

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1866.



AUGUSTA:
STEVENS & SAYWARD, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.
1866.

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Superintendent of Common Schools

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

DECEMBER, 1865.



AUGUSTA:

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS, }
AUGUSTA, DECEMBER 1, 1865. }

*To His Excellency SAMUEL CONY, and
the members of the Honorable Council:*

GENTLEMEN—The sad conflicts of four years have been terminated by a happy peace and the promise of increased prosperity. The anxieties, which had absorbed a large portion of the thought of the people of our State, have been removed; and the removal leaves a freedom to apply to the interests of education, a more earnest attention than could be allowed or expected amid the trials and sorrows of civil war. The record of our State, during the contest, has placed our name high on the merit roll of our nation; and it is not too much to say, that the intellectual and moral training of our defenders, in our schools and seminaries of learning, from the common soldier through all the rising grades to our Major Generals, has been among the prominent causes of the skill and courage, which have covered them with glory among the heroes of our times, who have gained success and saved the nation.

The encouragement which the Superintendent has received from your honorable body, as well as the most cordial welcome extended to him by associations, local committees, teachers and scholars, has been most ample and cheering. A disposition so widely spread cannot but be succeeded by the best results; and as the rulers and advisers in the government give their influence to sustain and promote this department of the public good, it will be still more clearly seen to be inferior to none, except the one which connects our happiness directly with the rewards of life, when its trials are successfully completed, and to which it should ever be the handmaid, to be guided in its help by the principles of revealed truth. If the interest manifested by parents in general were equal to the interest exhibited by Superintending Committees and teachers, as

it has been met in my many visits in the respective towns, an impulse would at once be given to the well arranged system of our Common Schools to elevate the character of teachers and scholars to a rank of improvement, which would be among our richest blessings in the present hour, and be the promise of still greater good in the coming years.

The enactments of the Legislature have placed the Normal Schools of the State, both present and prospective, under the care and direction of the Superintendent. The schools in the Madawaska region have had the same assignment, and therefore must claim a portion of the attention and interest which belong to the whole field of Common Schools. The like claim also, for a similar reason, exists in relation to the Academies which have received the sanction and the aid of the Legislative body. As the benefit which is expected to arise from the effective operation of the system of schools within our limits, must proceed largely from the character and efficiency of their teachers, it is proper that the Normal School should receive the first notice.

THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

While the labors of my predecessor were favorably directed to the general interests of the Common Schools, his success was specially marked in the establishment, under legislative sanction, of the Normal School at Farmington, and its prosperity during the first year of its existence. The appointment of teachers, the arrangement of the studies, the selection of text-books, and the difficulties attendant on the incipient stage of an institution of this important nature, were duly considered, and with the coöperation of the selected teachers, were so well managed as to allow the hope for a greater increase of pupils for the second year, and the greater profit to accrue as the reward of their attendance and diligence.

At the opening of the first term of the second year, it became necessary to make the appointment of a new Principal. Professor A. P. Kelsey, whose earnest efforts had contributed in no small degree to the location of the school in the pleasant village of Farmington, and who had anxiously labored for its welfare through the perplexities of its first year, declined a reelection to that office, having in view the acceptance of a position in an educational institution in Western New York, where it is pleasant to learn he has

been favorably received. The nomination of Mr. George M. Gage of our own State, at that time the first assistant in the school, was readily confirmed by the proper authority, and he has entered on his duties as Principal with a large share of the benefits of a regular course of instruction in one of the best of the Normal Schools in Massachusetts. He had already given a practical application of the best principles and methods of teaching in the schools of that State for some years previous to his connection with our own school, in which he was among the first to be interested.

The large number of pupils in the first term demanded at least one more teacher than had been employed during any part of the previous year. Miss Sarah R. Smith who had already been an assistant, and her sister Miss Mary B. Smith, both graduates of the Normal School at Salem, Mass., were appointed to begin their duties at the opening of the school in the Fall Term, before it was definitely known what the number of the pupils would be. It was very soon seen that more teaching force would be required, not only to meet the wants of the large attendance, but to furnish instruction in several departments, essential to qualify the learners for the art of teaching. After a careful consideration of the counter claims of expense and benefit, the appointment of an additional teacher was given to Miss Mary C. Packard, also a graduate of one of the Normal Schools in the State which has given her successful example in this particular to be copied largely throughout the Union. Like the other assistants Miss Packard had been engaged for some time in teaching; and her well known ability in the High School in Brunswick afforded the Superintendent great confidence in her efficiency in this larger field. The working of the school has been harmonious and effective. The demeanor of the pupils has been respectful to their teachers, pleasant among themselves, compliant with the regulations; and their propriety and regularity of conduct has been specially commended by residents in the town. It seems to be well understood that the State has no design to encourage in their number, the idle, the irregular, and least of all the immoral.

Attendance.

The term opened with *eighty-five* scholars, and increased to *one hundred and thirteen*. The corresponding term last year began with *thirty-one*, and increased to *fifty-four*. This statement is not

introduced as indicating any disparagement of the past. This would be unkind. These last numbers were specially encouraging at the commencement of an enterprise, which was an experiment, and had already awakened doubts as to its success. But the history of the year has dispelled the uncertainty, and prepared the way for the present more prosperous record. Certainly the friends of the effort can now rejoice and be encouraged. The evidence is fitted to remove distrust; and if the short past of its work can be indicative of the future, the hope may well be entertained that the accommodations of the building will be required to be completed, if not in certain respects somewhat enlarged.

Under this head it may be proper to state that the portions of the State, from which the attendance has been furnished, shows how widely and strongly the claims of the school have spread and been recognized. The Principal reports, that "During the first year of its existence, from three-fourths to four-fifths of the students connected with it were from the county in which it is located. The present term a good majority have been from other counties, though more have come from Franklin county than from any other in the State. Fourteen counties have been represented, all except Hancock and Piscataquis. Cumberland, Oxford and Somerset counties have furnished nearly forty pupils. The number of towns in the State represented in the school this Fall term, is nearly fifty. I may add that letters of inquiry from every part of the State and applications to furnish teachers go still further to prove the interest which school agents and the people throughout the Commonwealth are feeling in our enterprise."

In this connection it is proper to add that the number of male pupils has been proportionally larger than in the first year, and presents a fair comparison in this particular with schools established elsewhere for the like purpose.

Expenses.

It has been the desire of the Committee of the Council on Education, and of the Superintendent, to direct the financial affairs of the school in such an economical way as not to press with a particularly heavy weight on the treasury of the State. The principal part of the incidental expenses of the institution have been paid by the small sum required of the students as one of the conditions of their enjoyment of its privileges. The small overplus arising

during its first year, was occasioned by the necessities of the new undertaking. With the expected enlargement of the income from this source by the larger number of future pupils, it is supposed that the demands of a merely incidental nature will be fully met.

The amount expended in the payment of teachers' salaries last year was twenty-five hundred dollars. As compared with the three teachers of the last year, the present term has had the aid of four; and if, as seems now to be essential to the efficiency of the system, the same number be continued to the end of the year, their salaries will amount to twenty-five hundred and fifty dollars, being only fifty dollars more than the last year. As more than a balance to this small addition to the cost may be placed the larger number of pupils already taught, and the wider diffusion of the offered advantages throughout the counties, towns and districts of our State, as well as the anticipated benefits in the two coming terms. In the first year a sum was paid to Mr. Walter Wells for a course of Lectures in connection with the prescribed course of studies. This expense will not probably be incurred during the present year, as the Board of Instruction deemed that the constant occupation of the pupils in the preparation and recitation of their lessons was enough for the time allotted to the term, and indeed is requisite for the proper attention to complete the course prescribed. At the same time it may be deemed a question of interest, whether lectures can impart their expected profit, except as united with a course of study specially directed to the subjects thus discussed.

It is proper here to anticipate what may be a pressing want during the next Spring Term. If the reasonable expectations of the Principal are realized, as relating to the number then in attendance, "there will," as he reports, "be required an additional assistant. There will always be needed in the school at least one more teacher than there are classes. In fact in the Normal Schools of Massachusetts, which have been so liberally supported, and have attained a national reputation, there have generally been employed nearly twice as many teachers as there have been classes." This allusion to the possible need of increased auxiliary power has reference to the probable increase of the school, and the desire to make its instruction more complete and effective. It will scarcely make the labors of the Board of Instruction less than they now are; and rarely is more earnestness, diligence and fatiguing toil seen in the class room, than are found here, where the numbers to

be taught have been much larger than in other schools with near twice the number of instructors.

Boarding.

The desire has been earnestly entertained by the friends of the Normal School, that it should be filled to the utmost capacity of the existing accommodations. If the ratio of increase, during the short period of its continuance, be the criterion for deciding the question for the future, it may reasonably be inferred that this desire will be gratified in a very few years. The wish for this kind of instruction is becoming more common throughout this State, as well as others, where the facilities are afforded; and it is well known to the persons most intimately associated with it in our own plan, that much self-denial, not to say hardships, has been encountered for the purpose of gaining the proposed benefits. It has thus been found that the greatest of the practical difficulties in the way of the most desirable success has been in the expense of boarding. This expense has been as favorable at Farmington as could be expected in any place of its size and attractiveness, perhaps more so. But as teaching is generally not a business which yields large returns of profit, and as many of the persons, whose tastes and purposes lead them into this path of employment, are often unable to bestow the needed pecuniary means for the best course of judicious preparation, it will appear that in these facts may be found an adequate reason for the comparatively few pupils in this school, when viewed in relation to the whole number of teachers in the State. It is well known elsewhere as well as here, that there are very many aspirants for the office of teachers, with natural abilities and often a certain amount of practice in their work, who are deterred from attendance upon a professional school of this nature by the want of the necessary means. The liberality of the State furnishes the instruction, and doubtless in time will also supply all the apparatus of books and philosophical instruments fitted to extend its first gift to supply the utmost needs of the trainers of the young. This is all that she can be expected to do. On this subject it is pertinent to quote from the Annual Report of the State Normal School of New Jersey.

“The candidate, who has already arrived at an age at which he might be receiving a good salary in any one of a score of occupations soliciting his services, must not only forego this advantage,

but must for two whole years be at the expense of board and clothing. The burden of this expense must be increased when the candidate must go from home to secure his professional training. * * * There are undoubtedly more persons anxious to attend our Normal School, and to avail themselves of the liberality of the Legislature, than would fill our ample buildings twice over, were it not for the expense of a residence away from home."

The purpose of these observations is the desire to check any tendency to discouraging remark, because our building is not yet crowded, though its success has been greater than was found in the early years of the now well sustained and well attended schools in Massachusetts. There has been also another purpose; and this is to throw out the suggestion, which may be available in coming years, as to the expediency of a boarding house for the accommodation of such of the pupils as may wish to diminish their expenses, under the supervision of a judicious matron, where all the profit of the undertaking should be surrendered in their favor. In another State this arrangement has been secured by private liberality, and the results have been fortunate. The time may come when the value of education shall be so much exalted in our State, that some of its citizens will combine, and from inherited wealth, or the wealth which their toil and sagacity have gained, create such an auxiliary to our cause, as will make their names to be remembered with gratitude, and their benefactions a blessing in the schools of every district in the State.

Course of Study.

It was the earnest desire of the late Principal and his co-laborers of the last year, that the course of study, for the two years of required connection with the school, should be systematically arranged and definitely fixed, so that the teachers should be qualified on their part to guide, and the scholars should have more than a misty glance of the field over which they were to be led. This course has been prepared. It has had the test of one term, and has worked satisfactorily. Modifications will be made when found expedient. But it is believed that its outline will be sufficient until the increase of pupils, and their proper claims for its enlargement shall demand the presence of one or more additional teachers.

It must be understood that in a school designed for the special purpose of "teaching teachers how to teach," the plan of studies

must be adapted to the object sought. In other schools there is a gradation. When one class of studies has been accomplished, it is succeeded by another. The first is preparatory to the second, and the second to the third, and so onward. Thus the studies of the High School or the Academy are preparatory to those of the different departments of literature and science to which the attention is afterwards directed. Thus the class occupations of the school room are successively dropped. But in the Normal Schools, as at present generally conducted, the past studies are begun, as if at the beginning. The course now in its early stage is one of strict accurate review, with all the explanation on the part of the teachers, and exactitude of expression on the part of the pupils, which shall enable them to teach with the strictest accuracy, and thus in their turn give to their scholars precise information, and so form in their tender minds the habit of accurate description; and this will be of no small importance in their continuing the same habit in the truth-telling experiences of their subsequent life.

But the second end to be gained in this course has the more direct bearing on their profession. This is the methods of teaching. The daily drill on the once learned studies, and others perhaps newly taken up, prepares them for the effective discharge of the duties of their own school rooms. This repetition of address to the elementary branches on the part of the preparing teacher, makes the progress of the little pupils in the districts the more easy and rapid, because their instructors teach intelligibly; and "knowledge is easy to him that understandeth." It is the same in the higher branches which, so far as may be in harmony with the main design, should come into the course. They are taught so as to be understood; and the methods are inculcated whereby the same branches may be imparted effectually in the proper fields of labor. The idea is constantly kept in view that not only, or so much, is the attainment of knowledge to be aimed at, as the best mode in which *expression* can be given to that knowledge. This result is contemplated as coming from the direct action of the normal teachers, and still more from the practice of their pupils in becoming by turns teachers of the class or sections of the class to which they belong, or of others not as yet equally far advanced. This is done in the presence of the regular instructors, so that any correction or suggestion may be given when needed. Thus theory and practice are combined.

Three particulars have been urged in the Normal School as essential to the success of the pupil proposing to become a teacher—attainment, memory, and expression. The first is to be made by attention in study; the second, which is to receive the acquired treasures, is to be strengthened in its grasp and power by repetition; and the third by practice. If there be no study, or but little, the attainment will be the same. If memory does not hold the acquisitions, the toil and time are in effect wasted. But if both these antecedent conditions are fulfilled, then the third comes forward as essential to the success of the teacher. He may have all the qualifications of the first two; but if he have not the power to communicate of the wealth in his mind, he will never make his own scholars intellectually rich by receiving from him, nor develop under his imperfect guidance the wealth hidden in their own minds. He must gain this ability by exercise. In his recitations he must learn to give more than monosyllabic answers, and teachers should aid them in presenting questions or requiring statements, connected with the lessons, which demand an expansion of the thought into language of clearness and point. He will be aided by gaining readiness in written compositions. He will too become accustomed to the sound of his own voice before the school,—the want of which custom is often a hindrance herein,—by clear and distinct reading, and especially declamations. By this cultivation of the voice much aid is imparted to the power to bring out before the class the thoughts pertinent to each rising degree of their improvement.

Another useful form of expression is a readiness at demonstration at the blackboard. It is here he can awaken new interest hourly, if he can easily and rapidly transfer his thoughts to the visible shape of chalk lines, whether in equations, diagrams, maps, botanic outlines, or the varied forms of mineral crystals, or indeed any of the descriptions, whether in word or figures, that will be constantly occurring in the routine of his work. He must in both ways, in word and act, be able to tell what he knows in the way suited to the stage of advancement of his pupils; or he will find dullness apparent on their countenances and show discouragement, perhaps fretfulness on his own.

In the hope of securing the results sought for in this part of my report the following arrangement of studies, as already intimated, was proposed soon after the close of the first year, and having

been duly considered, was adopted for future guidance. It will be found to bear a favorable comparison with the plans devised in other like institutions, and will be changed and enlarged as experience and expected profit may indicate.

COURSE OF STUDY.

FIRST YEAR.

First and Second Terms.

Mental Arithmetic with special reference to Methods of Analysis; Written Arithmetic and Algebra; English Grammar with Symbolical Analysis; Geography with Map Drawing; Reading with Analysis of Sounds.

Third Term.

Written Arithmetic and Algebra; English Grammar (completed); Geography (completed); Reading; Chemistry; Physiology; Geometry.

SECOND YEAR.

First Term.

Written Arithmetic and Algebra; Chemistry and Physiology (completed); Geometry and Trigonometry; U. S. History and Constitution; Natural Philosophy; Logic.

Second Term.

Algebra; Constitution of the United States; General History; Natural Philosophy; Mineralogy and Geology; English Literature.

Third Term.

General History; English Literature; Astronomy; Mental and Moral Philosophy; School Laws; Theory and Art of Teaching.

Spelling, Writing, Drawing, Rhetoric and Compositions, Vocal Music, Calisthenics and Declamations, throughout the Course.

Book-keeping will be taught in connection with Writing, and Botany in Object Lessons throughout the Course.

Students are called upon to give Teaching Exercises adapted to different classes of pupils, and are held responsible as Section Leaders in Class Recitations, under the direction of the Instructors.

Qualifications for Entrance.

A brief inspection of this programme for two years will show that the more thoroughly the applicants for admission are prepared to engage in the duties, the more rapid, pleasant and satisfactory will be their acquisitions. It would be well if all the studies here laid down were familiar to the new comers before their entrance; so that nothing more might be sought from our teachers than the best methods of imparting their own knowledge, and thus restrict the Normal course to the period of one year. But in the present state of our educational interests, we cannot do better than to carry

out the present plan. Hence the terms of admission have been fixed, as sent in a circular last July to all the Superintending Committees in the State; in which it was required that "applicants for admission to the first year will be expected to show such attainments in Reading, Spelling, Writing, Arithmetic, and the Geography of the Western Continent, and the History of the United States, as will enable them to enter with profit on the studies proposed; and to present testimonials of good character and a prospective aptitude to teach."

If they bring fuller preparation than is here expressed their own profit in the course will be proportionally benefited.

Female Teachers.

In deciding on the plan for the appointment of teachers special reference was had to the great preponderance of female pupils over those of the opposite sex. This preponderance is not peculiar to this institution. It is quite as marked elsewhere; and the fact that in Massachusetts, where two Normal Schools are devoted to the tuition of females exclusively, and two others to both sexes, shows how the cause of education is going into the hands of the gentler sex; and the more so when in the mixed schools the male attendants are scarcely more than one fourth of the whole number.

It is hardly worth the while to go into the statistics to show how by degrees, where the Common School system prevails, the female teachers have been year after year displacing the males, who in former years occupied most of the ground. The Superintendent of Public Instruction in Kansas has done this satisfactorily, and shows that the cause of education has been no loser. He says, "To some it may seem an unaccountable fact, that while this rapid displacement of male teachers from Maine to Kansas has been going on, the schools have constantly been growing better. To us this is no mystery." He then assigns as among the prominent reasons, that woman has more patience, more love for children, has a taste for the employment, and greater facility of adaptation to the varieties of thought and disposition; and in the government of the larger scholars succeeds "by the only way in which government can be permanently established, namely, by kindness and love."

