to justify the bungling artisan, the reckless empiric, the unskilled pettifogger, avail him? Shall it,—should it shield him from the just reproaches of parents whose confidence he has betrayed,—from the unanswerable reproaches of an awakened conscience?

I am not unaware of the argument urged by some of the profession, in extenuation of their own deficiencies, that there are reciprocal obligations from parents to teachers which are so little appreciated, or so totally disregarded, as to furnish an apology, or an offset, at least, for the teacher's short-comings. It is true, there has not been in time past that practical recognition by parents of the duties they owe to the teachers of their children which should have been. There has not been that faithful home-preparation, that hearty co-operation, that cordial sympathy, that earnest interest in the success of the teacher and his school, to which he is entitled. Parents have, too often, kept aloof, when their presence in the school-room would have been an angel ministry to the wearied, drooping spirit of the almost discouraged teacher, or their coming has been that of the *flaming minister of wrath*, rather than the peaceful sunlight. Long and dark indeed is the array of their sins of omission, but from that darkness there comes not out a single ray of light, to shine upon and bless the teacher's neglect of duty. He "lays a flattering unction to his soul," who in the failings of others finds an apology for his own. There is but one safe rule of conduct for the teacher, as for every other human being; it is to be himself true to duty although all the world beside be false.

The teacher owes it to the children entrusted to his care that he be qualified for his vocation. Look, for a moment, at the relation which he sustains to them. He is, for the time being, in the place of the parent, and upon him devolve the parent's duties and obligations. It is true, in a limited sense, that the department assigned to him in the great field of human culture, is the intellect; but it is as true, that his work is but imperfectly performed, if it does not embrace within the sphere

of its operations the physical, social, and moral culture of the child. The care of the manners, the mind, the heart of that child, is transferred for a season from its natural guardians to him. It is a trust which he voluntarily assumes. He is bound then by obligations as solemn as those which rest upon the parent to perform it faithfully. In the work of education, the teacher, of his own accord, becomes a fellow-laborer; yes, more; he assumes the burthen which, judging from results, the parent, too often, has not the moral or intellectual strength to bear. There is not left for him that shadow of an apology which is sometimes offered for parental neglect, that the physical necessities of their children engross so large a portion of their time and thoughts, that they have none of either to devote to their mental and moral culture. Every argument, then, which can be adduced in proof of the parent's obligations, applies with equal force to the teacher.

And what are those obligations? Man knows none higher,—Omniscience has imposed none weightier! The shaping of a mind! The forming of a character! The planting of a seed, whose flower is of time,—whose fruit is of eternity! The erection of a structure, whose base is on the earth,—whose cap-stone in the skies! This, and nothing less than this, is the work of him who undertakes to teach a little child! Fraught as it is with such momentous consequences, is it not a duty which he owes to that child that he be a skillful workman?—that he understand well the nature of the material which he undertakes to mould and fashion?—that the seed he sows be of the right kind and wisely scattered?—the building he erects be fitly framed and jointed?

The man of mature years, whose civil rights are invaded, seeks redress through the agency of the legal adviser of his own selection; if disease attacks his bodily system, the remedy is administered by the physician of his own choice; and if he suffers detriment through the unskillfulness or unfaithfulness of either, he cannot escape the conviction that the fault is, partially, at least, attributable to his own lack of discrimination.

The lawyer, the physician, each has his own moral and legal responsibilities, but their employer is not thereby relieved from his responsibility to himself. But how is it with the teacher and those to whose moral and intellectual wants he undertakes to minister,—the children entrusted to his care? They have no voice in his selection. Helpless, defenseless against the danger to which they are all unconsciously exposed, they are entrusted to his guidance, and whether his ministrations be for good or evil, no measure of responsibility attaches to them. He is made by the position which he occupies, the object of their most implicit confidence. The teachings of the master are to them the law; and the harpings of the Prophets never sank deeper into listening hearts, nor left there an impression more abiding, than do his words and acts in theirs. The confidence of childhood! That feature of earth which most resembles Heaven! How *can* man betray it!—and yet how basely is it betrayed by the unfaithful teacher!