The fearful necessities of the late war may have borne much influence on producing this disparity. But it began long before the

claims of that calamity were laid on our young men. As it exists, it is but the dictate of true wisdom to give the best education to the female teacher, into whose directing powers the course of events has been gradually placing the instruction of the young. Our Normal School is the most favorable of our instrumentalities for accomplishing this purpose. Under its training influences the various qualities which are to be combined in teaching and governing, are receiving their proper developement; and as it has been judiciously remarked in an American work on education, "The little children hang around her, anxious to know her wishes, and desirous of being first to please her; and the 'great big boys,' those terrors of pedagoguedom, on whom schoolmasters always look with trembling, speak to her in the blandest tones, and with their more solid acquirements, receive from her lessons of gentleness, which give beauty and character to their future career."

Diploma.

It is provided in the fifth section of the act establishing Normal Schools, that when students therein shall have completed the course of study prescribed, they shall receive a diploma certifying the same. This subject is here referred to for the purpose of showing that the school can assume no more than its proper responsibilities. It may occur that a pupil, who has given attendance to only a single term, may go forth as a candidate for a school; and among his qualifications may appear the fact that he has been receiving the benefit of this system of instruction. But he may fail in his efforts, both in teaching and in discipline, and the Normal School may receive censure for sending out unqualified teachers. Now the Principal and the assistants in this institution are not to be held accountable for any such misfortune, and, with the Superintendent, only give their promise of the success of their pupils when they have satisfactorily completed the course of study, as recognized in the section of the law referred to above. Their responsibility in this particular does not commence until the proper signatures are affixed to the proposed testimonial.

In accordance with the plan of study, it is evident that this testimonial can be granted only when the proper attendance has been given through the three terms of each of the two years, or for as much time as will be an equivalent, and suited to the acquirement of the knowledge proposed in the course. It has not as yet

been possible for all the students to be present consecutively during the terms already elapsed ; as in some instances of the most commendable interest and industry, it has been necessary for some of the number to be absent to earn the means for returning to these cherished pursuits. But it will only be a fair application of the rule, to give the diploma to such candidates for its honor as shall, whether continuously or with interruptions, have accomplished the intended plan of study. Confidence will be held toward such graduates, that they will go forth to fulfil their work and be well qualified to redeem the pledge given at their entrance, that they would engage as teachers in the State for a period bearing a due proportion to the length of time in which they had received the benefit of the institution created by public liberality. The well qualified instructors will give this requirement an honest interpretation. If any are not well fitted under the tuition and all its helps, or are disposed to evade the obligation, the community can well dispense with the trial of their disqualifications, in learning, in principle, and the want of gratitude to the State.

Wants Unsupplied.

Want is a condition more or less co-existent with human affairs. Like the life of the infant, the incipient age of all institutions of learning require a special care and supply which are not needed when the plan is matured and desired means are provided, when success has removed all lingering doubt, and certainty gives confidence to their future movements. Some of these wants in the early stage of this enterprise would seem to need immediate attention, if not for their full supply, at least for the commencement of a supply, which may at once begin to diffuse its benefit to the minds of the persons for whom they are primarily intended, and through them to the schools of the State.

In his report to the Superintendent, the Principal remarks—
 “Among these unsupplied necessities I number first, and as of primary importance, *Books of Reference*.

“No literary institution can attain to much excellence without a good *Reference Library*, thoroughly and constantly consulted by its teachers and students. This is truth established, and needs not to be argued. Rob Bowdoin, Yale or Harvard of its Library, or once let the professors and students connected with those institutions cease, to consult the standard authors, whose volumes have

been preserved for the inspiration of the poet and the scholar, and what and where would be Harvard, and Yale and Bowdoin? And is the Normal School,—the school that has been established for the training of teachers,—an exception to this requirement?"

As an encouragement for hope in this direction, it is a pleasant duty to record that Professor Alpheus Crosby, late Principal of the Normal School at Salem, Mass., has made a donation of nearly a hundred volumes of valuable educational works. By this gift he has added a highly welcome and useful auxiliary to the labors of our teachers, of which the service will not pass away with the day of their reception, but will continue to do good to coming classes for a long period of years. Many of the benevolent gifts in life appear and pass away with the occasion which called them forth. But the endowment of a Library, suited to the wants of the community where it is placed, is like the planting of the tree, whose fruit will return year after year to nourish and gladden many generations.

Our small library is also furnished with "Barnard's Journal of Education," and most of the volumes which compose the "Teacher's Library."

But other works are needed to complete the purpose of furnishing the proper instruction. If private munificence, either individually or collectively, would give the assistance, as has been done elsewhere, its first and rich recompense would be the luxury of doing good. But if we can gain no relief from this quarter, we must solicit the State thus to contribute to the educational interests for which the school is laboring. An annual appropriation of no very large sum would, in a few years, secure the object proposed. Yet a larger sum at once granted would the more speedily give the desired aid to the inquiring mind. "Let the friends of the institution," says the report already referred to, "be assured that the young men and women whom they send from their several districts, will make good use of every facility which they afford them; and that a small sum thus invested in books, which remain the property of the State, will return to them, through their representatives in this school, in awakened intellect around their own hearth-stones." It may be added that whatever apparatus may help to explain the different departments of study will be cordially received and gratefully acknowledged. Minerals, shells and other specimens of natural history and objects of interest and curiosity will be always welcome.

Text-Books.

The transition from the desired library to the desired text-books is easy. These are necessary to the true and efficient working of the system. A proper supply of the implements for the work is essential to the success of the workman.

The impression has been made rather widely that the text-books are furnished at the expense of the State. This is an error. The State, as yet, has afforded no such supply. A large number of these books are in the possession of the school, and the use of them is allowed without cost to the students. The private liberality of the teachers, (surely this ought not to have been expected of them) has supplied a part, because in the absence of other aid, they felt the demand of their own personal action. Another part came from the interest of book publishers, to bring their volumes into notice. A sufficient number of text-books should always be on hand to supply the needs of pupils, whose pecuniary ability is only sufficient to pay the necessary expenses of board; and who with this aid may make the best of teachers. For such a want as this the State may be solicited to furnish the relief. But *all* the books required in the course are not furnished free of expense to the pupils, and probably never will be. It certainly will be better for the pupils to own the books, through the aid of which the exacting and effective teaching of this school prepares them for their future calling. They will carry with them to their work the valuable treatises, and the interesting associations, which have been combined, in their preparation for prospering in their calling. These few volumes should be the beginning of a collection of works on education, which will give them, as their employment goes on, increased facilities in the instruction and the management of their schools.

The School Building.

This structure, conveniently arranged in relation to its rooms for the general gathering and the special recitations, is creditable to the taste and skill of the persons under whose guidance it has been brought forward to answer the present purpose, in prospect of its thorough completion according to its original design. If the school is enlarged as is now the fair expectation, some considerable attention must be paid to the wants necessarily arising. Additional black-boards will be needed. The heating apparatus will want

a larger power ; and under any circumstances of numbers the recitation rooms need tightening, to exclude the cold air of the wintry winds. It is however doing good service. It is already, and when it is completed and its grounds are enlarged, will be much more than now, an ornament to the attractive village in which it stands a conspicuous object, and worthy to have a place in the scenery and among the intelligent population of Farmington.

Benefits of Normal Education.

Upon this subject much may be said. But that much may be condensed into a short space. Experience in all the States where it has been introduced has borne uniform testimony in its favor ; and in the States where the system has not been introduced, the Superintendents and the leaders of their educational interests are urging the measures for its early adoption. Extracts from their reports might be given in abundance to sustain the like testimony given in the report of the last year. There are institutions suited to prepare candidates for the practice of the law, medicine, and the sacred duties of the ministry, and an apprenticeship is always deemed the best preparative for the skill of the merchant and the artisan. Surely it is the profoundest common sense to require that the persons who are to be the teachers of all these and other classes, while their minds are in the formative state and preparing for their future occupation, should have an equal discipline, to fit them to train the faculties, and direct them into the right channel, when it is as easy to do this as to turn the stream into the chosen course when it is leaving its fountain. Opposition indeed has been raised up against the system in the States referred to. But time and success have confirmed it in its hold on the minds of the people. In none has it been abandoned. As an example of this interest, the school in Connecticut may be selected, where "the Trustees request an appropriation of \$6,000, as in their opinion necessary to maintain the school properly." * * * "At this amount of expense to the State it would then be the cheapest Normal School in the country." Yet this amount reaches to more than twice the annual cost of ours to the State, under the present scale of expenditure ; and this too for a number of pupils there for the year somewhat smaller than has attended our school in this first year and a third of its existence. The Superintendent has the pleasure to think that there are none who wish it less than the

continuance and the increase of its present prosperity. To take a backward step now, away from its maintenance, would be a step—and a long and sad one too—towards the regions of ignorance.

Conclusion.

The last words of this portion of my Report will be of acknowledgment to your Excellency and those members of the honorable Council who compose the Committee on the Normal School, for your and their kind and uniform readiness to promote the work; and to its friends throughout the State, whose countenance has largely contributed to bring it to its present promising condition; and to solicit for the Principal and the earnest teachers associated with him in these labors, the cordial sympathy and coöperation of the friends of education, who have learned or are learning the value of the improved methods of teaching here imparted. In this cause there can be but one great aim, the highest welfare of the young. Parents, guardians, teachers and the taught have but one purpose, though it may be variant in its reward.

REGISTER OF THE STATE NORMAL SCHOOL AT FARMINGTON.

For the Fall Term ending Nov. 28, 1865.

NORMAL COMMITTEE OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:

HON. HIRAM RUGGLES of Penobscot, *Chairman.*
HON. CHARLES HOLDEN of Cumberland.
HON. JAMES W. LYMAN of Washington.

SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS:

REV. EDWARD BALLARD, D. D., of Brunswick.

BOARD OF INSTRUCTION:

GEORGE M. GAGE, PRINCIPAL.
MISS SARAH R. SMITH, } ASSISTANTS.
MISS MARY B. SMITH, }
MISS MARY C. PACKARD, }

STUDENTS:

Names.	P. O. Address.	County.
GENTLEMEN:		
Bailey, Melburn W. C.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Bisbee, Charles M.	Canton,	Oxford.
Blazo, Amos	Porter,	"
Boston, Charles A.	Avon,	Franklin.
Bowie, Greenfield H.	Durham,	Androscoggin.
Chadbourne, Francis F.	Waterboro' Centre,	York.
Ferguson, John F.	Shapleigh,	"
Ferguson, George A.	"	"
Gammon, Fairfield	Canton,	Oxford.
Hammons, Everett	Bethel,	"

STUDENTS—CONTINUED.

Names.	P. O. Address.	County.
Hastings, M. A.	Bethel,	Oxford.
Hayes, Edmund	Farmington,	Franklin.
Hayes, Mellen	"	"
Holbrook, Lorenzo L.	Starks,	Somerset.
Jackson, John	Alfred,	York.
Knapp, Jerome B.	N. New Portland,	Somerset.
Lash, James W.	Waldoboro',	Lincoln.
Norton, Samuel R.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Perkins, William S.	"	"
Rackliff, E. A. R.	Industry,	"
Randall, H. A.	Dixfield,	Oxford.
Randall, Paul C.	West Harpswell,	Cumberland.
Roberts, John G.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Rogers, Osgood W.	Windham,	Cumberland.
Sewall, Elmer C.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Stanley, A. D.	"	"
Stackpole, George F.	Lebanon,	York.
Sweet, John A.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Taylor, Austin W.	Byron,	Oxford.
Taylor, Stephen	"	"
Tozier, Orlando	Anson,	Somerset.
Tukey, Alonzo P.	Windham,	Cumberland.
Walker, Stephen W.	Anson,	Somerset.
Waterman, Ozro A.	Hope,	Knox.
Woodbury, Rolliston	Sweden,	Oxford.
LADIES.		
Abbott, Mittie M. B.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Albee, Julia B.	Portland,	Cumberland.
Atkinson, Hattie	Farmington,	Franklin.
Bailey, Sarah R. C.	"	"
Bisbee, Maria H.	Canton,	Oxford.
Bixby, Electa W.	Anson,	Somerset.
Bixby, Eula P.	"	"
Bradbury, Vesta E.	Chesterville,	Franklin.
Bugbee, Mary R.	North Perry,	Washington.
Clark, Emma	Farmington,	Franklin.
Clark, Elizabeth S.	"	"
Craig, Mary	Island Falls,	Aroostook.
Curtis, Sarah S.	Mercer,	Somerset.
Davis, Lucia A.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Dennis, Eva	E. New Portland,	Somerset.
Dennis, Malora	"	"
Dinsmore, Paulino	Madison,	Somerset.
Dow, Mary	Farmington,	Franklin.
Dyer, Susan M.	New Sharon,	"
Dyer, Percia L.	West Freeman,	"
Evans, M. Augusta	Athens,	Somerset.
Floyd, Ada M.	Winthrop,	Kennebec.
French, Luella B.	Chesterville,	Franklin.
Freeman, Emma J.	Manchester,	Kennebec.
Fuller, Sylvia K.	St. Albans,	Somerset.
Furbush, Jennie S.	Wilton,	Franklin.
Goding, Clara	North Livermore,	Androscoggin.
Goodwin, Mary L.	Dresden,	Lincoln.
Harris, Joanna W.	New Sharon,	Franklin.
Hayes, Ellen M.	Farmington,	"
Huse, Abbie L.	"	"
Knapp, Frances E.	N. New Portland,	Somerset.
Knowlton, Emily	Brunswick,	Cumberland.
Leland, Ella A.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Leland, Emma C.	"	"
Lewis, Hannah	"	"
Lord, Mary O.	Springvale,	York.

STUDENTS—CONTINUED.

Names.	P. O. Address.	County.
Lowell, Julia E.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Marvell, Flora A.	"	"
Morrill, M. Emma	Farmington Falls,	Franklin.
Morton, Ella	N. New Portland,	Somerset.
Norton, S. Frances	Farmington,	Franklin.
Park, Clara E.	Chesterville,	"
Parsons, Adella C.	North Chesterville,	"
Pearce, Anna D.	Eastport,	Washington.
Perkins, Martha T.	Bath,	Sagadahoc.
Rackliff, V. Addie	Industry,	Franklin.
Randall, Kate B.	Farmington,	"
Rich, Ruth G.	Canton,	Oxford.
Ripley, M. Nettie	Farmington,	Franklin.
Robertson, Abbie	St. Albans,	Somerset.
Sewall, Carrie E.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Spooner, Ada A.	New Portland,	Somerset.
Spooner, Theresa C.	"	"
Sprague, Dora A.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Stevens, Addie R.	Lewiston,	Androscoggin.
Stevens, Etta P.	"	"
Stewart, Hannah B.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Stimans, Mary E.	N. New Portland,	Somerset.
Swan, Olive H.	New Sharon,	Franklin.
Sweet, Lizzie M.	Farmington,	"
Tarbox, Josephine L.	Westport,	Lincoln.
Taylor, Frances E.	Norridgewock,	Somerset.
Tenney, M. Abbie	St. Albans,	"
Thayer, Sarah C.	Mechanic Falls,	Androscoggin.
Tobey, Susan K.	East Machias,	Washington.
Toothaker, Olivia M.	East Holden,	Penobscot.
Tufts, Flora A.	Farmington,	Franklin.
Tyler, Marcine G.	West Durham,	Androscoggin,
Vaughan, Mira Q.	Farmington Falls,	Franklin.
Walker, S. Priscilla	New Sharon,	"
Walton, Mindwell	Farmington,	"
Whittier, E. Vodisa	Farmington Falls,	"
Wyman, Emma S.	Strong,	"
Wyman, Lucy M.	"	"

	Gentlemen, 35.	Ladies, 75.	Total, 110.
SPRING TERM—	Gentlemen, 6.	Ladies, 32.	Total, 38.
	Total for last two Terms,		148.

The Winter Term of ten weeks will begin on the Wednesday after Thanksgiving, December 13. After a vacation of two weeks the Spring Term will begin on Wednesday, March 7, and continue fourteen weeks. The Fall Term will begin so as to allow fourteen weeks to be completed before the Annual Thanksgiving. For information the Principal may be addressed at Farmington.

COMMON SCHOOLS.

The Superintendency.

The office of the Superintendent of the Common Schools in this State became vacant at the expiration of the last year, and remained in that condition until about the middle of last May. In consequence of the late day of the present incumbent's appointment, his report of the general character and welfare of the cause, entrusted to his charge, cannot be made as fully or satisfactorily as it could have been, if he had had a longer experience in the duties of the office, especially in its details; and a wider acquaintance with the affairs of public education in the State at large. Hardly a week however has passed without his having come in contact with schools in different towns in the State. A long and systematic visitation has been made to many of the seaboard portions of the eastern counties; and where schools were not in session, as well as where they were, acquaintance was made with the Superintending Committees, and the subjects suited to the design of the visits were proposed mutually and it is believed were profitably discussed. Many addresses have been made to the children, gathered in their school-rooms, adapted to their various ages and proficiency; and all needed attention was given to make his efforts easy, for his entrance into the places of instruction and his communication with the teachers and pupils. In these respects he has had no wish ungranted.

Our Common School System.

The parental interests of the State require that all the children thereof should have such an education, as may fit them for the right fulfilment of their social and moral duties as good citizens; and have always recognized the influence of the principles of religion as giving sanction to the efforts conducive to this end. In accordance with this requirement of self preservation and progress, legal provision has long been made for the establishment of public schools, where all may share the equal advantages of their locality, and the taxation of property for their support has been their undisputed right. A long term of years, and the impulse given by the

earlier example of other States, have led to the gradual but sure progress of our system ; though in many instances the movements, for increased facilities of securing easier and more rapid improvement, have been contested with earnestness, but have been allowed to be profitable when fairly brought to the trial of experience. Our State has partaken liberally of the spirit that designs to enlarge the true wealth of our people, by adding imperishable treasures to their minds ; by preparing the young with good moral principles and intellectual furniture for engagement in the business of life with the fair prospect of success, and by their conduct here, and, in the regions to which the path of enterprise may lead their way, bear a living testimony to the excellence of our institutions, and their power to form the character and direct the energies of the young to gain the best prizes of our times.

Teachers' Institute.

The legislation of the State, having withdrawn the appropriation for the encouragement and support of Teachers' Institutes in the several counties, left to this class of persons the alternative of the loss of the mutual improvement derived from these gatherings, or the responsibility of continuing their benefit by individual energy and expense. There are many of the number who know the profit of these assemblages ; who have much regretted the loss of their support from the public funds ; and there are some who have made successful effort to secure a continuance of the meetings.

The teachers in Somerset county deserve much credit for their zeal in this direction. They have come together as heretofore. They have formed an association, published a report of their proceedings, with a list of its officers and members ; and assessed themselves for the expenses of the occasion and the publication. These efforts have had the tendency to bind the enterprising teachers in that county together in a body, animated by a good spirit in behalf of the Common Schools of that large district, as well as the whole State. The encouragement received from each other has maintained their interest in this associated relation, and leads them still to hope that the State will furnish some pecuniary aid, at least sufficient to defray the necessary expenses of holding their meetings.

A meeting of the teachers of both sexes in this county was held in the latter part of August at Norridgewock. Though not as

large as had in some instances been known when the State gave its patronage, it was nevertheless sufficiently well attended to show the earnestness which has heretofore characterized the interest in that county. The Superintendent was present through the principal part of the days occupied in its concerns. He engaged in the discussions; took part in giving methods of instruction; and having commenced his connection with it by an introductory address suggested principally by the occasion and its purpose, afterwards delivered a more formal lecture on some of the requisites for successful teaching. The meeting was made the more interesting by remarks offered by William Allen, Esq., of the same town; who, now at a very advanced period of life, gave an account of schools, school books, and teaching from his own far distant experience, and thence showed the progress along the course of time, and the high comparative position of schools, books and teachers at the present day. Thence he drew the inference of the responsibility of improvement in proportion to the great increase of privileges. The clerical gentlemen of the town also took part in the several sessions, and added much to their interest and profit; as did also several of the teachers. The effect of the whole was regarded as well adapted to further the spirit and action of instructors, and to carry new energy into the schools, where their knowledge and tact are to be applied.

Another spontaneous movement of a similar kind was commenced at Bucksport, at the end of October. This was mainly accomplished by the efforts of a few persons of that town, earnest in the cause. Teachers came in from towns in the neighborhood. The Superintendent was present, and at the first meeting made an introductory address on the duties connected with the teacher's vocation; and also at a later stage delivered a lecture having special reference to the cultivation of the power of retaining the results of study. Aid was also given in lectures by clerical gentlemen interested in the present undertaking and its objects, who, with the teachers, engaged in the discussions on subjects previously proposed, and the means of securing success; and also in giving instruction to a class of teachers. Two classes from the Grammar School of the village were presented by the teacher on invitation, and the mode of instruction and recitation was laid open for subsequent remark; which proved to be generally commendatory. So satisfactory were the incipency, progress and result of this

meeting, that the desire was expressed, which ripened into the intention, to renew the movement the next year.

While the Normal School must of its very nature hold the pre-eminent place for preparing teachers for their work, the holding of Institutes will have a claim for an ability to do a portion of its service, in adding to the power to impart better instruction. But as the opportunity can continue but a few days and once in the year, of course its utility is equally circumscribed. Nevertheless as this utility has been proved, and as conference among teachers, and debates and lectures strengthen and encourage their zeal and power, they are worthy of some support from legislative aid. The incidental expenses of this meeting were defrayed by a collection made from the teachers and the audience, which it is gratifying to record was large on every occasion, and on some crowded.

Graded Schools.

A division of labor and its adaptation to the special objects to be accomplished has long been regarded as the most efficient mode of effecting a required result, whether it be the making of a pin, an anchor, a locomotive engine or a ship to cross the ocean. It is equally useful in training the minds which are to engage in any of the occupations of life. A personal acquaintance with graded schools for near a quarter of a century has led me to regard them with favor, as coming under "a division of labor." By this arrangement one teacher is not required to teach everything. But the schools are regulated according to the attainment of the scholars. Teachers are selected with special reference to their qualifications to give the instruction needed in each of the grades. There are, unfortunately for this useful purpose, some towns where the population is so widely spread apart, that the schools must be necessarily small, and the instructors must be prepared to teach the alphabet, and it may be all other pursuits to the higher mathematics. But where the population is compact and large enough for this division, there it should have a place; and the profit of the system would begin with its introduction and continue and ever increase in proportion to the liberal zeal and good policy cherished and exhibited toward this wise distribution of labor. It has been with a very great degree of satisfaction that visits have been made to several towns where this system is in practice; to find it sustained by the intelligent portion of their communities, and to witness the

benefit thus flowing out in annual streams to enrich the common mind. The statistics as returned hardly give a fair view of the actual number of the towns where the grades have been established, as in some instances no mention is made, where the system is known to be in most promising condition ; in others the number of districts where it is at work is stated ; and in others still the whole number of schools thus arranged in a single district. An actual inspection of these schools reveals more than incomplete statistics can tell ; and this testimony is abundant in commendation of graded schools, in the places where the compactness of the inhabitants will admit the arrangement, and indeed properly require the contemplated classification. Opposition still lingers here and there on the ground of expense mainly. But the prevailing sentiment, where the plan has been long and most fairly tried, is that that the benefit to the children of the people more than equals the dollars spent.

High Schools.

These necessarily come from the graded schools ; as the most advanced studies and older scholars must claim a preëminence, whether they are only the higher parts of an English course, or embrace Latin, Greek and French. But in some places where, in the want of sufficiently dense neighborhoods, there cannot be the several grades, found profitable in others, there still may be two ; and thus if not all the good of a complete system, yet a part of it can be found. The design of the State, enlightened for the interests of its future citizens, must always be to carry their education as far as the judicious expenditure of its resources will allow.

One benefit of this division is this : The High School keeps before the mind of the rising scholar, whether poor or rich, a standard of higher attainment for admission to its privileges. He will thus have an inducement, which wise parents will encourage, to rise to the expected measure of qualification. When he is admitted, the stimulus of a new teacher and new studies will be all the more likely to bear him onward in the right direction much farther than he could be carried by the old plan, where one teacher taught all possible studies, and often to classes made more numerous by the combination of individuals, than the individual scholars themselves.

Objections.

But an objection is sometimes heard against opening the system of Graded and High Schools, or indeed good schools of any kind, to the children of the poor; that they will be thus educated above their station. But can this position stand? Can it ever be the policy of the State, or a town or district, to withhold the opportunity for the poor to enrich their minds, because Providence has not allowed their parents to have wealth in their purse? Can any education, truly conducted, work an injury in producing the suggested discontentment? If it may make the growing scholar dissatisfied with his condition, can it be any harm for him to have the mental means for the endeavor to rise above his condition? All observation shows that a right education prepares a man for any condition. Society is always made better when true knowledge displaces ignorance. In our land no man can predict the future of his child's classmate in the school. We need not look far in our history to see how stations of the highest trust and responsibility have been gained by the sons of poverty, who have successfully battled against the opposing circumstances of their lives, and made good use of every advantage for their welfare as it arose in their path.

Allusion has been made to the increasing number of female teachers. Preparatory to this fact must be placed the previous fact, that many more female pupils than males continue through the course in our highest class of schools, while in the Primary, and the Intermediate stages, the number continues about equal. The diminution of the latter begins in the Grammar School. In the last year of the graduated course, the former are usually much in the ascendancy, if not bearing the honors of persistent study all alone. Thus the girls are coming to be the best educated, in proportion as our system is allowed to be neglected by the boys.

The mutability of human opinion is an interesting if not a profitable study. It is quite as marked in regard to the interest in female education as in many other things. In the latter part of the last century in the public schools of Boston only boys were allowed to be taught. In 1789 measures were taken for "instructing both sexes." But now, as if to gain a compensation for the former inattention to their intellectual wants, the females are apparently so going in advance of the pupils of the opposite sex, as to raise the objection against our mode of education, that it is raising the at-

tainments of the daughters of the land to such a height, as to make them look above the circle where they have moved, for their future associations in life. But as this objection is more in words than in reality, it needs to be noticed only to remove one of the aspersions against a better system of education than what satisfied the community a hundred or even fifty years ago. If it be true that the one sex is receiving a better education than the other whose is the fault? Can the blame fall anywhere so properly as on the parents, who allow the neglect or the misuse of the school-room and its auxiliaries; who too early yield to the impetuous claims of the boy to become a man, while yet in his early "teens," and so shut out of his mind the information and the intellectual discipline, which, while they might delay his entering on his manhood until the legal age had arrived, would make him "more a man" when he entered on its duties at the right time and with the right qualifications?

The true working of the system is to raise all the young community together to a higher grade of culture and attainment than has been reached by their predecessors. Where all are elevated in proportion to their ability there will be no more difference than existed when our schools were in their worst condition. For even then some were educated above others. This process of improving the whole has been going on through the past century, though by no means as near perfection as it can be brought. If any one will compare the state of learning in the most favored parts of our commonwealth in the early part of its history, he will easily find, from existing documents, that the leading men of those times had not the correctness or extent of information that would qualify a teacher now for a district school, and that people generally were in these particulars below the average of our grammar schools. This was no fault of theirs. They tried to remedy it for their posterity, and that posterity have been gradually profiting by their efforts and those of their successors. Let it be our part to keep the improvement in motion, and so to sustain the schools of our day, that all their members may at the least be able to instruct a district school well.

It is not all of the present life to learn *how* to gain wealth, or to *gain* it. In our country distinction comes through this success, and it is not a wonder that the majority make its attainment their aim. But we should have another purpose; and that is to know how to enjoy it when gained, with comfort to the owners thereof

and benevolence where needed. The want of a proper early education detracts from the means of this happiness. We not seldom hear it said, by way of another objection to the enlargement of the benefits of school instruction, that the want of early education did not hinder the success of such men as Astor and Girard, and therefore all beyond the simplest elements are useless. But we can point to such men as the striking examples to prove the contrary. When they had as if controlled circumstances, and made fortune subservient, they knew not how to reap the true result from their prosperity. But at the age of forty-two, Franklin was wise enough by his diligence in study, to know how to enjoy the competence which was then his own. He knew how to turn from the cares of business to the pursuits of science. From these pleasures he could give his cultivated thought to the service of his country, and knew how to apply his attainments, both mental and material, to the public good. But if he had given the days of his youth and mature manhood only to making money, who would have ever heard of Franklin, as the promoter of science, the judicious statesman and the benefactor of the world? If men are energetic in mind, at the same time that they are untrained in lettered culture, they cannot be idle; and so they go on in the mill horse round of usual toil, and add thousands, it may be millions, to their properties, which may benefit or harm thankful or thankless inheritors. But they will have anxious hours by day and by night, and toil on as Girard did by day, only that he might by fatigue compel sleep to come to him in the darkness. But their treasures do not make them happy, hardly useful, while their day lasts. When old age arrives, they have no inward wealth to fall back upon; and may regret in vain the want of the education which they could not or would not have. It is well that they sometimes make their regrets the motive to do better for their children and society; encourage schools, endow literary institutions, found libraries, and engage in other benefactions; which show their value of the learning which they wish to be spread for the welfare of society.

Permanent Teachers.

All that can be written under this head, has doubtless been thought of, spoken of, and printed by all officers in charge of schools, whose position enables them to see and estimate their ever-recurring wants. In the more than four thousand districts

belonging in the State, a very large number of teachers annually begin their experience in this most useful and honorable department of life. A few only as yet have enjoyed the profit of a course of Normal instruction. Others have had the discipline of an academy or high school, for a longer or shorter time. Some have had a partial or a completed course in a college. But a large part enter on their duties with no other preparation than what may be gathered in our common schools; in too many instances to perpetuate their imperfections, already derived it may be from ancestral generations. They may indeed have sufficient literary qualifications to satisfy the examining committee, and so be in advance of their scholars. But these conditions are not enough to ensure their power to organize classes judiciously, or direct the discipline of the school-room wisely.

For the want of any experience beyond that of a learner, they enter on the work with no well determined plan for their own guidance. No course of studies has been provided. Classes may be as numerous as scholars and even more so; and books so different as to hinder a proper application of their time. It is not to be a matter of surprise then that often the first term of the teacher's work may fail to fulfil its purpose. But experience comes by practice, and with it comes the power of learning how to regard dispositions and capabilities; how to encourage and stimulate; how to commend and to censure with a proper discrimination. This combination of knowledge with experience makes the true teacher; and hence comes the utility of securing permanent teachers, and their continuance in the same schools. Too many, perhaps for their own sakes but not for the lasting good of the pupils, use this vocation only as a help to another in prospect; and while often in this way much good is done as we are passing along, yet the continuance of the good teacher in his office in the same place would tend largely to develop the still latent power of our school system. The frequent change of teachers, like the long vacations, is nearly equivalent to the loss of the first two or three weeks of the term or until the relations of the governing and studying portions of the school are duly known and fixed. So highly is this benefit of permanent teachers regarded in the neighboring province of New Brunswick, that the Superintendent of Public Instruction there has deemed it right to suggest the expediency of erecting comfortable dwelling houses for their teachers, in the hope that thereby

persons would be induced to make teaching their profession, by having homes offered to them to enjoy as long as they are faithful in their duties to the young. Of course we do not expect to do this. But this reference illustrates the want and one mode of meeting it. We shall be able to find our relief when teachers are willing to make their work to be their profession, and are paid a compensation in proportion to the cost of their preparation, and the actual worth of their services.

Absences.

An inspection of the returns in the blanks sent from the office of the Secretary of State, shows a marked difference between the number of scholars registered, and the number recorded as in actual attendance. This discrepancy may find its explanation in the fact that some of these scholars are taught in private schools and academies, or are sent out of the State to find certain advantages, which are supposed to be inaccessible nearer home. Some too doubtless go to trades, where they can prepare for their future occupations in life. It may also be found in another fact, more to be lamented, that parents are prone to take their children from school for the purposes of the profit to be derived from their labor, at a time when their powers are most adapted to treasure up the best of riches in their own minds. This may be the result of necessity; but sometimes, it may be feared, this cause of injury to the mind by leaving it vacant of knowledge, comes from a less honorable motive, that of cupidity.

But in either case, the temptation to withdraw scholars from the school-room, for single days or for weeks of the term on which they have entered, is a strong one when a sum of money can be realized from their labor and skill, sufficient to go largely to their support and the comfort of a family. The fisheries, the factories, the season of berries, the driving of the dumping-cart, the claims of hay-making and other pressing employments offering good pay, have had their influence in causing the loss of tuition by absence from the place where it is given. But it would be well for parents to consider carefully whether it is good policy in "the long run" to enrich the pocket at the expense of impoverishing the mind; and whether it would not be better to persevere in the education, even at the expense of self-denial, when the education would return the largest interest to compensate for the apparent loss of a portion of money.

This habit of taking children from school at busy intervals, and still more of removing pupils, especially boys, from school at the best age for their improvement, is having the effect to render a continuance at school up to the ages of fifteen, sixteen or seventeen an unfashionable occupation. The idea of going into business at these years is flattering. A boy becomes a man in his own view at a step. He looks with a feeling of conscious superiority over his school-mates, who are content to plod on in the toils of the school-room, while he is clad in his new suit, ready to take the cars and go, but incompletely equipped with mental implements, to reach the eminence which his imagination has placed in his view. He may have the success which unlettered ignorance sometimes reaches, only because he has the energy which masters all difficulties. But these instances are rare. Where they have occurred they have been of persons, who have been deprived of early opportunity, and have made the most of it for improvement whenever it afterwards came, rather than of such as have fled from the places where the mind could be trained, and gone to the toil of putting pennies into their purses.

On this subject there are teachers, as well as members of Committees, who bear the willing and strong testimony, "that a scholar who is absent one day in a week, in a term of ten or twelve weeks, loses one half the advantage of the school. Tardiness, the twin sister of absence, comes from the same source, viz: want of interest with the parents."

Excuses.

But there is still another loss of the benefits of the provided instruction, coming from the indulgence of parents in sending *excuses* to shield the scholar from the censure of the teacher, and the loss of his place in the class or rank in studies. The pupil is late and a recitation has passed by, when the rule requires punctuality; or he is absent from one or more sessions, when he should be constant in attendance; or certain employments have hindered him from learning the lesson assigned for an hour out of school. The written excuse comes. The censure is withheld, and the fond parent and the child are both placed under the mischievous effect of the persuasion that the lesson excused, and the place in the class thereupon retained, is about the same in its practical effect as if the lesson had been duly learned, recited and illustrated by the teacher's voice.

The statistics of these excuses would be surprising, indeed almost appalling, if they could be brought in from all the schools, as they have been privately presented to the Superintendent in answer to his inquiries of teachers in various parts of the State. It is not the absence alone that is to be lamented. But it is the satisfaction which steals into the mind that the excuse is all the same as a recitation, without considering that a recitation lost in the series of recitations is like the removal of a link from a chain. The connection between what was before with what follows is broken, and can never be replaced with the same profit to the mind, as if it had been made at the right time. In some instances this system of excuses has been so applied as to release a pupil from all the hard or unwelcome studies of the course; and at the end the complaint comes out that the school has been unprofitable. The blame is made to fall on the teacher, who has been helpless against parental interference. He must wait for his vindication to appear, when time will disclose the sad defects caused by willing absence from the school room, its duties and its profit.

The Superintendent cannot expect that his views on this subject will early, or perhaps ever, reach the minds of all the persons who might be benefited by a change of their own. But there are members of Committees and teachers, who have listened to his suggestions on this point of seductive mischief, and whose judgment and experience have fully coincided with his own. Absences are more than frequent enough, and surely are bad enough. But the excuse, which leads the pupils, little or great, to regard it as an equivalent for study, recitation and the attendant instruction, has an insidious effect to substitute a certain amount of neglect and therefore ignorance for a certain amount of knowledge, which cannot be possessed without diligence and attention, or perhaps in this relation it might be better said, *attendance*.

School Houses.

The number of these edifices erected in the past year is returned as *seventy*, at a cost of \$42,503.89. Bearing in remembrance the increased pressure of the times when the votes for their construction were passed, this number bears favorably in comparison with the *seventy-five* and *seventy-seven* of the previous two years, and speaks well for the progress of our cause. The example thus given is worthy of imitation in many other districts, in some of

which the places, where scholars are brought together to keep still on wearying seats, to shiver in the cold of winter and to study if they can, are enough to put to shame the wealthy property owners in the neighborhood, who are willing to allow the children of the district to assemble in tenements far less suited for the purposes of education, than their outhouses are for the shelter and growth of the beasts of the stall. Such school-buildings may prove that knowledge may be gained under difficulties; but how much more pleasantly, profitably and abundantly in rooms made attractive by good locality, convenience and warmth in winter, with some little attention at least to beauty of structure and shade trees; and especially to a proper introduction of fresh air to keep the mind awake.

School Agents.

An important duty devolves on the districts in the choice of their Agents, whose duties require the selection of teachers, the payment of wages, and the general care and comfort of school-houses. It is an office, like many others without pay, which is most often accepted with reluctance and laid down with pleasure. Sometimes it is held and conducted in contrariety to the views of Superintending Committees; and one instance is reported where the selectmen united with the Agent of a district and paid the wages to the teachers for eight weeks, though they had been dismissed from their positions by the Committee on the score of incompetency at the end of a little more than two weeks. A disorderly mode of action like this cannot have the approval of the friends of law and order. It sets an example before the scholars, that the law may be defied, when private judgment deems it wrong; and if one law, then more, until oaths are valueless, and secession tries to rule. Let districts choose the right men for agents, as well as towns the right committees; and let all act in harmony with the law. A careless agent will be likely to have a careless teacher and a cold school house, and the minds of the scholars will be little better cared for, than if they were at home,—perhaps not as well. The Agent should be selected because he knows how to do the duties of the office, and not because it is “his turn” to serve. Indeed, where can a man, in his relations to a district, do more good, than in securing good schools during the proper parts of the year?

School Money.