Shrinking under a deep sense of the responsibility resting upon him, the teacher may, perhaps, urge as an apology for his deficiencies, that the pecuniary inducement is too trifling to justify the outlay which he must necessarily incur in qualifying himself for the discharge of the duties of his calling. To the full benefit of this apology he would be entitled in a controversy with his employers, merely. But in the full exercise of an enlightened conscience it must fail him, when he reflects upon the character and position of those with whom he has most to deal,—that they are the mere passive recipients, and neither principals nor accessories in the employment of his services;—that while his obligations to his employers may simply be that he will serve them to the extent of his legal qualifications, his obligations to their children are the highest which man can owe to his fellow being. He may, perhaps, solace himself with the reflection that the period of his intercourse with them is but brief, and that, although with his best directed efforts he may do them but little good, he yet does them no positive harm. But is he sure of that? Is he sure that the

impress of his own imperfections will not, unconsciously, be stamped upon the minds and hearts of these young beings? Is he sure that his own mental and moral deformities will not be reproduced in them,—that his sins of omission will not be visited upon them? Let him calmly, deliberately re-peruse the history of his own life, and with an honest heart declare how many of the passages there written, although traced by his own hand, are the dictates of another's mind. Let him call up from its dim sepulchre the buried Past, and question it. It shall point him to the hour, the place, when and where, a single act, —a word,—cast over the disc of his childhood a light which still illumines his pathway, or left there a shade which the lapse of time has only deepened and darkened. It is indeed a fearful hazard which the teacher runs! He deals with the offspring of a day, pregnant with the issues of ages! He is writing upon a tablet lessons which the angels shall read!

To be well qualified for his vocation is a duty which the teacher owes to himself, as a man, as a teacher, and as a morally accountable being. He owes it to himself as a *man;* not merely as a morally responsible agent, but as a man among men;—as he would be respected by himself and others, but more especially as he would be respected by himself. Self-respect is absolutely essential to individual happiness and usefulness. Without it man's nobler energies are but imperfectly developed. The teacher cannot claim to be exempted from the common lot of humanity. If he would attain to that degree of happiness which every man does, that usefulness which every man should desire, he must respect himself. The effort to attain either will be in vain, unless he is sustained by the consciousness that he is filling honorably and creditably the station he occupies. He owes it to himself as a *teacher.* Upon the same principle that every man should practice as he preaches, —should lead a life in conformity with his profession—the man who professes to be a teacher should know how and what to teach. He owes it to himself as a *morally accountable being.* Tried by the standard of that Gospel in whose light

we all rejoice, what is the measure of the teacher's accountability? To whom much is given of him shall much be required. To him is given, for a season, the training of intellect which, under his guidance, may prove a blessing or a curse. To him is given the control of the precious hours of childhood and its golden opportunities, which, once passed, never return. To him is given the moulding, the direction of undying affections. In the language of a distinguished teacher, "the Schoolmaster speaks, writes, teaches, paints for eternity!" If faithful, then, how great his reward! Time may foreshadow it—Eternity alone can reveal it! If it be true that in the far off ages of existence *another* book shall be opened, in which the spirit-eye shall read the history of the past, with what a solemn sense of his accountability, of the magnitude of the trust confided to him, should the teacher of childhood be impressed! Who can foresee the lights and shadows which will rest upon the field of his labors! What tongue shall foretell the fatal issues of his neglect, the blessed fruits of his fidelity! or whether the voice which hereafter shall speak to him from the abyss of the centuries, shall utter the language of blessing or reproach!

To qualify himself for the discharge of its duties is a debt which the teacher owes to his profession. It is so, because there is an implied moral obligation that no man shall disgrace the calling to which he attaches himself, but, on the contrary, shall do all that lies in his power to dignify it. It is so, because every man should be engaged in some respectable calling, and that calling cannot be respectable or respected whose ranks are crowded with unworthy members. It is so, because it is the only mode in which the claim of the teacher to ampler remuneration can be sustained. It is so, because it is an honorable profession and is entitled to such a return for the honor it confers. There was a time when the supremacy of the Teacher was felt and acknowledged; and in every age, some of the brightest lights of mankind have poured the full blaze of intellect over the quiet and unobtrusive scene of their labors,—

the village school-room. In justice to the memory of an Ascham, a Milton, an Arnold, and a host of lesser lights,—"men who have taught the world to think" and whose works live after them, should the teachers of this and every coming age strive to adorn and dignify the profession which they hallowed with their lives.

I have styled the occupation of teaching, a *profession.* I am not so visionary as to suppose that we are on the verge of that golden age when any considerable portion of the teachers of our common schools will find constant employment and a livelihood in this pursuit; still it is none the less a profession. Its followers are required to be possessed of learning,—the material upon which they operate is mind,—and it is entitled to take rank with the learned professions in the estimation of the community. The tendency of the age is to make it such, to restore it to the position it once occupied; and teachers should withhold no effort to help on the good work. They will be laboring in so doing, not merely for the advancement of their own personal interests, but those of their successors,—for the coming generations,—for the great cause of humanity.

I have thus called attention to the obligation which rests upon teachers to qualify themselves for the discharge of the duties of their vocation, as one of the means to be employed in improving the condition of our common schools. The question here presents itself, "How shall they qualify themselves?" I answer, by the same process to which every man subjects himself who would become a proficient in his calling, —by labor. No School Committee's certificate, no Normal School, no Teacher's Institute, will, of itself alone, answer the purpose. The teacher constitutes no exception to the general rule for the attainment of moral or intellectual excellence. *He must labor.* I need not say that no trifling portion of that labor must be expended in the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the branches he is by law required to teach. But the field is still larger and broader. The wide domain of Science is before him, inviting him to enter and gather of its fruits,

which, with a skill beyond that of the alchemist, he can transmute into priceless riches. He must labor, also, to acquire the faculty of communicating, of engrafting his own mind upon the minds of his pupils. He must labor to acquire a spirit of patience and equanimity. Tried as he often is, it is a hard task, but it is a solemn duty. It is a victory well worth the effort to achieve. He must labor to acquire and manifest the spirit of cheerfulness. No child can love or profit by the teachings of one whose brow is hung with perpetual gloom. Even inanimate Nature, could it find an audible voice, would cry aloud *to be dismissed*, were the sun robed in a perpetual eclipse. He must labor to acquire the spirit of kindness, that he may be loved; of impartiality, that he may be respected. To crown all, he must labor to make himself an example worthy of imitation. He must indulge in no habit which he would not willingly see his pupils contract; he must do no act he would not have them imitate; utter no word he would be ashamed to have them repeat.

In the work of preparation, the teacher is not left entirely to his own unaided effort. The work of moral culture, it is true, must be wrought out in the laboratory of his own heart; in the work of intellectual improvement, the acquisition of the science and art of teaching, he has many helps. An important one will be found in the careful perusal and study of the writings of practical educationists. There are many such, which, to the young teacher desirous of excelling in his profession, will be of invaluable service. The teacher who permits his other avocations, or the fear of incurring a trifling expense, to debar him from the high privilege of communing, through their works, with those "excellent of the earth," knows not how costly is the sacrifice he makes for so paltry a pecuniary gain.

Another important help may be found in Teachers' Associations, if rightly conducted. The object of such an association should be the mutual improvement of its members in their qualifications as teachers. Its meetings should not be made the

occasion for rhetorical display, the discussion of abstract principles, or of general resolutions, important though the bearing of the principles involved may be, upon the subject of education in the abstract. Such a course may afford opportunity for the exhibition of eloquence and a knowledge of parliamentary usages, but little practical good results from it. The exercises of a Teachers' Association should be eminently practical. They should consist of a comparison of notes, as it may be termed, the discussion of questions of government and discipline, the methods of instructing in the various branches, &c. It should be remembered that the meeting is not one of orators or philosophers, or political economists, or literati, but of teachers of common schools, anxious to learn, and willing to communicate to each other the fruits of their experience. Thus conducted, the exercises of the Association will prove of incalculable benefit to all participating in them.