By Taxation, the amount of \$469,463.86 has been raised for Common Schools, as appears in the returns. Their incompleteness, however, furnishes ground for the belief, that a sum considerably larger than this has been devoted to the benefit of the young, as one of our largest inland cities, last year reporting \$8,500, fills the blank this year with the words "Appropriation not yet made." Several towns have not reported, which returned last year in the aggregate some thousands of dollars. But with all these abatements, the amount in this report is greater than that of the last year, by \$42,559.81.

Permanent School Fund, and the Bank Tax. As the financial affairs of the State in respect to the moneys directly under its control, will be reported as far as proper by the officer of the government having those affairs in his immediate charge, the Superintendent refers to that report, as the reliable source of information on these two subjects.

Money paid out of the State for Tuition. The returns here are unsatisfactory, and are generally estimates. Under the disadvantages of collecting statistics on this point, the amount is \$9,285.75. The inducements for seeking abroad the larger facilities for gaining accomplishments in addition to the solid studies of training at home, have long led to these expenditures; and even from the best schools of our country, not a few are sent to foreign shores to seek an improvement, which they suppose cannot be made without that absence and expense. The better we can make our schools, the less need will there be for seeking in other States the teaching, which we may and should be able to impart in our own.

School Books.

Many replies have been made to the inquiry "Would it not be well in your opinion to have a uniform series of School Books throughout the State?" Many of the returns have also been made without any notice of the question. Where answers have been given, they are in general favorable to uniformity, and given in a simple affirmative. Where a reason has been added, it has had relation to the expense of procuring a new set of books, where families remove to other towns. The fewer replies in the negative have been rather more demonstrative. Some have thought it would be most beneficial to the book-sellers. Another answer is

indefinite, saying, "It would be well, if they could be afforded as cheap." Another says, "We do not believe in the utility of the law;" and the last to be added here, declares emphatically, "No; unless it is desirable to force all the minds of the State to run precisely in the same groove." Thus it will be seen, that while there is a widely spread desire for uniformity, there is about the same extent of indifference, and a few instances of positive opposition. The statistics here to be added on this subject will show how far the activity of book agents, and the decisions of Committees have agreed, in the introduction of books, whose reputation has secured adoption, and whose excellence, if of a permanent character, will be likely to keep them long in their place, especially as our law forbids a change oftener than once in five years.

The following statement will exhibit with much fairness the names and numbers of the leading Text Books. Names are omitted where only one or two of a kind are used:

Arithmetics.—Greenleaf, 393; Colburn, 53; Robinson, 8.

Readers.—Town's, and Progressive, 370; Sargent, 22; Hillard, 25; Sanders, 7.

Geographies.—Colton & Fitch, 299; Mitchell, 30; Smith, 50; Cornell, 45; Warren, 8.

Grammars.—Weld & Quackenbos, 242; Brown, 143; Tower, 42; Smith, 4; Wells, 14.

Spellers.—Town's & Progressive, 375; Worcester, 17; Sanders, 6; Sargent, 10.

Histories.—Quackenbos, 346; Goodrich, 65; Wilson, 7.

Where there exists a difference of usage as marked by the largest numbers in this enumeration, it would require a long time to reconcile the minds of teachers, pupils and parents to the suggested change; and probably before it could be accomplished, new books, claiming, and perhaps actually possessing, valuable improvements, would be forced on the attention, and the uniformity be broken up by the decisions of local Committees. All the books here mentioned have done good service, and can yet do more. Legislative interference seems not to be needed in the matter.

The answers to the question, relative to the benefit of a uniform series of books, selected for each town by the respective Superintending Committees, show that this provision is working well. Nothing is needed in this particular, but persistence in the same course of action.

The fact of conceding the power of selection to hundreds of Committees in the State, marks with sufficient clearness the opinion, that an entire uniformity was never intended or expected.

THE SCHOOL RETURNS.

A later page contains the usual statistics, gathered by counties from the annual returns. The following summary will show at a glance the leading items for the years 1864 and 1865, in comparison. For 1865 no estimates are made except for board.

General Summary of the Returns for the year ending April 1.

	1864.	1865.
Population of the State in 1860,	628,300	628,300
Extent in square miles,	31,766	31,766
Valuation of the State in 1860,	\$164,714,168	\$164,714,168
Number of towns in the State,	405	406
Number that have made returns, plantations included,	383	436
Number of children between four and twenty-one years,	235,249	219,060
Number registered in summer schools,	133,150	120,149
Average attendance in summer schools,	102,923	92,409
Number registered in winter schools,	132,306	138,181
Average attendance in winter schools,	111,892	99,107
Average attendance for winter and summer,	107,407	95,708
Number in winter who did not attend in summer,	23,088	21,543
Ratio of attendance to whole number of scholars,46	.44
Average length of summer schools, in weeks,	10.2	10.1
Average length of winter schools, in weeks,	10.1	9.4
Sum of the average for winter and summer,	20.3	19.5
Number of school districts in the State,	4,020	3,867
Number of parts of districts,	374	308
Number of school-houses in the State,	4,035	3,830
Number reported in good condition,	2,188	2,155
Number of school-houses built within the last year,	77	70
Cost of the same,	\$111,385	\$42,503
Number of male teachers employed in summer,	137	94
Number of male teachers employed in winter,	2,274	1,157
Number of female teachers employed in summer,	4,088	3,883
Number of female teachers employed in winter,	1,846	2,156
Wages of male teachers per month, besides board,	\$23.29	\$27.76
Wages of female teachers per week, besides board,	\$2.13	\$2.49
Average age of teachers,	23 years.	22½
School money raised by taxation,	\$426,904.05	\$469,463.86
Excess above requirement of law,	37,802.72	27,944.38
Average amount raised per scholar,	1.81	1.96
Amount of permanent school fund, Dec. 30,	173,492.70	-
Income of same apportioned to schools,	10,120.63	-
Bank tax apportioned to schools,	39,386.24	-
Amount derived from local funds,	16,907.41	19,469.32
Contributed to prolong public schools,	11,643.99	17,453.25
Am't paid to private schools, academies, &c., within the State,	35,076.16	38,102.43
Amount paid for same out of the State,	16,725.00	9,285.75
Paid for repairs, fuel, &c.,	51,187.80	43,082.10
Average cost of board per week,	1.56	1.95
Estimated amount paid for board,	156,187.20	158,754.37
Amount paid for school supervision,	13,577.24	15,539.16
Aggregate expenditure for school purposes,	887,100.72	857,949.03
Number of towns that raised less than the law requires,	57	-

Academic Returns.

Under a resolve of the Legislature, requiring that all academies and other chartered literary institutions should make returns to the Superintendent of Common Schools, the proper blanks were issued for that purpose, with the persuasion that the protection and liberality of the State, its gifts of charters, and their partial endowments, would lead to a general response to a law, wherein no penalty is provided. Of the Colleges, Waterville is the only one whose return has been made to this office. Out of the sixty-seven on the list of these institutions, only twelve academies and two seminaries have done the same. These are Berwick, Bridgton, China, Corinna, East Corinth, East Maine Conference Seminary, Fryeburg, Houlton, Lebanon, Lincoln, Litchfield, Maine Wesleyan Seminary, Presque Isle, and Towle (at Winthrop.) As this compliance is so very small, and can show but a small amount of the resources of education in this quarter, it has not been deemed expedient to make an array of partial statistics. The institutions reported, except two or three, appear to be in a flourishing condition. Of the rest, where no information has been granted, no more can be said, than to express the hope that they may be found to be equally prosperous, though gratitude to the State would seem to imply, that some testimony to the fact should be granted, in the way which their benefactor has deemed judicious to provide. The returns will be kept on file for future use, if needed.

The Madawaska Townships.

In the early part of this Report reference was made to the subject of instruction, as connected with the population in the part of the State denoted by the caption of this paragraph. It is well known that the large portion of these settlements is occupied by persons of French origin, who retain much of their ancient language and many of their customs almost unchanged; are slow to welcome improvements that involve change; are prone to cling to the water-courses for their farms and homes; who yet are our citizens and should be taught how to value and use aright the privileges which their relation to our government and country spread around them for their elevation and protection. Their situation, removed far from the centres of influence where education is doing largely its desirable work, and the peculiarity of their history as well as nationality, and long cherished traditions, may render it

difficult to reach them with such effect for their good, as their condition and the benefit of their improvement to the State would suggest. But if a wise and continuous policy be exhibited towards this distinct people of a former immigration, they will be gradually assimilated to the manners and usages of our own people, and by being raised year by year to a better state of intelligence, will be better fitted to fulfil the moral, social and civil duties which every resident of Maine ought to know how to discharge.

My relation to the schools in this region has been as yet but distant. The comparatively short time since the relation commenced has given me no opportunity to make a personal acquaintance therewith. As yet I have received no information respecting them or their wants, except what has come in almost the smallest possible number of returns. These are incorporated into the tables of statistics. The provisions of the law of Feb. 20, 1864, restraining the grant from the State until the taxes had been paid, was thought by the agent of the last year, to have been injurious; and thereupon my predecessor recommended the repeal of that enactment. My unacquaintance with that region, and entire inexperience of its wants at my entrance on this office, with its many claims on my time and presence, have led to the omission to appoint an agent for that large district, as the law has provided. This is to be regretted; and the regret can only be relieved by the purpose to make the appointment in compliance with the law the next year.

Interference in Schools.

In some of his visits the Superintendent has found that the question has been raised, "Whether parents had not the power to control the studies to be pursued by their children in our common schools?" In some instances persons have entered the school room for the purpose of giving their direction in this matter, and for a reprimand to the teacher or to some offending scholar, while the school was in session.

As to the first of these points, it should be understood that the common schools belong to the State; that the State supports them by its constitutional and legal provisions; that the money paid in taxation, ceases to be the property of the tax payer as soon as it goes out of his hands; that he can claim no right to dictate because of his large or small payment, and has no more power than he possesses by his moral and intellectual influence and his vote;

that the State has placed the selection of books and the general direction of the school in the hands of duly elected and qualified Superintending Committees, who intrust the special instruction and management of the schools, subject to their revision, to the teachers employed by the several agents, after examination and certificates of approval.

It therefore follows that the children seeking instruction through this public channel must comply with the order there established. If any change is desired it is to be effected by a proper representation to the teacher, who may make some modification in the details: or if the general plan is thought susceptible of improvement, to the Superintending Committee. If the studies are deemed too hard for a scholar, he can be put into a class where his capacities will be equal to a less amount of labor: or if his health be feeble, a certificate from a physician will be sufficient to induce any teacher to make suitable allowance for an inability arising from this source. But where these desires to change a well established and legal order manifestly proceed from caprice, the love of singularity, dislike of a teacher, or a misunderstanding of the true purpose of these schools, it is to be presumed that good teachers and firm committees will proceed in the even tenor of their way.

As to the other point mentioned above, where a person, perhaps in anger, enters a school room while its occupants are engaged in the routine of their studies, and takes up their time and attention by reproofs against a scholar or the teacher, he becomes a disturber of the peace; and may be punished therefor to the full extent of the law. This remedy has been tried in some instances, and has been an effective auxiliary to preserve the proper relations between the duties of the school room and the passions or emotions outside of its walls.

Statistics.

The statistics have been gathered from the actual returns made to the inquiries as issued to the several towns and plantations. It has not been thought advisable to add to this Report the special items in answer to the questions addressed to each of the Superintending Committees in the State. But a tabular summary of each of the counties has been prepared with as much accuracy as seemed possible from the imperfect manner in which not a few of the blanks have been filled. This imperfection has been most noted

in the answers where the averages have been required to be specified. In making up this summary the discretion of the Superintendent has been in some instances rather severely tasked to bring into the account a proper estimate, to be gained as well as he might from the defective materials presented for his aid. In many instances there may be seen a falling off from the Report of the last year. This diminution is mainly to be ascribed to the fact that my predecessor, in his diligence to present the statistics in a view approaching completeness, filled the blanks occasioned by the non-compliance with the law, with figures taken from the returns of the previous year. In the present instance the figures are given from the returns of the present year alone. If the compliance in all the particulars specified in the blanks, sent out for the purpose of securing the items, had been duly given, there is no doubt that the statistical report would have shown an increase in general above the former year. This inference is lawfully drawn from what appears to be the gradual growth of interest in the cause throughout the State. Perhaps some part of this deficiency is to be ascribed to the fact that during a vacancy in the office from the beginning of the year, no blanks had been prepared to be sent out to the towns, at the usual time for such mission. Not until after the present Superintendent had received his appointment, just before the middle of May, was this omission made known to him; and as soon thereafter as it could be effected, he authorized the blanks to be prepared and dispatched for use. A similar delay will not be likely to occur again.

It may also be added that where the amounts raised are less than the requisition of the law for securing a grant from the school fund, an explanation may in part be found in the known fact, that in some instances the Committees seem not to have been aware of the change in the law, providing for a taxation equal to *seventy-five* cents for each inhabitant, according to the census last taken for the apportionment of members of the Legislature. This change was made by the act approved Feb. 22, 1865. Previously to this change the sum had been fixed at *sixty* cents for each inhabitant, to be estimated in the like manner. It is probable that in the ensuing year the returns will show a fuller acquaintance with this commendable alteration, so favorable for the better working of our system. An explanatory note is added on page 43.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS BY COUNTIES.

TABLE I.—Showing the number of scholars, attendance, length of schools, number of teachers, and wages, districts, school-houses, etc., etc.

Counties.	Number of children in town between the ages of 4 and 21 years.		Whole No. registered in summer schools.		Average No. attending summer schools.		Whole No. registered in winter schools.		Average No. attending winter schools.		No. in winter schools who did not attend in summer.		Av. length of summer schools in weeks.		Av. length of winter schools in weeks.		No. of school districts.		No. parts of districts.		No. of school houses.		No. in good condition.		No. of school houses built last year.		Cost of school houses built last year.		Expended for repairs, fuel, &c.		No. of male teachers employed in summer.		No. of male teachers employed in winter.		No. of female teachers employed in summer.		No. of female teachers employed in winter.		Av. wages of male teachers per month, exclusive of board.		Av. wages of female teachers per week, exclusive of board.		Av. cost of teacher's board per week.		Av. age of teachers.	
	Number	Whole	Average	Whole	Average	No. in winter	Av. length	Av. length	No. of school	No. parts	No. of school	No. in good	No. of school	Cost of school	Expended for	No. of male	No. of male	No. of female	No. of female	Av. wages of	Av. wages of	Av. cost of	Av. age																							
Androscoggin,	9,389	5,689	4,398	6,626	5,258	1,111	10.4	8.7	173	21	194	107	3	3,554	89	3,369	23	3	96	190	112	28	04	2	53	2	00	17	1	96	190	112	28	04	2	53	2	00	17							
Aroostook,	7,217	3,076	2,315	2,515	2,045	387	10.4	9.4	172	9	101	53	4	1,610	00	645	32	3	21	126	52	21	13	2	62	1	55	20	3	21	126	52	21	13	2	62	1	55	20							
Cumberland,	27,643	10,104	8,091	118,65	9,270	1,102	10.7	9.4	284	17	304	171	6	5,616	00	13,788	66	9	162	322	184	27	96	2	65	2	01	22	2	65	2	01	22	2	65	2	01	22								
Franklin,	6,929	3,747	2,740	5,213	3,617	1,433	7.8	8.4	217	22	198	100	6	1,525	00	1,413	63	1	91	174	110	22	36	1	98	1	66	21	1	91	174	110	22	36	1	98	1	66	21							
Hancock,	14,813	8,760	6,726	8,449	6,765	1,404	9.6	7.6	280	5	265	141	3	3,600	00	3,358	38	4	148	270	97	31	94	2	63	1	91	25	4	148	270	97	31	94	2	63	1	91	25							
Kennebec,	17,335	10,061	7,756	11,680	8,706	1,933	9.6	8.8	328	15	262	214	3	2,755	00	4,700	55	7	138	345	242	29	17	2	57	1	90	22	7	138	345	242	29	17	2	57	1	90	22							
Knox,	10,665	6,560	5,060	7,498	5,869	1,056	13.2	11.4	129	14	141	71	3	2,568	00	1,988	94	9	84	151	90	33	83	2	59	2	32	26	9	84	151	90	33	83	2	59	2	32	26							
Lincoln,	10,630	5,945	4,489	6,375	5,078	1,351	10.0	8.7	191	10	184	107	4	2,000	00	980	46	3	129	183	56	29	08	2	49	2	39	24	3	129	183	56	29	08	2	49	2	39	24							
Oxford,	13,227	7,303	5,695	8,682	6,896	1,859	8.5	8.5	352	32	339	172	4	500	00	1,585	24	2	160	333	174	20	75	2	14	1	54	21	4	500	00	1,585	24	2	160	333	174	20	75	2	14	1	54	21		
Penobscot,	25,080	15,915	12,407	16,576	12,504	2,450	9.3	9.1	389	30	403	272	11	4,215	00	8,221	95	9	122	467	320	31	30	2	72	1	98	22	9	122	467	320	31	30	2	72	1	98	22							
Piscataquis,	5,312	3,319	2,586	3,487	2,652	993	8.3	9.1	145	16	141	66	6	2,025	00	1,053	41	-	33	133	96	26	10	2	28	1	77	22	-	33	133	96	26	10	2	28	1	77	22							
Sagadahoc,	7,892	4,609	3,811	3,260	2,720	677	13.3	11.2	97	2	114	71	1	700	00	3,347	79	5	67	111	49	33	48	2	57	2	45	23	5	67	111	49	33	48	2	57	2	45	23							
Somerset,	12,097	7,602	5,917	8,304	6,601	1,540	8.2	8.0	334	42	299	159	2	860	00	2,748	48	-	95	298	190	26	49	2	43	1	62	22	2	860	00	2,748	48	-	95	298	190	26	49	2	43	1	62	22		
Waldo,	13,906	6,790	5,193	8,341	6,491	1,392	10.6	10.6	240	37	245	134	4	1,975	00	2,489	82	8	142	238	121	27	07	2	19	1	90	23	8	142	238	121	27	07	2	19	1	90	23							
Washington,	16,208	9,206	6,618	17,518	6,388	1,510	11.9	10.8	226	18	227	118	5	6,080	00	3,298	96	20	90	219	112	31	58	2	88	2	18	23	20	90	219	112	31	58	2	88	2	18	23							
York,	20,717	11,520	8,577	11,792	9,137	1,345	10.0	10.3	310	18	313	199	5	2,920	00	2,491	28	11	179	323	151	24	86	2	55	2	06	23	11	179	323	151	24	86	2	55	2	06	23							
	219060	120149	92409	138181	99907	21543	16.1	9.4	3867	308	3830	2155	70	42503	89	43082	10	94	1757	3583	2156	27	76	2	49	1	95	22	94	1757	3583	2156	27	76	2	49	1	95	22							

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS BY COUNTIES.

TABLE II.—Showing the population and valuation for 1860, the amount of school money raised by taxation and other sources, 1864-5, etc., etc.

Counties.	Population in 1860.	Valuation in 1860.	School money raised in 1865.	More than law requires.	Less than law requires.†	Amount raised per scholar.	Amount drawn from State funds.	Amount derived from local funds.	Am't paid for tuition in private schools, academies, &c., within the State.	Am't paid for tuition out of the State.	Am't raised to prolong public schools.	Am't paid for school supervision.	No. districts in which schools are graded.
Androscoggin,*	29,734	8,230,829	17,114 50	-	5,186 00	2 26	1,794 82	359 18	1,850 00	225 00	903 00	1,031 75	9
Aroostook, .	22,449	1,356,237	8,879 10	-	7,957 65	1 63	825 92	382 01	231 75	160 00	1,059 90	326 12	2
Cumberland, .	75,608	36,361,035	75,891 75	19,185 75	-	2 32	5,907 25	1,407 75	15,034 00	3,150 00	1,885 00	947 39	15
Franklin, . .	20,574	4,283,843	13,205 14	-	2,225 36	1 89	1,235 93	859 42	1,928 50	100 00	1,240 75	550 42	4
Hancock, . .	37,728	6,520,694	27,422 20	-	843 80	1 75	3,330 08	1,669 57	1,705 50	715 00	984 20	1,114 90	12
Kennebec, . .	55,660	15,273,355	45,128 50	383 50	-	2 20	4,113 11	29 11	4,086 00	119 00	3,293 94	1,561 01	15
Knox,	33,122	9,212,824	22,943 00	-	1,898 50	2 01	2,175 66	3,077 40	1,307 44	292 00	973 10	750 50	8
Lincol'n, . . .	27,866	6,184,441	19,478 13	-	1,421 37	1 84	1,687 79	-	2,726 00	460 00	865 00	713 82	5
Oxford,	36,700	7,834,162	25,348 21	-	2,176 79	2 08	2,455 05	1,203 47	3,399 00	1,187 00	1,357 35	1,081 16	8
Penobscot, . .	72,737	14,524,937	55,342 19	789 44	-	1 80	4,722 46	3,111 92	3,438 59	360 00	534 35	2,282 71	21
Piscataquis, .	15,054	2,705,228	10,715 50	-	575 00	1 82	1,140 13	877 87	1,017 50	75 00	330 25	376 56	6
Sagadahoc, . .	21,685	10,054,434	23,849 44	7,585 69	-	2 46	2,023 70	39 87	1,134 50	335 00	779 00	769 15	6
Somerset, . . .	36,547	7,136,994	25,013 85	-	2,396 40	1 97	2,319 93	891 51	2,827 25	-	891 09	920 70	9
Waldo,	38,448	7,773,529	25,876 85	-	2,959 15	1 96	2,498 75	79 00	4,959 00	1,120 00	1,131 65	744 34	11
Washington, . .	42,555	7,663,945	30,276 70	-	1,639 55	1 18	3,516 97	5,399 16	1,715 50	430 00	812 17	702 11	17
York,	62,124	19,133,618	45,948 80	-	644 20	2 17	4,347 35	82 08	4,741 99	557 75	232 50	1,666 52	15
Total,	628,600	164,714,168	469,463 86	27,944 38	29,923 77	1 96	44,294 90	19,469 32	38,102 43	9,285 75	17,453 25	15,539 16	163

* Lewiston, no report as to money raised. † Owing to the absence of reports from many towns, as well as, perhaps in some cases, an ignorance of the late law, requiring seventy-five cents to be raised on each inhabitant, the deficiency in money raised appears greater than it would on the estimate of former years. For this reason the number of towns raising "less than the law requires" has not been given.

REPORTS FROM TOWN COMMITTEES.

There is a value in these reports, which it may be feared is sometimes, and perhaps often overlooked. That value consists in the fact that they furnish a record of the school experience of each passing year. The chief part of our many improvements in school houses, teachers, books, discipline and encouragements, have been derived from this examination of the annual practical working of our system. Where defects have been perceived, the appropriate suggestion has been made; and where it has been adopted, there has followed the benefit desired. Every year brings improvement somewhere, and thus all the schools in the State are becoming recipients of the good influences of better houses, better instruction and a form of discipline, where the attractiveness of the teachers and the interest they throw around their work, make severity the less necessary and improvement the more certain. These reports bring to the public notice the faults and the virtues in the working of our plan. There may be the repetition of the same faults, and the production of the same virtues in different reports. But this feature only shows that the Committees mean to be impartial, and are laboring, like sensible friends, to bring these institutions to a higher degree of prosperity, than has yet been attained.

Extracts only can be given from these reports; some of which would occupy several of these printed pages; and only such portions can be selected, as have a bearing on the general welfare of our schools. Great care appears to have been expended in their preparation; and their tone of thought and fitness of style are worthy of great commendation.

AUBURN.—The report gives these good cautions:

“Against one thing, however, be cautioned. Should the teacher fail to reach the standard you set up, beware of speaking your opinion too freely before your children. Often is the little good a poor teacher might accomplish, prevented by parents’ pointing out

their faults to their children, thereby lessening their respect for them and encouraging disobedience to their commands.

Habits formed at home are exhibited abroad, and when we see the school room marred and defaced by a too frequent use of the Yankee talent of whittling, we are inclined to think the furniture at home was the first to suffer from the blade; and the defaced desks and battered panels of the school-room seem to prove the lack of proper restraint at home.

One word more, and it shall be concerning tardiness. This prevails in our schools to a great extent, and does much harm. Is there no way to prevent it? Where rests the blame? Parents, do you do all your duty in this respect? Some, we fear, fail to see that, at the proper time, their children are prepared and started on their way. In this, as in all things, the force of habit is very strong; and when once a child acquires the *habit* of punctuality, it costs but a slight effort to be like Washington, always in time; and punctuality in boyhood will lead to the same virtue in manhood."

BIDDEFORD.—In this report we find how a teacher becomes successful; the evils of change; a rebuke to *some* parents for their negligence, and a "partial remedy" for this evil:

"Modest and unassuming in his manners, and of pleasing address, he has succeeded at once in gaining the confidence and esteem of those who have made his acquaintance. His reputation as a teacher has yet to be established, and it will devolve upon the committee of the present year, to speak more fully of his merits in this direction hereafter. It is but simple justice, however, to remark that the not unusual annoyances so often consequent upon a change of teachers, presented themselves, to some extent in this school during its first term, though not in any unusual manner or degree, but by judicious management on the part of the teacher they are fast being overcome, and the present term gives pleasing evidence of permanent success.

While the liberal policy of our city towards our common schools should be a matter of congratulation to all, and while the benefits thus conferred are, for the most part, properly appreciated, no one who has been conversant with them during the past year can have failed to notice that some, at least, of our citizens but too lightly value their privileges. Of this fact almost every school register furnishes sad evidence.

That the child, ignorant of the future demands of society upon him, and in a measure unconscious of the intimate relation of the present to his whole hereafter, should fail to place a just estimate upon the value of his "school-boy days," may be no matter of surprise; but that those who have so keenly felt in their maturer years the many disadvantages arising from such neglect, yet suffer their children to grow up in idleness while such abundant opportunities for improvement gratuitously present themselves, is to say the least, unpardonable.

A partial remedy would undoubtedly be found in the more rigid enforcement of our "truant laws;" but even these would be found comparatively powerless, unless seconded by a more general approval and coöperation on the part of those parents upon whom alone rests, in the highest degree, the personal and individual responsibility."

SHAPLEIGH.—Here are cautions about mistaking the *aids* for the *end* of education: the choice of agents, and parental fault-finding:

"Teachers and scholars should not mistake the *aids*, introduced by modern educators, for the *principal means* of acquiring an education. We admit the usefulness of "object lessons," of blackboards and maps, and such other apparatus as is necessary to aid the teacher in making the exercises of the school plain and interesting, yet these are the *auxiliaries*, and not the principal agents, by means of which an education is acquired. We have yet to see the first educated man who does not testify to the fact that his education was mainly acquired by his own hard study. We must look mainly to parents to improve the condition of our schools. Their first duty is to use more care in selecting suitable persons for agents. In many cases persons are chosen for agents who have never visited the schools in their own districts, and are entirely ignorant as to the scholarship and discipline of the pupils. Can such agents be expected to be successful in employing proper persons for teachers? Agents should be men of intelligence and friends of education; they should perfectly understand the condition of the schools in their own districts, and should use the greatest care in selecting such persons for teachers as the necessities of the district demand. We fear that too many parents show their interest in schools by finding fault with teachers: there is no lack in this respect. Teachers are by no means perfect, yet there are few of them who do not understand their duties better

than parents understand theirs; and if parents would try to aid the teachers in the performance of their duties, instead of finding fault with them or trying to dictate them, they would not only lighten the burden of the teacher, but greatly increase the usefulness of our schools."

KITTERY,—Speaks among other good things of "deportment *out* of school;" the protection of the school-house, and the distribution of money, to equalize the length of schools:

"Let those under your care learn *early* that you discountenance every shade of wrong. Parents, encourage your teacher by making occasional inquiries in regard to your children's deportment *out* of school. We would suggest that no boy or girl receive the premium figure for good behavior, though always coming up to the required standard in school, if they are habitually rude to one another or to passer-by. Show your children that their teacher has a *moral* right to do so, if not a legal one. Such a course would insure you well-bred children, aid the teacher materially, and establish a good reputation for their school. As far as our knowledge goes, one district in town imposed a fine by a unanimous vote upon any lawless person or persons who should injure anything in or around the school-house; and we would commend this to all who have so generously added to the comfort of the pupils, and so much to the good appearance of these respective districts. We think it would be a safe and wise measure, to have each district of the town draw an equal amount of money, so that the smaller districts may enjoy equal facilities in all respects with the larger—they shall have for one summer, as a trial, the same quality of teacher and length of school. We recommend, by vote of the town, the Selectmen and Superintendent of School Committee be authorized for the coming year to make the apportionment of school money accordingly."

PORTLAND.—This city of good schools liberally supported, and equally prospered, speaks through its report chiefly of its local affairs. But the following, upon common schools and salaries of the teachers, is worthy of reproduction:

"Many other moral and intellectual undertakings, though well deserving a continuance of popular zeal in their behalf, have been wholly absorbed by the universal demands made by civil war on

our pecuniary ability and on our mental and physical forces; and yet more, though not wholly drained, have suffered much or little from the temporary diversion of their ancient refreshing streams. Not so with our Common Schools! They have experienced no loss, either of attendance or of pecuniary support, but rather an increase of both. They lie close to the popular heart. They constitute a fountain which must receive a perpetual supply, since it is a place where all must drink. The whole mass of the community know and feel that the intelligence and moral influences which they diffuse will hereafter become absolute necessities in the just solution of the questions, and in honorably meeting the great obligations, which have gathered and are yet gathering thickly and fast. Our own city is an example.

Early during the current year the question of increasing teachers' salaries was brought to our attention. * * * The committee recognized the fact that as yet no general increase of salaries has been allowed to those holding offices in the gift of the public authorities; but the position of school teacher, although coming by appointment from municipal officers, has more the nature of a private than of a political employment, and moreover the actual necessities of the schools made it necessary that the actual necessities of the teachers should be met. It was felt that some little assistance, some little increase of salary, would afford a relief to many valuable instructors who might otherwise be compelled to seek for other employment. Were the personal feelings of the committee alone to be consulted, all would have been glad to have made the additional salaries more nearly commensurate with the enhanced cost of living. This however was practically impossible. All that the committee could do, or all that we could reasonably hope to do, was to meet the strict needs of each case or each class of cases as a temporary expedient, trusting to the future, to a more settled and favorable condition of national affairs, for an equitable and permanent adjustment of the pay roll. Acting on this principle the smaller salaries, which at present prices were insufficient to afford a decent sustenance, were the most urgent. They were therefore increased by a greater percentage than the larger salaries."

HARPSWELL.—Here a variety of unforeseen causes sadly diminished the profit of the schools. But the interest in education is still alive, and the importance of "graded schools" is suggested:

“Our schools for the past year have been more broken, consequently less profitable than usual. Sickness in many districts has materially injured the schools. There have been also some unfortunate selections of teachers. In one district two teachers were engaged who were not qualified, and another commenced and shortly after left for reasons unknown to us. In another case, the committee was obliged to remove a teacher, whose services we found to be unprofitable. Other instances have occurred where teachers have been obliged to leave their school on account of ill health. These, combined with the want of interest upon the part of parents, the depreciation of the school fund, the increase of teachers' wages, and various other causes, have sadly injured our schools. Some districts have shown their wisdom in prolonging their schools by voluntary contribution. At no previous year do we recollect so much being given for this purpose as during the past. As nearly as we could ascertain, there were about five hundred dollars. This is as it ought to be. What the State and Town fails to do, individuals must make up, or our schools will run down. We would once more urge upon you the importance of grading, where it can be done. Where this has been tried in other parts of the State, it has proved a success. Hardly an exception can be found.”

DEDHAM—Gives a report where success stifled complaint, and the path of education was “pleasantness and peace,” as it ever ought to be :

“It gives us pleasure to speak of the prosperous condition of our schools during the past year. This should give our citizens cause for congratulation, that they have been so fortunate as to secure, for the most part, such capable and faithful teachers. The absence of all complaint concerning our schools, argues well for our reputation as a town ; and we hope that parents will do all in their power to encourage the instructors of their children, to make their labors as pleasant as possible, meet them with smiles instead of frowns, and strew flowers in their pathway, instead of planting it with briars and thorns.”

CRANBERRY ISLES—Were favored with good teachers, but not with full attendance of scholars. A remedy is suggested :

“We are gratified in being able to say that our schools have been equally as prosperous this year as in former years ; a very good

class of teachers have been employed, who have exerted a moral and intellectual influence upon the young.

The inconstant attendance of some scholars, and the uniform absence of others who ought to be scholars, and who draw school money as such, is a subject which ought to demand the attention of every parent and taxpayer. There is no little amount of money and time expended, for which we receive no equivalent; and we would call your attention to the fact that the attendance of our scholars is only sixty-four per cent.; and that we lose thirty-six per cent. on each dollar of our school money for want of punctuality. Now what would be said and done should your committee withhold that amount from you? would you not consider it sufficient cause for action? We think you would; then cannot something be done to secure a more general and punctual attendance?"

DETROIT.—The committee enumerates the difficulties here in the way of prosperous schools. They are not all new. The children of Detroit will grow up better citizens when they are removed:

"Our schools labor under many and serious difficulties; and first and foremost comes, as difficulty number one, the indifference of parents to the mental interests of their children and the welfare of the public schools; we fear that too many are ready to say, or by their acts do say, they care not whether "school keeps or not." Another serious difficulty is the want of good school houses and suitable furniture therein, such as chairs, blackboards, tables, &c. Other causes are at work to the injury of schools—as the decrease of school money, the war, and a just and proper effort by school agents to procure suitable and competent teachers."

AUGUSTA.—The conclusions drawn by the committee from the experience of the year, specially in regard to female teachers, are given in the following condensed form. There have been encouragements; but they are compelled to speak, as do a majority of the like officers elsewhere, of the want of punctual and constant attendance. Parents too, as elsewhere, receive a salutary rebuke, as do "unfit" school houses:

"We are gratified to say that our schools, with a very few exceptions, during the summer and winter terms, have been well managed, and the usual success has been apparent. The experiment of employing female teachers in the winter schools, if experi-

ment it be, has met with much favor. Twelve of the nineteen winter terms have been under the instruction of females, and in our opinion, by equal success with the other sex, as will be seen by the report.

There is room, however, for much improvement in many respects in order to elevate the standard of instruction, and thereby secure a deeper interest in our common school system. There is in many of our districts, a want of punctuality on the part of scholars in their attendance, and a failure on the part of parents to require their strict attendance, which is so necessary for the prosperity of the schools.

We have alluded in our former reports to the sad condition of a number of our school houses, which are altogether unfit for the occupation of *intelligent* beings. We do this again, with the hope that the inhabitants of those districts which are encumbered with such apologies for school-rooms will be induced, for their own credit's sake, and for the sake of the health and comfort of their children, to "pull down and build greater" and more pleasant and convenient buildings for the accommodation of their youth, while engaged in the pursuit of scientific knowledge."

FORT FAIRFIELD—Speaks clearly of the kind of men needed for agents, the kind of aid to be given to teachers, and the value of a parental bequest to children in their education :

"We will again impress upon your minds the great importance of selecting those men for school *agents* whom you *know* to be interested in the school; men who have families, and are anxious about their intellectual welfare; who will improve the first opportunity to go and engage some known good teacher; who will see that the school house is in good order, and furnished with necessary apparatus; that it is properly banked before the ground freezes, and furnished with seasoned wood for winter. Call into your schools occasionally and see how they are progressing. Give the teacher the assurance that you will sustain him or her in his efforts to make the school pleasant and profitable. The teacher's duties are difficult and burdensome at best. He needs your coöperation; this you can give by advising your children aright at home. Talk to them of the importance of education; give them your own experience; tell them to obey their teacher in every respect; that you will not countenance a deviation from his rules. When they come from school with stories of wrongs

and abuses, be exceedingly careful how and what you say. Never sympathize with them, or encourage this fault-finding, unless you wish to ruin them and the school too. Should your child get punished in school, and unjustly in your opinion, ascertain first the facts concerning it, from the proper authorities, disinterested scholars and the teacher. Talk with him candidly and impartially, and in nine cases out of ten, you will become convinced that your child deserved the punishment. If you should not be satisfied, refer the matter to the School Committee. Few of us are able to leave our children anything more than the rudiments of a common school education; shall we be penurious and grind them down to the smallest possible amount of that? *Answer yourselves when you vote money for schools.* If there is any institution to which we are indebted for greatness as a nation, or for success in arms, it is to our public schools, and when you refuse to give adequate support to your schools, you are striking at the very foundation of our greatness."

HARTFORD.—The necessity of the Free School, for the preservation of our national institutions, forms the conclusion of a well-arranged and instructive report:

"When our fathers laid the foundation, on which our government rests, and cemented it with their blood and tears, one of the main pillars, which they used to support that foundation, was the common school system. Knock out that pillar and the whole superstructure falls. From the infancy of our government down to the present time, a portion of our nation has been opposed to our *Free School System*, (where children of the poor have equal rights with those of the rich). But more particular manifestations of these blessings have been made during the last four years. The foundation yet stands! and will continue to stand, if we do our duty, and use the means within our reach. Educate the *masses*, the poor as well as the rich, and all will be well. A more glorious day is dawning. The *Free School System* is enlarging its borders. Every *sister* of this great REPUBLIC will arise and put on her 'beautiful garments,' and all shall be encircled in the arms of Liberty."

ANDOVER.—The duty of agents, their negligence and favoritism, are mentioned, as they are in some other reports:

"There is but one agent in town who has served the past year, that has notified the committee, as required by law, of the commencement and close of his school. Every agent should remember

he is under oath; and that the money is put into his hands, not to benefit his friends or relatives, or anybody's else friends or relatives as a teacher, nor to pay off any old score, but to be used for the especial benefit of the school in his district. And I hope he will remember that union is strength and an important element of success."