Another help, and the last to which I propose to allude, is the Teachers' Institute. With its character and object a portion of our teachers are already acquainted; in justice to themselves, and the State, that acquaintance must be renewed and continued. Their attendance upon its exercises may prove to them beneficial or profitless, as they choose to make it. If it is for no other purpose than the gratification of an idle curiosity, with no higher object in view than the enjoyment of a brief period of social intercourse, they might as well, for all the true purposes of the assembling, tarry at home. If, on the contrary, the object is to profit by the experience of others, to improve, and to do something for the elevation of the character of the profession, if the teachings to which they may listen are received into honest hearts and treasured there, teachers will have a right to expect, and will not fail to find, an adequate reward, in the renewed mental energy with which they will return to the scene of their professional labors, and the increased facility with which they will be enabled to discharge the duties there devolving upon them. If they will but give to the work before them their patient and undivided attention, making their note-books the repository of

all the valuable hints and suggestions which may be thrown out, reducing them to practice whenever and wherever they may find them practicable, the Institute cannot fail to impart to every intelligent teacher an impulse which will bear him on still more successfully in his career of duty.

My remarks upon this topic have extended further than I anticipated. Were they to be submitted to the consideration of this Board, the Executive, and the Legislature only, they might well have been dispensed with. But, through the agency of the Press, this Report will reach the hands of teachers; if there is aught of truth in it, may it reach their hearts. Let this be my apology for devoting so large a space to the consideration of the part assigned them in the work of improving the condition of our common schools.

School Officers,—and by that term I mean Superintending School Committees and School Agents,—from the very nature of the relation which they sustain to our schools, may be highly instrumental in promoting their usefulness. They are the legally constituted guardians of their interests. It is a trust which they voluntarily assume, and if unfaithful in the performance of it they are without excuse. We have a right to demand at their hands a strict observance of the obligations which the statute and their oath of office impose, and a right to ask for their zealous co-operation in every movement which has for its object the moral and intellectual welfare of the rising generation. They are selected, at least, such is the reasonable presumption,—not with a view to political preferment, or the advancement of their pecuniary interests, but because they are believed to be possessed of those endowments which peculiarly recommend them for the station. It is hardly necessary to add, that under such circumstances, the neglect of duty, the betrayal of the trust confided to them, implies a degree of moral turpitude which is deserving of the severest reprehension.

Having devoted a considerable portion of my last Annual Report to the consideration of the statutory duties of Superintending School Committees, I deem it unnecessary to recur

to it, and have only to add that the faithful observance of those duties, is, in my estimation, indispensable to success in the practical operation of our common school system. But there are some implied duties, or, rather, opportunities for usefulness, to which I would call attention.

To effect all that is desired in the way of improving our common schools, it is necessary that the public mind be aroused to a consciousness of existing defects, and of the social and pecuniary benefit which will be sure to follow from the removal of them. This result can be attained only by patient and persevering effort, by oft repeated argument, and, in many cases, by that demonstration which is supported by facts and figures. To effect this object by individual personal appeal is a slow and wearisome task; we can look for its prompt and entire accomplishment, only to associated action. I would have school committees realize this truth, of which their experience must have already convinced them, and exert their influence to awaken a livelier interest in the public mind, and secure the co-operation of parents, teachers, and the friends of education, by the organization of Town and District Common School Associations. In this movement they must take the lead; it is a work which seems most naturally to devolve upon them. The name of such associations sufficiently indicates their object. It is to excite a becoming interest in the subject of common school education, to arouse attention to its importance in a social, moral, and political view, to awaken parents and guardians of youth to a sense of their duty, and to disseminate correct information as to the best modes of promoting these several objects and remedying existing defects. I do not deem it necessary to enter into an argument to prove that beneficial results would follow from such a movement; the history of every attempt at reform is replete with testimony in point. Whether this agency shall be employed in the educational reform now in progress in our State, remains for our Superintending School Committees to determine, and I would most

respectfully, but earnestly, commend it to their serious consideration.