GOULDSBORO'.—This report contains brief but useful thoughts on the subject of truancy, and the pecuniary loss produced by this evil:

"The only complaint from teachers is the irregular and tardy attendance of scholars. Truancy has become so common in most, if not all of the districts, that something should be done to remedy the evil. That all may know the real standing of our schools, in the matter of attendance, we have prepared tables showing the actual per cent. of time lost at each term of school. We will state what we mean by per cent. of time lost. If a school of twenty scholars continue fifty days, each scholar would obtain fifty days of schooling if they attended all the time, making 1000 days. But if one loses ten days, another fifteen, &c., so that 250 days be lost, then, of course, 25 per cent. of the time as well as money is lost. * * * Amount of school money literally lost by truant scholars, \$220; which is nearly one-fourth as much money as was expended for the year. But the advantages lost to the truant can not surely be estimated by figures."

It is proper to add that this town shows a good "list" of constant scholars, printed in *true blue*.

BRISTOL—Reports the chief part of its schools as profitable. But the school-house was wanting in the work of one:

"The district elevated Miss D—— and a handful of scholars, to a cold and uncomfortable garret in a private house. She, however, did all she could for her scholars, and they made good improvement."

LUDLOW.—Here is a repetition of the complaint about poor school houses, "without which our schools are measurably useless." The report adds:

"In conclusion, I would say that our schools during the past year have improved, and the several districts have been fortunate in procuring good and competent teachers."

LITCHFIELD.—From the details of this report the following extract will show how in one school at least order was made to take the place of confusion :

“ Miss S. brought to her work a well disciplined mind and large experience, which she found quite convenient in reducing chaos to order. Some scholars had imbibed wrong ideas of their rights and duties ; and consequently came in contact with the arrangements of the school. Moral suasion, rendered effectual by a medical preparation known as “ oil of birch,” administered in no homœopathic doses, brought order from confusion, and secured to the district a profitable term of school. At our closing visit we more than realized the high expectations raised at our first, and could but pronounce the school a complete success.”

DURHAM.—The committee report on their hindrances happily diminishing. The school houses need repairing :

“ That there are many, and in some respects, powerfully adverse influences operating against our public schools, and in many instances, too successfully, no one who has taken an interest in their welfare for any considerable length of time, need be informed ; but with pleasure we are permitted to say, that in our opinion, in no previous year, have they been less annoyed by such influences, than during the year now past, without any exception.

More interest should be taken in keeping the school houses in good repair. It cannot be denied, that many of them are in a very bad condition, the plastering falling from some, others with the doors battered or broken, or the glass out of the windows. This should not be so ; we should strive to make our school houses as attractive and pleasant as possible, thereby securing a greater amount of interest in our schools.”

ATHENS.—Sometimes complaints are heard and none are found to sustain them when inquiry is made. Here is a case in point :

“ This school, at the commencement, appeared *well*, and we anticipated an agreeable and successful term. After a few weeks we were requested to inquire into some charges preferred against the teacher. Upon visiting the school and investigating the affair, no one made any accusation against her, but all spoke favorably of the school and teacher, and censured the actions of the absent disaffected pupils.”

In concluding their report the committee say :

“ We would congratulate the citizens of this town that the schools for the past year have been so pleasant, well disciplined and successful. In no year since our acquaintance with them has more been done towards correct and thorough instruction of your children. True, there have been imperfections witnessed and many improvements desired ; but on the whole there has been a better class of teachers, more interested class of agents, and a general desire among parents for better instruction than formerly.”

LEWISTON.—A “ consolidation of thirteen districts into one has been succeeded by great benefit, has secured better teachers and kept off “ the interference of unwise outsiders.” The committee speak thus of the success of the terms, and the High School :

“ Out of eighty-four terms we count but one failure, and with a few exceptions the remainder have been decided successes. There has been no instance of insubordination in the schools, and almost universally excellent order has been maintained.

It is objected by some to the fixed course of the High School, that those who by absence for a single term fall behind their class, or those who wish to attend only for a few terms, cannot have the advantage which at an academy they claim, of studying just what they wish. It is true, there is some force in this objection, but the greater advantages of a graded system of classes, and a regular progressive course of study, to the great majority of the pupils very far outweigh this evil ; and as far as may be done, the committee seek to remedy it, by allowing such as are unable to take the regular course with one class, to take such a select course from the studies pursued by the different classes, as will be most profitable to them. But we most earnestly recommend to all who can do so, to take the regular course and persevere to the end. They who do so, with fair ability, can hardly fail of attaining a high rank as scholars.

We believe that boys can obtain as good a preparation for College at our High School, as at any classical school, and girls who wish to fit themselves for teachers can find no better opportunity.

Evening School. The special appropriation made for this experiment has been expended, we think, judiciously. The upper hall in Lisbon Block was secured, at a very moderate rent. It is furnished with settees and tables, is well lighted by gas, and is

capable of accommodating 180 scholars. This number has been in attendance. The average number has been about 140. The sessions have been held three nights each week under the direction of A. K. P. Knowlton with five lady assistants. The pupils have been of ages from eight to twenty-one, and have manifested an attention and eagerness to learn truly encouraging. Those only have been admitted who were believed to be unable to attend upon the day schools. We regard the school a success and hope it may become an established institution of the city."

Saco.—The report is taken up chiefly with accounts of each of the schools. The following extracts are of general interest, in regard to supervision, and the High School :

"The schools generally have experienced prosperity. There has been, however, some exceptions. As is often the case, some school money has been wasted. Experience has convinced the Supervisor, that the more thorough the supervision, notwithstanding the expense, the less will be wasted. There is no school but will actually do better, if they are to be often visited, and finally reported. Most teachers, as well as scholars, are thereby prompted to greater and more diligent efforts.

The Supervisor finds something to be done almost every day, especially in term time. Lines are to be given, complaints are to be attended to, teachers to be examined, or scholars to be changed, some school is commencing or closing, and must be visited.

The High School has accomplished a good work. It pays as it is, but it does not accomplish what it might. It is, however, no fault of the teacher. It is the fault of scholars, or parents, or both. Too many finish their school education when they get through the Grammar School, at some 14 to 16 years of age, and somebody is to blame when dire necessity does not intervene, either the scholar for having no higher aim, or the parent for coveting what little he may earn.

It makes us sad to see our youth neglecting, for some trifling excuse, to avail themselves of the facilities which this school affords. If they were all like three young ladies, who during the summer term were not checked for 'absence, tardiness, or misdemeanor,' we should expect to find it patronized as it ought to be."

WAYNE.—The selection from this report relates to the proper mode of *grading* schools :

“The *manner* of grading the schools in districts number 1 and 5, is not the best that might be devised. Number 1 has been divided in accordance with the *ages* of the scholars; those under ten years, attending the lower department; those over that age, the higher. The object of grading is not so much to reduce the number of *scholars*, as the number of classes. It takes but little longer to hear a recitation from a class of twenty, than it does from one of ten. In dividing according to ages we shall find good scholars, in the lower department, that might join the classes in the higher, without detriment to the others, and much to their own advantage. Poor scholars would also be found in the higher school, that might be placed in the classes in the lower. Thus several classes would be avoided in each. Another argument in favor of grading in reference to *attainments*, and not age, is the powerful *incentive* it would be on the members of the primary department. *Great* efforts would be made to fit themselves for the *higher* department. Our advice then would be: let *acquirements alone* decide where each scholar belongs. Choose a district committee of able persons that will perform the duties with discretion, or throw the responsibility upon your school committee. Let each scholar pass a thorough examination, before being allowed to go into the higher department. And let the standard of qualifications required be elevated; no matter if it excludes many that are now there.”

DAMARISCOTTA.—The need of a larger amount of money, longer schools and proper teachers, is here forcibly expressed:

“The committee would call attention to the imperative need of making larger appropriations for the support of our schools the ensuing year. It is not proposed to insult your understanding by entering into any discussion of this matter. It is enough to say that if schools are worth supporting at all, they are worthy of being supported to such an extent as to answer the end for which they exist. No one of you can think for a moment that our schools heretofore have been too long—hardly long enough is a truer conviction. But to cut down the village schools to twenty-three weeks of study for the whole year is simply ridiculous, especially so when the means exist to make our schools, as regards sessions, what they ought to be. Let there be retrenchment and the strictest economy in the management of town affairs; but the observance of this principle would be very far from leading us to cut

down the school fund ; it would rather insist upon laying out more for that purpose. We can far better afford to lay out money for the education of children and to fit them to take their places as good members of society, than leave them to grow up ignorant, vicious, a pest to society, disturbers of its peace and safety.

One of the great truths this rebellion has brought out is that money laid out in the school-house and for the mental as well as the moral elevation of the people is well invested. Shall we heed that dear bought warning or shut our eyes to it? It is a fact so far as our observation goes that teachers of both sexes who understand their business, who know *how* to teach are very scarce ; not but that there are plenty of good scholars about who want to teach ; but we have found by our experience that a good scholar and a good teacher are not synonymous terms.

We are glad that the State has begun a work which holds out the hope that in time thoroughly qualified teachers may be secured by those towns, wise enough to avail themselves of the services of those who have made teaching a science to be acquired,—an object of study as well as practice.”

WATERVILLE.—There is much in this long and able report worthy of reproduction. But the following only can find space in regard to teachers :

“It is our firm conviction that no one is properly qualified to teach a common school who has not the fundamental principles of a thorough English education so inwrought into his mind that he can readily apply and explain them, without being slavishly fettered by his text book.

But scholarship alone will not make a good teacher. Important as this, there are other qualifications equally so. Many a ripe scholar utterly fails as an instructor, while others, whose literary attainments are below the proper standard, shine in the school-room, to their own credit and to the benefit of their pupils. This fact, however, does not in the last detract from what has been said above of the importance of a thorough education ; on the contrary if such should add to the present qualifications a higher degree of mental culture and discipline, their usefulness and efficiency would be immensely increased. Almost any one can go mechanically through the routine of school exercises, but not every one, and not every good scholar can *teach* a school, for teaching signifies

the imparting of knowledge to others. A teacher must know, not only *what* is to be taught, but *how* to teach it. He must have tact, judgment, and common sense; he must study his pupils, bring himself into sympathy with them, and adapt his explanations and illustrations to their capacities; he must be diligent, patient, earnest and zealous. It has been truthfully said, "Enthusiasm is the best part of education. An unquenchable thirst for knowledge is the great result of all teaching. To drill and drudge and fret is not the end of education or the way to it. The ardor of the teacher must kindle the desire of the scholar." The common failure to inspire a love of knowledge in the pupil is one great cause why children so generally long for the end of school days when they may fling their hateful books aside. Science should be so taught that a love of it will ensure its future pursuit.

The one grand object of the Normal School is to furnish good teachers for our schools. Those who wish to become teachers or to improve in teaching can here receive that special training which will fit them for the work. We rejoice that at last we have such a school in our own State; and we believe that the opening of the Western State Normal School at Farmington will mark an era in cause of education in Maine. If you wish to increase the value and power of our public schools, sustain the Normal School! Send thither your sons and daughters who wish to become teachers, and encourage all who propose to teach to avail themselves of its advantages."

BRADFORD.—Loss of money by absences, poor school houses, parental duty, and the value of history, form important parts of this report:

"Compare the average attendance for the past year with the number who draw money. Only about 40 of every 100 have regularly attended school; leaving a serious loss of \$60 of every \$100 expended, by irregular attendance. The question arises—is all this unavoidable. We leave it for each parent to answer. Another serious drawback is inconvenient and uncomfortable school houses. We have several which have but one recommendation—that of perfect ventilation. And we again repeat our oft unheeded recommendation that parents should visit their schools at least once during each term. By so doing, both teachers and scholars would see that we are interested in their welfare, and be stimu-

lated to redoubled efforts. The history of our own country has been sadly neglected in our common schools. Its introduction as a reading book makes it doubly useful. Books read in early life make deep and lasting impressions. The children who now use this book, will find in future years the great advantage of early reading, not simply by learning the art of reading, but by becoming well-informed historians. The instructions contained in this work should be familiar to every American citizen."

KENDUSKEAG.—The successful account of schools in this town may be largely ascribed to the district agents :

"Your committee can truly say, that the agents in our several districts have been very successful in procuring excellent teachers the past year. Our teachers have been well adapted to their professions. Our agents are well worthy of the good feelings of our citizens."

ORNEVILLE.—Discretion needed on the part of agents in selecting teachers. A suggestion is made as to the appointment of supervisors by towns :

"School agents should be especially cautious to select the *best*, rather than the *cheapest* teachers. They should not depend too much on the judgment of the committee. No committee can invariably tell beforehand, whether the teacher will succeed well or not. If they judge the teacher will do well, of course the requisite certificate is given. So when the school is visited frequently a number of the larger scholars are absent, and some lack of interest manifested, but the committee give good advice and hope for a good school. Your committee are aware that little is gained by exchanging teachers in short schools, unless in extreme cases, and then a faithful committee will not flinch from duty, though they may incur censure thereby. It is generally safest to employ such as have *proved* themselves *competent* and *successful*. When this cannot be done, we should endeavor to secure the services of those who sustain a good moral character, possess a sound judgment, an active and energetic mind. We should never trust the education of children with a knave, a fool, or a tyrant. Some have been in favor of a town committee, and some in favor of a supervisor. To reconcile these two extremes, our Legislature passed an act making it the duty of towns to elect a committee ;

but that committee *may* at their first meeting appoint one of their number to act as supervisor, and perform all the duties of supervisor, (except in a few specified cases where the judgment of the whole board may be required). What we would suggest is, that the *town* choose for themselves whether they will have a *supervisor* or a *committee*. No reasonable committee would wish to take that responsibility upon themselves. This rightfully belongs to the town."

NAPLES—Speaks of "young teachers," a want of unity among parents," and repeats the tale of "unfit" school-houses :

" We have this disadvantage, the present year, to contend with : the presence of so many young teachers. Still they have labored earnestly for the good of the scholars ; and teacher and pupil have been interested to a considerable degree. There has been no disturbance of a serious nature in any school. Minor difficulties have arisen and have been amicably adjusted ; none of which we believe are attributable to the teachers ; but were owing to that too prevalent fault,—a want of unity among parents of the same district. Of parents, we would ask a greater knowledge of the wants of the school, a greater intimacy with the school-room and more hearty and earnest coöperation with the teachers. It would remove many differences, encourage the scholars, lighten the burdens and relieve the monotonous labors of your teachers.

We are forced again to refer to the bad condition of many of our school-houses. While there are a few good ones, there are many incommodious and in want of repair ; and some wholly unfit for a school to be kept in. In one district, there could be no winter term of school, on account of the dilapidated condition of the school-house. Bodily comfort and ease are necessary to mental quiet ; without which, the time spent in school is a loss."

NEWCASTLE.—The committee make important suggestions on the relative improvement of classes, and the injury of long vacations :

" Attention is requested to the fact that the "*second classes*" have made on an average, more improvement than the "*first classes*." One of the reasons is, the smaller scholars commit themselves more completely to the guidance of the teacher. Large scholars often are unwilling to study what the teacher sees to be necessary, and to prepare the lessons just as the teacher wishes.

Parents desire that their children shall commence "where they left off" the term before. The thing cannot be done, because the pupil is not at that point. He has forgotten much more than the parent supposes. If parents can induce their children to review constantly during the long *vacations* (and who thinks of doing so) then the advance may commence with profit, and not otherwise. Parents, visiting the school at the commencement of the term, would learn how much a child forgets in one vacation, and would find less occasion for fault because the teacher "puts their children back." Our schools suffer more from parental neglect, than from any other cause. Either the school is not visited at all, or only at the close of the term. When other laborers are employed we do not depend upon the report of children, but visit them often at their work, advise them, and make suggestions. Shall we be less wise, in a work which involves the happiness and the success of our children, their social influence, and the future political condition of the country? But we will say no more, for man is never so neglectful, as when mind and soul are at stake."

CORINTH.—Some parents are again reminded of their duty; and school-houses are better than in other towns, though some new ones are needed:

"Some of the parents either do not feel the responsibility resting upon them, or they do not estimate fully the value of education; otherwise their children would be prepared to enter the school at its commencement, and would not be permitted to remain absent so much during the term.

We think our school-houses will compare favorably with other towns, but it is hoped there may be some new ones erected the coming season."

BANGOR—Whose higher grades of schools have a good and wide reputation, speaks thus of the Apprentices', and the suburban schools, and the benefit of gymnastic exercises:

"No Apprentices' School has been opened the past year, the meagre and inconstant attendance and small progress of this school for several years past having led to its discontinuance. Those of the class usually attending the school, to the number of about forty, who applied for school privileges, I distributed among other schools, according to locality and qualification. Many of these exhibited the same traits which characterized the later ses-

sions of the Apprentices' School—irregularity of attendance and slipping out two or three weeks before the close of the term. Some years since the Apprentices' School was quite a feature of our school system, being largely attended, and by many worthy and studious young mechanics who manifested an earnest desire for mental improvement. The war, in its demand upon young men to fill the army, or take the place of those who have gone to fill it, has wrought a great change in the numbers and material for such a school, and for a few years past the appellation of the school had become a misnomer.

The suburban schools have been unusually successful and satisfactory during the past year, there having been no disturbance or interruption of any one during the summer or winter term. This success is quite remarkable from the fact that a year rarely elapses without some interruption, or change of teachers, in these schools, in consequence of disaffection and disturbance. In but one district has any dissatisfaction become audible, and sufficient to impair the usefulness of the school.

The teachers of suburban schools, besides peculiar difficulties arising from neighborhood jealousies, encounter great disadvantages in securing a desirable degree of progress. These schools are ungraded, the classes are numerous, and the pupils, with their parents' approval too generally, pertinaciously cling to higher textbooks than are suited to their capacity, and are unwilling to submit to that thoroughness of drill in rudimentary principles, without which little true progress can be secured. There is a strong disposition to go through a book, rather than to master it, to measure advancement by quantity rather than quality—unmindful of the fact that what is worth learning, is worth learning well, and what is not learned well, can hardly be said to be learned at all.

It gives me pleasure to allude to the gymnastic exercises introduced into the schools by the teachers who have availed themselves of the instruction of Mrs. Simons. These exercises are heartily entered into by the pupils, and serve to break the tedium of the school room, refresh the bodies of the pupils and give new life and cheerfulness to the school."

MANCHESTER.—This report shows how the larger scholars may do mischief, and when parents are to be blamed :

“ Many of the larger scholars were irregular in attendance, and, when in the school, evidently thought more of mischief than they

did of study. Like some of whom we read in Scripture, who said respecting a certain nobleman, "we will not have this man to reign over us," so they felt in regard to their teacher. The spirit of the larger scholars was manifest in the smaller, and consequently no very great improvement could be made. Some, those especially who felt that they ought to do right, were profited by the school, and *more* would have been, *had parents done their duty*.