Apart from the influence which committees may exert through these Associations, they may do much to advance the cause by making their visits to the schools in the several districts the occasion for calling together parents, and urging upon their consideration the duties and obligations they owe to the school and its teacher, by directing their attention to existing defects in the school-house and to the necessity as well as the ways and means of remedying them, by pouring oil upon the troubled waters which so frequently overwhelm and bury the best interests of the school district, and by recommending and enforcing, so far as facts and arguments can enforce, all such measures as will tend to the improvement of the school. They may avail themselves of the same, or other opportunities, to impress upon the minds of teachers the duties which they owe to parents, to children, and themselves. They may infuse more of life and energy into their endeavors to secure the regular attendance of children at school. In fine, they may take into their charge every department in the system, and make their supervision, what it was intended to be, practical and effective. The welfare of our schools demands of them all this, and they must be willing to answer the demand.

To the other and very numerous class of school officers,—School Agents,—we may look for important aid. The position they occupy has its moral, as well as its legal duties and responsibilities; but in times past, those responsibilities have too often been lightly regarded and those duties neglected. The rights of individuals and the community have been thereby jeoparded, the peace and harmony of the district disturbed, and the usefulness of the school materially impaired. But the charge preferred in these general terms will be better understood from a specification of particulars.

The law creating the office requires that Agents shall be duly sworn before entering upon the discharge of their duties as such. This is a reasonable and wholesome provision, and the

rights of parents, children, teachers, and all having any business transactions with the school-district in its corporate capacity, require that it should be strictly observed. All contracts entered into by an Agent who has omitted to comply with this requirement are liable to be vacated, and the proceedings of a district meeting called by him rendered null and void. Great injustice may thus be done by reason of his omission of duty, and the party injured be remediless. Common honesty, then, would seem to demand at the hands of the Agent the observance of this provision in the law, which, through heedlessness, rather than willfulness, has too often been neglected. An evil so trifling in its inception, but, by possibility, so serious in its consequences, should no longer be permitted to exist.

School Agents are invested with authority to employ teachers for their respective districts. This authority has been abused by the employment of teachers destitute of the legal qualifications, in defiance of the express provision of the statute. The influence of so open a violation of the law cannot but be unfavorable to the maintenance of order, and the observance of law in the school; its influence upon the community is bad; it is unbecoming the official character of the agent, and, involving as it does the violation of his oath of office, is criminal. This authority has also been abused by the employment of teachers who have rendered themselves particularly unacceptable to the parents and children in the district. With such a teacher no school can be profitable, and although the employment of him may not be in violation of any duty known to the law, it is, to say the least, injudicious, if not reprehensible. As an honest man and a faithful officer, the Agent is not at liberty to sacrifice the welfare of the school to the gratification of his personal predilections. He is the servant of the people, and to the will of the people, understandingly and deliberately expressed, it is his duty to yield. Against these abuses of authority School Agents must guard. In the employment of teachers they must have a single eye to the interests of the school. They must insist upon a strict compliance with the requirements

of the law. The production of the statute certificates must be the indispensable pre-requisite to the employment of the teacher, and the return of his Register at the close of his school, the condition upon which he shall receive the voucher necessary to entitle him to compensation for his services. I do not attach any talismanic virtue to the certificate of the School Committee, but it is the safeguard which the law has interposed for the protection of our schools from the inroads of ignorance and vice, and no man has a right to trample upon it; least of all, the sworn officer who is placed as a sentinel at the door of the school-room for the protection of its inmates.