CUMBERLAND.—Good advice is given, and the profit of "female" teachers :

"Let us all bear in mind that it is the duty of every citizen to sustain and cherish this institution, "The Public School, the Palladium of the public good." Let agents secure the best of teachers, and parents enforce a more regular and punctual attendance of their children, manifesting at all times a hearty co-operation with the teacher, never allowing petty district prejudices to find their way into the school room, "nor pupils be allowed to tattle about their teacher." It will be noticed that all but four of our teachers are females. It is said the time has gone by that required physical force to govern a school, when the teacher had to go into the school room well armed with a large *ruler* and *cow-hide*, but that our children are more easily led by love and kindness, smiles and pleasant words. If so, we ask, "Who so capable as gentle, smiling and amiable young ladies?" In conclusion, we recommend to agents for the next season all the teachers employed the present winter as eminently qualified; and that they will give a trial in the summer schools to some of the many in town who by their own industry have qualified themselves for such situations."

ALBION.—The hardships of a small school, and the remedy, are forcibly but quaintly expressed :

"This school consists of so few scholars that it requires constant effort on the part of the teacher to keep up a sufficient interest for the best good of the school. But Miss M. was equal to the task. The school was orderly, and good improvement was made in all the branches studied. We think it would be wisdom for this district to "*bust up*" and then try to connect the fragments with the adjoining districts."

KENNEBUNK—Recommends the grading of a large school, and the raising of more money :

“ We fear that our friends at the Landing are losing a good share of their school money, and, what is of infinitely more value, a great deal of their children's time, by indifference to the fact that their school room is insufficient for the wants of the district during the winter term,—so long, at least, as they continue to employ but one teacher and send their children of all ages to the same school. It is perfectly idle to expect any teacher to instruct thoroughly some 60 or 70 pupils, of ages ranging from four to twenty, and this, too, in a room where the little ones occupy the seats that should be used by the larger scholars, when called upon for recitations. Why will not the citizens try the experiment of maintaining two schools in the fall and winter—a primary school, in charge of a female, composed of such of the children as have not advanced beyond the Second Reader, and a school, in charge of a male teacher, embracing all the other scholars? A room might be hired for the accommodation of the primary. The number of months schooling will be less for each class,—but it will be found that the improvement during the short term will be much greater than that made in a year, under the present arrangement. Let this course be adopted, and it is safe to predict its complete success. We owe it to the rising generation that ample provision shall be made for their instruction in the common branches of a good English education. Let us look at the subject from whatever point of view we may select, we cannot arrive at any other conclusion than that this responsibility rests upon us. As a business matter only,—a mere calculation of dollars and cents,—we can find no better investment than that which is expended for the education of youth. The school prevents the children from roaming about the streets and fields, in idleness, and gathering in all those habits and vices which idleness engenders. The probability is, that the boy who attends school will learn to read, spell, write and cipher, and perhaps obtain a good knowledge of grammar, geography, history, &c., while correct notions concerning obedience, punctuality, good behavior, and the necessity of industry, will almost imperceptibly be acquired; and, moreover, the chances are that that boy will grow up intelligent, reliable and trustworthy—make a respectable man, who will not only support himself, but accumulate property, and thus feel an interest in the public welfare, and contribute towards the public burdens. That these are facts, and facts of great practical importance, is demonstrated by

every day's experience and observation. It is so plain, therefore, that he who runs may read, that when we vote for generously sustaining our public schools, we vote for personal security,—for respect of private rights,—for peaceful homes,—for cultivated manners in society,—for honesty and intelligence in conducting the public affairs, and, indeed, for good ground whereon may spring up and grow the seeds of sound morality and true Christian faith and practice."

BRUNSWICK.—The report is chiefly directed to the several schools, but adds an earnest recommendation that their length should be increased :

"It has been a prosperous year with all these schools. No serious difficulty, scarcely any at all, has occurred. The appearance of them during the whole year has been highly satisfactory. It is very desirable that means should be provided for lengthening the terms of the schools. It would seem that our citizens must feel that there is a common interest in sustaining, and if possible, increasing the efficiency of a system which has proved so useful and creditable to the town."

KENNEBUNKPORT.—A "graded" school is recommended ; irregularity and tardiness condemned ; home influences needed :

"In justice to the scholars of all ages who are obliged to pass away so many hours in this crowded room, and undergo all the inconvenience incidental to their physical well being and intellectual training, the people there would find that their children would be materially benefited by having a more spacious and convenient school, or by adopting the system of supporting a primary school. A school trammelled with irregularity and tardiness on the part of the scholars must inevitably be broken, confused, and, to some extent, imperfectly taught. To remove this cause of complaint, the remedy is not in making large appropriations for the support of schools; neither is it in the power of the teacher to obviate the disadvantages arising from it, but it is to be found in the homes of children—and here alone. Home is, with all, the starting point in life and the birth place of character and social qualities. The right precepts, examples and admonitions at home will aid and encourage the child to be prompt and punctual at school. A just estimation of the importance of education by parents should be a sufficient

incentive to lead to the sending of children to school regularly and promptly; but they should be submissive to their teacher, devoted to their books, and convinced of the importance of the learning which they are sent there to obtain. If you would have your children benefited by the school, let nothing but absolute necessity cause their absence therefrom; and especially so if the time thus indiscreetly lured from study is spent in idleness, and in company with the vulgar and profane."

YORK.—The report is confined to the schools, one of which receives this praise, and the house this censure:

"We found some very fine scholars in this district, and the improvement in the term was very manifest, doing credit to the teacher as an instructor, and the scholars as studious and attentive. But we were sorry to see the school-house so disorderly. We think the teacher to blame in not enforcing a greater attention to cleanliness, and the district in suffering the doors and benches to be so much out of order. Had there been that neatness and order in the school-room so pleasant to see, and so necessary to happiness, we would have set this school down as one of our best."

BUCKFIELD—Requires a closing examination and a good attendance of the district:

"We would suggest that no school be allowed to close without a thorough examination, which should be attended by the committee and every patron of the school. Parents and agents should unite in demanding this of their teachers, and should see to it that their children do not "dodge." Nothing would have a more salutary effect upon our schools.

If you would have profitable schools—have your children receive the greatest amount of benefit possible from your teacher's labors, then awaken to your duty, feel more interested in the welfare of both your teacher and scholars, regard the success of the school as your children's gain, and its failure as their loss and yours. Do not try to put all the responsibility of having poor schools on teachers, agents or committee. Send your children to school in season, and see they do not play truant. Do not keep them out of school for any trivial cause, but cooperate with the teacher in maintaining good order, and promoting the usefulness of the school. Parents should influence their children to make a poor

school better, and not allow their children to influence them to make a good school bad.”

FAYETTE—Gives an instance where an accidental fire occasioned no serious loss, and furnishes nearly all its teachers :

“ While the school was keeping, the school house accidentally caught fire and was consumed. A temporary school room was fitted up near by, and made as comfortable and convenient as circumstances would permit. As the school house was old, and much out of repair, its destruction, though some detriment to the school then in operation, was not a very serious loss to the district. The erection of a new and more commodious structure will be of far more advantage to future schools. The schools the past year have been generally successful. They have been conducted by tried and faithful teachers. You will not fail to notice by this report of individual districts, that a large majority of the teachers are of our own town ; thus proving to you the folly of importing them from other towns, when no better can be found than within our own borders. May the day not be far distant when it will be said of Fayette, that she not only furnishes her own teachers, but has a surplus for her sister towns.”

GRAY.—The town is congratulated for raising the chief portion of its teachers, and parental interference receives a decided rebuke :

“ It is a matter of congratulation and encouragement, that many of the teachers employed in our schools the past year have been of the superior class, and the progress made by the pupils under their instruction, has been far above the average. You have cause to feel proud that a majority of these teachers were raised and educated in your own town. There has been some trouble and much fault-finding in some districts this winter. The teachers may have been in fault in some instances ; yet I think we can trace the principal cause to parents. Were children properly trained at home, and led by mild yet decided means to obey the requirements of their parents, and sent to school with the understanding that they are strictly to regard its regulations, and obey the teacher, one great cause of trouble and poor schools would be removed. It is unjust to expect a teacher to enforce obedience or exact good lessons (which a judicious one will always do,) where

the refractory scholars have the sympathy of the parent, who perhaps will allow them to leave the school rather than submit. Improper interference is often a drawback upon our schools, by parents who are entirely ignorant how the exercises of a school ought to be conducted. Another drawback is the indifference of parents—they do not see that their scholars have suitable books; they do not seem to know or care whether they are in the school room or playing truant, lounging about the stores and houses or playing in the street. If by accident they find their scholars have made but little progress, they blame the teacher.”

WOODLAND.—The committee speak of an important requisite in a teacher :

“One school was not so brilliant a success as could be desired. The teacher failed to inspire her pupils with a love of school and a love of study, which is so essential to rapid progress.”

SEDGWICK.—After the mention of several school houses unfit for use, and black-boards almost white, the report speaks of what and where school houses ought to be :

“In estimating the character of a school, reference should always be had to the house. A teacher should not be required or expected to do as well in a cold, inconvenient, unpleasant house, as in a good one—and we do him injustice if we do require it. It is not enough that the school room can seat the scholars without crowding, and can be easily warmed. The house should be built in good taste, if good taste is worth cultivating in any case. The children will be more or less influenced by the general appearance of the house and surroundings. The location should be selected in reference to the scenery, to readiness of access, and to shelter from the cold blasts of winter and the burning heats of summer. Better have the house a little one side of the centre, and in a pleasant, comfortable place, than to have it just where the measuring chain may place it, with no beauty and no comfort about it. The house should be large enough to give space for classes outside of the seats. It should be high posted, to give plenty of pure air for the children's breath. The brain cannot work without its proper supply of pure air in plenty, any more than your horse can work without his hay and grain. That the house be well ventilated is as important as that it be well warmed. A poor school is at

times as much owing to poor air, as to a poor teacher—and no teacher can be successful in an unpleasant, cold, ill-ventilated room.

It is highly important to have comfortable seats. Such are rarely found, especially for the younger scholars. Seats are almost invariably too high and too narrow. The height of a seat should be such that the heel of the scholar can rest fairly on the floor. A little examination will show that this can be done in few houses. The width of the seat should not be less than its height, perhaps a little greater, and the back edge should be one or two inches lower than the front. If the seat be hollowed a little, like a good chair, so much the better.

The house should be warmed without passing the stove funnel over the heads of the scholars, even if this incur a greater expense. The whole house should be neatly finished, and if the seats and desks are well painted nothing is lost. The better the finish, the less likely are the scholars to mar it, and the more easily can it be kept clean."

SKOWHEGAN.—Well qualified teachers, and the protection of school-houses, find a prominent place among other good suggestions, not here extracted :

"The past year has made still more apparent the necessity of elevating the standard of our public schools. Too many teachers of a bare mediocrity, or of quite inferior talent, are still employed. The opinion too generally obtains that any one who can procure from the proper source a certificate of literary qualifications, is competent to teach a school. Tact, interest and disposition to teach are too much overlooked, and in consequence we find many teachers whose school-room operations are nearly as destitute of interest as are the hands of a clock over the dial-plate; and who are drilling their pupils in poetical feet and rhetorical analysis before they can read questions correctly.

We have need of that talent in teachers which shall come down to the level of the pupil's intellectual development, and open the child's mind to the reception of *ideas*, instead of standing aloof and merely teaching a mechanical repetition of words and phrases. To secure such talent, compensation must be a consideration, of course; and we think that even shorter terms, where increased compensation cannot otherwise be made, would do much toward

securing a higher order of talent in teaching. Let the question be not so much as to how many weeks of school we can have, as it is, where is the best talent that we can employ for a while, be it longer or shorter.

School-houses are broken into, defaced by obscene drawings and writings, mutilated and damaged to an extent that should awaken apprehensions in the mind of every friend of law and order. The knowledge should be diffused that such misdemeanors are high crimes in the eye of the civil law; and earnest efforts should be made by every good citizen to bring such offenders to punishment, not as a matter of revenge, but as what all are bound to do for the protection of society, and the maintenance of those principles which underlie and support our civilization and social structure."

SMITHFIELD.—Parents should visit schools and make the scholars go:

"It would encourage the scholars and incite the teachers, in many instances, to renewed exertions; and still by so doing, they would be enabled to judge for themselves of the efficiency of their schools, and not be led (as is too often the case) to form hasty and unjust opinions of the ability of their teachers, through the misrepresentations of their scholars. And furthermore we would advise all parents to see that their scholars attend regularly; for we hold it to be a self-evident fact, that those scholars who are absent from school one day in each week do not improve more than two-thirds as fast as those who are present every day."

BLUE HILL.—Like almost all other reproof, this censures the want of parental interest, and adds a similar report to teachers and school officers:

"The history of our schools for the year just concluded, furnishes us with but few examples of *extraordinary* advancement; yet in reviewing it we are led to hope that, to a reasonable extent, they have produced their legitimate results. There is the usual want of interest on the part of parents in this most important of all our institutions, our common schools. This is made painfully apparent to teachers by tardiness, irregularity in attendance and indifference to study which seem to characterize many of the pupils in our schools. Truth obliges us to say that this lack of interest has been too largely shared in by teachers and school offi-

cers. This apparent indifference doubtless arises in a measure from the all-engrossing question of national existence, which remained so long involved in doubt, and which still exerts an influence on our civil, literary and religious institutions."

POLAND.—The report shows how a school may be made a success, and teachers encouraged :

"In visiting the school at its beginning, we found the teacher was using the right lever to move the young minds and susceptible hearts, placed under her charge, by gaining the love, and infusing life and energy into her pupils. Some portion of each day was devoted to exercises in singing and oral recitations from Scripture, and in this way she promoted good order and increased the happiness of her pupils ; for the first exercise is *truly congenial* to the *nature* of scholars. We would recommend its introduction into all our schools. The second exercise can be but highly salutary in its influence ; for the young minds were daily impressed with the golden precepts of that Book which is the inestimable gift of God to man. At our second visit we found that Miss H.'s happy faculty of instructing had accomplished all we had expected, and brought the school to a most successful examination.

When a teacher has been engaged, and entered upon his duties, extend to him your warmest sympathies and hearty coöperation ; cultivate his acquaintance ; invite him to the hospitalities of your homes, and cheer his heart ; lighten his labor, and stimulate your children, by frequent visits to the school-room ; and let him plainly understand that you feel a deep interest in his success."

NEW GLOUCESTER.—The true working of the Common School System, and sound advice to parents, agents and teachers, are here extracted :

"Our Common School System, as now arranged, is most admirable in its operation ; and when all concerned properly perform their parts it cannot fail to bring forth good results. But when either party, through want of interest or proper watchfulness, fails in duty, then the efforts of the whole are measurably lost.

We would urge upon parents the importance of securing school agents who are themselves interested in the prosperity of the school ; men who are above carrying politics and prejudice into school

affairs, and will not be influenced through friendship to employ a teacher in whom they have little or no confidence, and whom they believe to be wanting in energy, force, faculty and discipline, and in fact in any or all the qualities which fit him for the duties of his station. Agents should not employ a poor or doubtful teacher because he can be obtained cheap. If you have but little money in your district be the more careful not to misspend what you have. If you can have but a short school, let that be a good one. Everybody knows that one month of a good school is worth more than two or three of a poor one; in fact the *shorter* a poor school the *better* for those who attend it.

Teachers should be more thorough and analytical in their method of instruction. Many teachers seem content to have their pupils recite from memory the definitions and rules as given in their books; while they spend little or no time in ascertaining whether they have any clearly defined idea of what they are saying."

ACRON.—After noting a disorderly school, the following *necessity* is added. Superintending Committees, parents, and final examinations, are equally touched:

"It is often absolutely *necessary* to apply counter-irritants in cases of severe internal inflammation and excitability. We think a seasonable application of "whip-sticks," the patient being well shaken, would have a very *sedative* effect in this school. We think sedatives *necessary*, as many scholars were seen to stand up in their seats, when they should have been sitting.

Superintending Committees should be men qualified by education to fill so important an office. They should thoroughly understand their duties, and *execute* them faithfully, rigidly and exactly; never permitting their sympathies or prejudices to interfere with the faithful discharge of such duties. If a teacher, after having received a certificate, proves unfit to manage his school, they should remove him promptly, according to the provisions of the law. If a scholar persists in disobeying the regulations of the school, they should fearlessly expel him, upon proof of his habitual disobedience. No parent, for a single hour should, (and we had almost said no *parent* will,) suffer a child to forsake his school because he merited and received chastisement; but if he has left, correct him with the rod or counsel, or *both*, and return him to school.

Look at some of our closing examinations! Where there should

be *forty* scholars we find but twenty-five or thirty! Why is this? this crawling out, this *mean* withdrawal on the last day of the school? Is it because there is no *parental* power behind the throne? or is it because that power connives at misrule?"

STRONG.—The committee preface their detailed report with remarks on the value of virtuous education :

“The principal object to be kept steadily in view in the promotion of the cause of popular education, is to impress on the mind of the whole a proper sense of its importance. The parent should consider it as the well-spring of happiness for his children, and the citizen as a source of prosperity to the State. In our own highly favored country there is a peculiar duty devolving upon the people. Those who are in a few years to control its destinies, are now in our public schools. There, in the spring time of their existence, they will acquire those habits which shall characterize their lives. Whatever of excellence there is in the constitution which has been bequeathed to us, whatever there is of value in our laws, in the privileges of which we boast, in the honors which we prize, and those institutions which have made our country a name and praise among all the people of the earth, all depend for their existence upon the education of those who are so soon to stand forward as actors on the theatre of life. In this country the fabric of our government can only be maintained by a progressive movement of the people in knowledge and virtue.”

SURRY.—Registers not returned to the Committee. Advice to parents and pupils :

“Your committee labor under great disadvantage in making a report of the schools in consequence of the neglect of the teachers in returning the registers of their schools. They should be returned to the Superintending School Committee, before the teachers receive their pay for teaching, according to the law of the State. The committee must have them before the report to the Secretary of State can be made. As you would wish your children to be men and women diligent and faithful in business, teach them to be diligent and faithful at the schools. Do not encourage, do not even allow your children to be idle and disobedient at school, unless you wish them to be idle and disobedient at home. “Just as the twig is bent the tree’s inclined;” and as surely as you allow a child to

disobey the proper orders and restraints at school, just so truly may you expect him to disobey your authority and restraint at home and grow up to be an *idle eye servant*; for an idle boy or girl seldom becomes master of any business, but is always a servant to others."

PROSPECT.—No troubles to be settled, good home influences recommended :

"The discipline and deportment is as good as of former years, and we think we are safe in adding, better than that of the last. We have not been called upon to arbitrate between teacher and scholars during the year. The general advancement throughout the terms has been very good.

Leave not the whole training of your children in the hands of the teacher, but recollect that a great part of their education is acquired at home. The child that receives good instruction at home, will be the more easily governed in school. Only an individual case has come under our observation during the past two years of a parent being interested enough to visit the school where the children were being educated."