It is a part of the duty of Agents to return to the Assessors of the town, in the month of May, annually, a list of the children between the ages of four and twenty-one, residing in their respective districts, on the first day of that month. To the truth of that list the agent certifies. The lists from the several districts constitute the basis upon which the school money is apportioned, and, therefore, should be accurate and true. The willful or careless return of a larger number than the facts justify, in any one district, is a fraud upon all the others. It is as literally the obtaining of money by false pretenses, as it would be were the pretense a forged check or bill of exchange, and the party defrauded an individual or a bank. These false returns, either intentionally or otherwise, have been actually made, and continue, though perhaps to a less extent, to be made, and have been so long sanctioned by custom that their iniquity fails of being perceived. The connection between the abuse of which I now speak and the improvement of our schools is not very intimate, it is true; but so long as we propose to make them the nurseries of sound morals, consistency, at least, requires that their guardians be men of *clean hands.* There is another prevailing practice among School Agents,—that of returning the *number* of children within their districts, instead of a *list.* This is neither a compliance with the letter nor with the spirit of the law; and this, of itself, is sufficient reason why the practice should be abandoned. But there is

another reason why the requirement of the law should be observed literally; a list of all the children in the district furnishes to the committee, teachers, and all interested in the welfare of the community, the means by which the names of absentees from school can be ascertained; this information they should possess, that they may know in what direction their services are most required to secure a regular and punctual attendance.

But it is unnecessary to go farther into details. My present purpose is to call the attention of Agents to the responsibility of the position which they occupy, to some of the errors of the past which should be avoided in the future, and to urge upon them the importance of a faithful and impartial performance of the duties of their office. By an honest and earnest co-operation with school committees, they may contribute largely to the welfare of our schools; by a contrary course, by assuming a position antagonistic to them, or by inattention and indifference to their wishes, they may do much to retard the progress of improvement and to bring discredit upon our school system as now organized.

The State has an important part to perform in the work of improving the condition of our common schools. Our Constitution recognizes the truth, that a general diffusion of the advantages of education is essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, and empowers the Legislature to make all enactments necessary to insure the support and maintenance of public schools, and to encourage and endow, from time to time, as the circumstances of the people may authorize, seminaries of learning within the State. The extent to which this authority has been exercised and this duty performed, is well known to this Board and to the people at large; and I am not aware that it may not with propriety be added, that what has been done thus far has been well done. The reasonable demands of the people upon the Legislature have been answered in the spirit of the Constitution. But it does not follow that nothing remains to be done. The welfare of

the individuals constituting the State must be its constant care; and so long as the preservation of their rights and liberties is essential to their welfare, the diffusion of the advantages of education, upon which depends the permanency of those rights and privileges, must continue to be an object of the highest importance, as well as of the deepest interest.

In the matter of the education of the people, the interest and the duty of the State are identical. Whatever tends to develop its natural resources, to render its capital productive, to retard the progress of crime and promote the cultivation of these virtues which constitute the basis of a republican government, it is the interest and duty of the State to encourage and sustain. The agency by which these results are to be wrought out, is intelligence; that intelligence which is the fruit of moral and intellectual culture; and the field in which the seed is to be sown is the Common School. How the State can best promote this interest and perform this duty, is a question upon which there may well be a diversity of opinion. With the exception of the appropriations for the support of Teachers' Institutes, the educational patronage of the State, so far as it relates to our common schools, has been confined to the distribution of the annual Bank Tax among the several towns and plantations, and the setting apart of a portion of the public lands to constitute a permanent School Fund. Believing, as I do, that a large public school fund is no more to be regarded as a public blessing than a large public debt, I am not disposed to ask or recommend that the State should go farther in this direction. I am led to this belief by observation of the results which invariably follow where schools are sustained entirely, or almost entirely, by the public bounty, without the necessity of individual co-operation. Benefits which come unasked, or which are not bought by personal sacrifice, are, in general, but slightly estimated. The common blessings of light and air, which meet us at the commencement of life and go with us to its close, indispensable as they are to our very being, are but lightly esteemed, for the simple reason that the possession of them

costs us no effort. In what a robe of glory would every sunbeam be arrayed,—how laden with luxury would be every breath of air we inhale,—were it earned, as man earns his daily bread, by the sweat of the brow! The same principle applies, although perhaps with less force, to the sanctuary and the school-room. Part and parcel as they are of our New England heritage, they are appreciated as they should be by comparatively few, save those who having once enjoyed their privileges and opportunities, are by some change in situation or circumstances deprived of them. To make our public schools productive of the greatest possible amount of good, to make their welfare the common care, the expense of supporting them must be borne by the members of the community in their individual capacity. The State may, with propriety, co-operate, but the liberality which would transfer the burthen from the individual to the State, would be as fatal as the gift of Nessus.

The amount of the Bank Tax distributed the last year was about twenty-five thousand dollars, being about eleven cents to each child in the State, between the ages of four and twenty-one. The trifling amount realized from this fund by our common schools, would hardly seem to justify any extraordinary effort to secure the passage of a law providing for its distribution, were there none such in existence; but, provision having been heretofore made to that effect, and the tax having been for many years apportioned and distributed, I should be unwilling to have the law repealed or its operation suspended. If nothing more, it is an earnest that the State, in the exercise of its sovereignty, recognizes the Common School as an object deserving its sustaining care and bounty. The Permanent School Fund, derived from the sale of the public lands set apart for the benefit of public schools, has now reached the sum of one hundred and seven thousand dollars. By the law as it now is, that fund is to be put at interest, in such manner as the Legislature shall from time to time determine, and the income thereof distributed, annually, amongst the towns in the State, according to the number of children therein

between the ages of four and twenty-one, commencing at a time to be prescribed by the Legislature. No such time has yet been prescribed, no portion of the fund has been put at interest, and no income derived from it. Were it now to be put at interest, at the rate of six per cent., the amount of annual income would be about six thousand four hundred dollars; this sum, distributed among the towns, upon the basis by law provided, would yield two cents and eight mills for each child of the school age. The amount apportioned to sixteen hundred of the thirty-six hundred school districts in the State, would not exceed one dollar to each. I will not say that the sum thus distributed would be utterly lost, but I venture the assertion that the benefit resulting from it, in most instances, would be so minute as to elude the search of the most microscopic economist. If there be any other mode by which the annual income of this fund can be more profitably employed "for the benefit of town and district schools," I hold it to be the duty of the State to adopt it, at least until the period arrives when it shall amount to such a sum as will be worth distributing per capita. Such a mode I propose to suggest.

The most urgent educational demand of the times is for a larger number of well qualified teachers. Any measure which will increase the number of such, and thereby meet that demand, will be for the "benefit of town and district schools." The most obvious measure, indeed the only one which comes within the legitimate authority of the State, is the making provision for the education of teachers; this can only be done, thoroughly and efficiently, by the establishment of Normal Schools, or Teachers' Seminaries. The Teachers' Institutes do not contemplate any such thorough and systematic training as is indispensably necessary to the education of the teacher; the brief period during which they are in session, as must be very apparent, will not admit of it. They cannot be made the substitute for Normal Schools, neither can they be superseded by them. They are a link in the chain which connects the primary school, in which children are taught the rudiments of

language, with the highest seminary for the education of those who are to be their teachers through the progressive stages of childhood and youth. Shall the State establish and endow such schools or seminaries? In a moral, political, or pecuniary view, I know of no more profitable investment which it could make. But if not prepared to make it from its own funds, can a better disposition be made of a portion of the income which may be derived from the Permanent School Fund? At all events, would it not be for the interest and credit of the State so to dispose of it, rather than to permit the fund to lie dormant and unproductive in the treasury, as it has lain for the last twenty years?

The objection may be taken to the mode proposed, that a large expenditure of money, in the erection of buildings for the use of such schools or seminaries, will be required to carry it into execution. In answer to the objection I am able to state, that I have reliable assurances, from various sources, that in the event of the establishment of Normal Schools, arrangements can be made by which ample accommodations will be provided for them in the matter of school-rooms, without expense to the State. So commendable a liberality on the part of individuals, deserves to be met by a corresponding liberality on the part of the State, if, indeed, that can be termed liberality, which consists merely in the performance of a duty. The State holds the Permanent School Fund in trust for the schools, and is under an implied obligation, at least, to make it available for the purposes for which it was created. The objection may be made by those who have not investigated the subject, that the income from the fund would be inadequate to the support of a Normal School, or Schools. The whole expense of supporting the three State Normal Schools in Massachusetts the last year, did not exceed six thousand five hundred dollars: the same sum, by the practice of a rigid, not parsimonious, economy, would support four such in this State. Without entering into an argument in support of the position which I regard as already well established, that such institutions are highly conducive to

the welfare of schools, I cannot refrain from the expression of my belief, that the appropriation of the income of the Permanent School Fund,—for a limited time, at least,—to their support, is a measure which it would be for the best interests of the State to adopt.

Among the matters submitted to the consideration of this Board by the Act establishing it, was, the "best methods of aiding and promoting education in the new settlements of the State." The views of the members of the Board upon this subject were laid before the Legislature in their first Report, and adopted, in part, by the incorporation and endowment of two Academies. The other recommendation, that the State should afford pecuniary aid, in the form of a *bounty*, as an inducement to the raising of school money by the "new settlers," for reasons then deemed satisfactory, was not adopted. I still entertain the opinion that pecuniary aid is required from abroad, and I know not from what source it can come, except it be from the public treasury. It would be for the pecuniary interest of the State, as I believe, to afford that aid. The State is a landholder; her lands are in the market; and even were it not so, it is for her interest to provide facilities and inducements to the occupation and improvement of all the soil within the limits of her territory. It is a well known fact, that one of the greatest objections with many of her enterprising citizens to seeking a home in her newly settled territory, is that their children would thereby be deprived of school privileges. Would not the public lands find a readier sale, and at an enhanced price, to active, industrious, enterprising men, were it but known that the State would co-operate with them and bear a part of the burthen of educating their children? Education in the new settlements may be promoted in some degree, by conferring upon the inhabitants of plantations not incorporated for municipal purposes, authority to assess taxes for the support of schools in the same manner as they are assessed in towns and incorporated plantations. With these exceptions, I know of no measure which the Legislature would be likely to adopt, by

which education can be "aided and promoted in the new settlements of the State." The subject deserves serious consideration. It is intimately connected with the development of the resources of the State and the general welfare of its citizens. If, as I think the fact is, the aid required can be afforded only by the State, it becomes the duty as well as the interest of the State to afford it.

I bring this Report to a close, not because the subject is exhausted, for it is exhaustless; not so, I fear, with the patience of this Board. To the mind which has never sounded its depths nor measured its altitude, the Education of the People may be a topic alike unattractive and devoid of interest: but, I believe the day is coming when the important relation it sustains to the social, moral and political welfare of the People, will be recognized and appreciated by all;—when it will become the chief care as it is the chief interest of the State;—when the men who are devoting to it their energies and their lives, here and elsewhere, will no longer be regarded as visionaries and dreamers;—when the history of the errors and deficiencies of the Past and the Present, which we are now writing, will seem so strange and unnatural as to be deemed apocryphal. We may be permitted to see it only in vision,—but the day will come. The heralds of its advent are already abroad. A voice mightier than that of earth has spoken. It has broken the silence of the sepulchre, where lay, wrapped in death-like slumber, the mind and heart of the Nations. It has commanded the TEACHER to "come forth!" And he shall come forth; and his bands shall be loosed,—his mission accomplished!

WILLIAM GEORGE CROSBY,

Secretary of the Board of Education.

BELFAST, May 1, 1849.

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WILLIAM GEORGE CROSBY, of Belfast,
Secretary of the Board of Education.

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