SULLIVAN.—Order was needed, and all are concerned to maintain it. Children injured when teachers are blamed in their hearing :

"The want of good order is one of the greatest failures in the schools of this town. A want of order is found in many of the schools. The only way to bring our schools up to that high standard to which our free institutions entitle them, is for parents, teachers, committees and all others, to unite in this great cause and labor for the common good ; not supposing that our accountability ends when we have voted and raised the school money. Parents should see that their scholars are at school at school time. Parents sometimes think their children are at school, when they are away somewhere else. See that they go directly to school when they leave home.

Another evil which is quite common is for parents to find fault with the teacher in presence of the child. No one can tell the amount of damage this may do. Many a scholar has lost a good school on that account. The scholar loses confidence in the school and it becomes of no benefit to him."

WEST BROOKSVILLE—Gives an example in school-houses worthy of imitation. One portion of the town, where instruction seems to be not valued aright, hinders the cause of education :

“This town is year by year taking more interest in the education of its children and youth. During the past year a house of two stories in height and 30 X 40 on the ground has been erected and is near completion. War and heavy taxes concede a temporary suspension, but work upon it is soon to be returned. When completed it will be one of the best houses in the county. Another has been purchased to be remodelled, and will be a pleasant and commodious house. An effort is being made to unite two or more districts in another section of the town, for the purpose of erecting a house similar to the first mentioned. I regret that one section of the town takes but little interest in education, not as dead weights, but as opposing barriers to the cause, giving us not a little trouble in our efforts to improve districts, schools and teachers. By constant vigilance we hope to overcome all obstacles and in time place our town among the first in intelligence.”

LOVELL.—A good school, except in order, leads to the remark that instruction may be given to the neglect of *law*. Blackboards and globes are recommended, and advice of the best kind given to teachers :

“Blackboards have effected a great change in the method of teaching, and paid a large dividend on a small outlay. There is at least one other piece of apparatus which should be as extensively used in our schools as the blackboard. I refer to the globe. No school can afford to be without one.

Teachers, fit yourselves for your profession. Educate yourselves far beyond the schools which you would teach. Tell your pupils something new about their lessons,—something that they do not find in their text-books ; and when they learn to respect you for your superior knowledge, you will find it far less difficult to control them than it would be if they knew it took you a great part of the time out of school to prepare yourself so as to get along passably in school. Scholars have little respect for teachers whom they daily see perplexed in their text-books. But *keep order* if you do nothing else. If you teach your pupils good manners, it is so much done in the elements of education, and afterwards go as much farther as you can. ‘Order is Heaven’s first law.’

GREENWOOD.—The report teaches how fault-finding by parents may damage a winter or summer's work :

“ You should remember that more than one-half of the trouble and difficulty arising in our schools is chargeable to you ; that if you speak disparagingly of your teachers your children will think less of them and consequently be less inclined to behave in a respectful manner toward them. If your children disobey the orders of school and are punished therefor, do not take the children's part in such a manner as to give them to understand that you think they should be allowed to do as they please, and that their teachers are in fault for trying to keep order.”

WINSLOW.—The Committee think that they had better cease for a while to urge the new school-houses, and then ask for better attendance :

“ If it be true that a miller who can sleep soundly while his mill is going, making a great noise, will surely wake when it stops, we have come to the conclusion that perhaps if we should stop trying to make a loud report concerning the apology for a school-house, which is found in too many of our districts, the people might wake up and begin to do something.

Regularity of attendance also deserves to be more strenuously sought by those interested in schools. True, frequent storms the past winter have prevented some from being as regular as they might otherwise have been ; but our schools, many of them, are quite short ; and some scholars have no opportunity of attending school except in the winter ; how great then the loss of a single day ! And then, too, the scholars are so arranged and made to move along together in classes, with so much dependence on every lesson to aid them in acquiring the next, that loss of time by absence is like the loss of rounds in a ladder—it makes it hard to ascend ; if too many are gone, all progress is stopped. A few lessons lost, especially in the discussion of rules and principles, rarely fail to cripple the scholar for the whole term afterwards.”

RIPLEY.—This report is occupied with the state of the schools, but has the following in regard to female teachers :

“ We are satisfied that females, when properly educated as teachers, are preferable to males, and should be employed in all our schools in winter, as well as summer, throughout the town.

Their more gentle and refined manners, purer morals, and greater tact and forbearance in managing and instructing young children, preëminently fit them for the employment. With the coöperation of the parents in sustaining them, all of our schools might be taught by female teachers; and as they can be obtained at about one-half the compensation usually paid to male teachers, the length of our winter schools would be nearly doubled."

BUXTON.—A good teacher can do something in a bad school-house; and parents may spoil the efforts of the best teacher in a good school-house:

"If you cannot give your schools your personal attention, first of all see that they are intrusted to the care of good and faithful teachers. You may have a good house and everything in it attractive, but if you have a dull and disinterested teacher, whose interest is in his *town order* more than in the advancement of his pupils, your school-house were better unoccupied and the children at home. On the contrary, if your house is old and even repulsive, and you have a living, working teacher, who will make it even attractive by his own genius in exciting and sustaining an interest in the studies pursued there, you will feel that your money has been profitably expended, although his *town order* may be larger than that of the former, and the term somewhat shorter. Again we say employ good teachers, for such only will make good schools.

Be careful and not magnify your teacher's faults in the presence of your children. If your teacher has committed errors, as all are liable to do, go to that teacher, have the matter settled unknown to your children, and make provisions for avoiding the like again. Too many schools are injured and some entirely broken up by not adhering to this principle. Better, by far, throw your influence in the right direction by repeating to your children the time honored saying, "If you have a whipping at school, when you come home another will be your fate." Pursue this course and there will be but little occasion for corporal punishment. More serious difficulties in our schools date their origin from the fireside at home than in any other way, an influence more prolific of insubordination than most other causes combined. If then you desire the education of your children and wish them to honor your name for good counsel, as we honor those whose admonitions we reverently cher-

ish, pursue towards them such a course that they may be able to recall their school days with pleasure and to say with pride, 'I was an obedient scholar from the influence I received at home.'"

CHERRYFIELD.—The committee intend hereafter to hold the school agents to the law requiring notification to them of the beginning and close of schools. The neglect is often censured in other reports :

"The law requires of each agent that a written notice be given the Superintending School Committee, within ten days after commencement of the school in his district. The penalty is one dollar per day for every such neglect. It is equally binding in relation to a written notice at the close of each school. Your committee have attended to their duty under this criminal neglect. But two written notices from the nine several school agents have come to our knowledge ; and we wish it distinctly understood that for the year ensuing school agents in the several districts to which they are appointed will be held amenable to the law, for the fulfilment of this duty, so long and so generally neglected."

HEBRON—Advises that in one district no more money be spent for schools until a better house is provided :

"The schools in town for the past year have been generally successful and compare favorably with those of former years. There are good and convenient school-houses in all the districts except one and two. The house in number two is fast going to decay, and we hope soon to see a new one in its place. It is impossible for the district to realize the benefit of its money in such a house, especially in winter. Number one has no school-house and we would advise the district not to expend any more money for schools until they furnish a suitable house. It is quite as important to have a good house as a good teacher."

MT. VERNON.—How some scholars behave ; and after speaking of poor school-houses, the report closes with the identity of parental and filial interests :

"There seemed to be a general uneasiness among the scholars, some having no respect for the teacher and but little for themselves. The interests of the rising generation are our interests. Our children are to fill our places in society ; and the *manner* in they will do it depends very much upon the kind of education they receive."

BERWICK.—Writing and reading should be more and better taught. Absences are statistically noted :

“Each branch of learning has not, in all cases, received its due share of attention. The art of writing has been too much neglected, and often this fault is traceable to the parents. Teachers have often remarked, ‘Many of the scholars have no writing books.’ We insist upon the importance of this branch and hope that in future it will be properly attended to. Reading we regard as the leading branch, and as an exercise we think it has had its full share of time ; but that it has had *proper* attention, either from teacher or scholar, we very much doubt. We find very few good readers in any of our schools. Many of our scholars are allowed to advance from one grade of the series of text-books to another, much before their mental capacity requires the change ; and in this way many who might with proper training early become skillful readers, contract habits of stammering, repeating, and many others of a kindred nature, which often prove a source of much embarrassment in after years. The lack of constancy and punctuality that is shown by the teacher’s returns, is a formidable obstacle to the progress of our schools. This might in a great measure be corrected by the parents of the scholars. Out of the *eight hundred and fifty-five* scholars in town between the ages of four and twenty-one, we have the small aggregate attendance of *five hundred and sixty-three*, and an average of *four hundred and ten*. These figures may surprise you, but we think they are very nearly correct.”

LEEDS.—Discipline and liveliness needed. Profanity condemned :

“A thorough disciplinarian consequently governs with the eye, a look being sufficient. A little more *vivacity* would make the school more *vivacious*.

After the habit of using profane language is once formed it is hard removing it. Parents, we think, sometimes are not watchful enough to check the first indications of it. Let them watch carefully. They should be as choice of the *mind* as the *body*.”

MONTVILLE—Gives a brief report, but it speaks well :

“The past year has been a year of quiet and steady improvement. Our teachers, with very few exceptions, have known their duty, and been willing to do it. Our scholars, too, have taken an interest, which is highly commendable, and shows that our efforts to awaken them to the importance of securing an education is appreciated. With few exceptions they have done remarkably well.

On the part of the parents there is also an increased interest in relation to the true aim and purpose of the common school. Many are beginning to feel the importance of a unity of action, and a hearty coöperation with their teachers is the result.”

ORLAND—Gives the district reports, and the following encouragement :

“The teachers in the several districts have been able to govern their schools without calling upon the committee to deal with refractory scholars, which is very gratifying.”

SWAN ISLAND.—The committee speaks plainly and tells why some of the schools failed. Similar causes are pernicious elsewhere. One case is thus described :

“There being however a very *great* quarrel among the parents in this very *small* district, the parties seemed determined either to govern each school or destroy its efficiency, and they have succeeded too well, both in the summer and winter term ; some of the parents kept their children at home, with the plea that the teacher was liable to “learn them wrong.” We feel more fearful that they will *learn nothing* either *right* or wrong.”

Another case brings the following language :

“The winter term was taught by an experienced but, so far as this school was concerned, unsuccessful teacher. A large part of the scholars were prejudiced against the teacher, at least as soon as they saw him, and unfortunately the teacher had not the faculty to overcome this prejudice. Many of the parents, instead of taking decisive steps toward having the evil remedied, allowed their children to tattle about the teacher, and also to absent themselves from school, and aggravated the matter still more by talking with one another, and that sometimes in the presence of their children.”

WHITNEYVILLE—Reports disagreements and a general want of success. Causes are specified in one instance which were existent in others :

“Owing to the very great indifference manifested by the parents of the pupils, and the consequent irregularity, and want of punctuality in attendance, the average improvement of the pupils was not more than half or two-thirds of what it would have been, if parents had taken care that their children should be in school regularly and at the proper hour.”

POWNAL—Recommends a union of certain districts, and gives as a reason, a less number of new school-houses would be needed :

“We find many talented scholars in our schools, and it is to be regretted that we should not have some of our districts united, so as to give them longer terms and increase their interest in their studies. We think that districts number five and twelve might be united ; also number three and thirteen. In each of these four districts they need a new school-house ; and it would be cheaper to build *two* than *four*.”

FRYEBURG.—The “leadership” of the teacher is essential to success in his office :

“The genuine success and prosperity of a school depends very much upon the capacity, ability and leadership of its teacher. The homely old saying of Philip of Macedon, that “an army of stags with a lion for a leader is better than an army of lions with a stag for a leader,” is full of pith and point, nor is it applicable to *war-like* affairs alone. The *teacher* should not only lead the young to an accurate and thorough knowledge of everything contained in the text books—should not only teach them the great value of a sound mind in a healthful body, but he should also teach them the intrinsic excellence and worth of their being true to themselves under all circumstances and at all hazards.”

NORRIDGEWOCK.—This careful and instructive report presents several points of deep interest. The selections relate to rigid examination of candidates, perfect lessons and female teachers :

“In the year 1861 your committee began a more rigid examination of the candidates for teaching our public schools, and that practice has been pursued with unswerving fidelity through four

years. To that fact principally we owe the singular prosperity of the schools for the past season. We have heard no complaint from any source. In several of the districts the teachers are believed to have given universal satisfaction. In by-gone years there were various schools in which a few unruly boys got up insubordinations and disturbances. All that is obsolete. We have known no severity during the past winter; the government is supposed to have been universally mild and Christian, and yet ample restraint has been exercised.

At the commencement of the winter a strenuous effort was made to have perfect lessons in all our schools. The teachers were so instructed, and the matter was explained to the children, and its importance urged. The result has been quite as satisfactory as could be reasonably expected. Though, perhaps, no school attained absolute perfection, yet there were several which made commendable approximation toward it, and we are persuaded that perseverance in this right line of improvement will elevate our schools to an honorable place in our commonwealth.

A question was raised in one district which is worthy of a little attention. There was a desire among some to displace the highly commended mistress by a master. Let that have happened! What then? The term would have been two-thirds as long, there would have been a loss of *two and two-thirds* weeks out of *eight* weeks to the mass of the children. Let people consider whether that arrangement would pay.

Another district paid twenty dollars per week for its two teachers, and had little more than seven weeks this winter. If it had employed females, it might have had equal teaching for fifteen dollars and lengthened its schooling to more than three weeks. We may get another lesson in economy from the village on the north side of the Kennebec. That district had thirty weeks school *per year*, while number eight had but seventeen; a loss of thirteen weeks, which in our opinion would require an amazingly good master to make up in the remainder of the time."

TRESCOTT—Speaks of schools, pupils, parents and agents:

"The teachers did very well the last school year. If the parents of the children would visit the schools and compromise [co-operate?] with the teachers, and have their children more punctual in attendance, it would be better for both teacher and scholars.

Your committee further wish the districts would choose more competent men for their agents, as a majority of them did not do their duty as required by law, making it bad for your committee in making a report."

DEXTER—Is reported chiefly in statistics, and is encouraging :

"It is true of this as of every town, of this year as of all others ; some teachers rank high, others well-nigh failed. The agents on the whole have been very successful the past year in the teachers secured. In no school [out of thirty-six] has there been a rupture. No teachers have been dismissed, and in but *four* instances have they failed to give good satisfaction ; and but two schools shortened by sickness of teachers."

FRANKFORT.—The report is peculiar, and exhibits no flattering picture :

"In accordance with said statute [quoted] we report as follows :

1. The condition of the schools during the past year your committee knows but little about, not having visited but very few, for reasons *hereafter* given. So far as we do know the condition is not flattering for want of interest in both parents and pupils.

2. The proficiency of the pupils we apprehend has not been *greater* than was expected. We are unable to give positive information on that point.

3. Of the success attending the modes of instruction and government of the teachers, your committee can only speak in general terms. Knowing the fact that some teachers, who could not pass the necessary examination to warrant the committee to grant a certificate, have nevertheless been allowed by the agents to go on and teach the schools, for which they were engaged, it would not be at all surprising to the world at large to learn that the result proved a failure.

The reasons alluded to above why your committee know so little about the schools in town are as follows :

1. We were given to understand at the last annual meeting that we should not be expected to visit any schools without legal notice from the agents.

2. As we have not received a single legal notice from any agent in town during the past year, we have not felt it our duty to go to the several agents or districts to obtain such information. We therefore are unable to report more fully."

VERONA—Reports an improving condition of school affairs :

“One district had no fall school for want of a school-house. There will be one built this season. The money lays in the treasury. The committee are gratified at being able to report that in no former year have our schools, taken as a whole, been more successful in their operations than during the past year.”

ENFIELD.—The committee conclude their report with this summary :

“As a whole we think the schools, take them altogether, have been a fair average of schools for years past. As to quality, we have had some very good ones, to balance up for the poor ones. We think there is a chance for improvement and recommend that there be more effort to get good and competent teachers, and that parents take more pains to have the scholars at school and coöperate and sympathize with the teacher in the management and discipline of the schools, and visit the schools to know how they are getting along, and not hear too much to the complaints of scholars till they know whether there is really any cause for them.”

CHARLOTTE—Would find benefit in having more terms of the usual length :

“There has been a term of school in each district in town, since the last report; and in one district two terms. They have not all been as good as we could wish; though they have, we think, been quite as good as usual.”

PHIPSBURG.—The committee notice a common evil forcibly, and commend our system of public education :

“Irregularity in the attendance is becoming fearfully great, especially in some districts. Some scholars will attend a few days of the week; some not at all. On the street and in the stores many of our boys spend too much of their time. The education they receive in these places is ruinous, as they have no desire for anything that will make them respectable and beloved. Our common school system, imperfect though it may be, has given to New England a character for intelligence second to that of no people on earth. It affords facilities by which the poorest man may become the peer, and even the superior of him upon whom fortune, from his birth, has showered her golden favors. It is a system from

which the wealthy are not debarred, but within which they can claim no peculiar advantages. How jealously should it be guarded, protected, fostered, nourished."

SEARSPORT.—The report of the committee is occupied with a critical examination of the schools. Nearly all receive commendation. One or two are specially noticed otherwise. Truancy, a conspiracy, and a bad school-house, each receive a merited blow :

"The whole number of scholars in the district was seventy-four. The average number attending school, as appeared by the registry, was only twenty. From this one of two things may be inferred : either that some parents in that district are guilty of a great wrong towards their children, in permitting them to lose the benefit of their schools by non-attendance ; or, that many scholars play truant unbeknown to their parents ; and that the officer in that district, appointed by the town to look after truant scholars, has not performed his duty."

A petition to remove a teacher after a few days in the school, was signed by certain scholars and denied. The temper of the school was bad :

"On the contrary they saw great reasons why the request of the petitioners should not be complied with. They saw evidence of a wicked conspiracy on the part of some of the scholars to oust the teacher ; and that they were not very particular as to the means used to accomplish this end. Fifteen scholars signed a petition that the teacher was not qualified to teach them algebra, only one of whom pursued that study, and she only a beginner. Were they competent judges ? So with parsing ; some of those who signed the petition that the teacher was incompetent to teach them in parsing, never studied grammar in their lives. Were they the judges to decide the competency or incompetency of the teacher ? So with arithmetic. While there were several very fair scholars in arithmetic, the others possessed a knowledge of that branch scarcely beyond the first simple rules.

Had the committee, under these circumstances, closed the school, they believe they would have committed a great wrong towards the teacher, and would have given encouragement to a spirit of insolence and insubordination which merited defeat and rebuke ; and which if thus encouraged, would have caused trouble to the district in the future.

It is within the knowledge of at least one of your committee, that this school has often been poorly governed in years past. Intimations and threats of personal violence towards the teacher, and attempts to break up the school were not made in that district the past winter for the first time.

In district number six the school-house is utterly unfit for the purpose to which it is put. It might, with suitable repairs, make a tolerably good pig-pen ; but the scholars of that district are worthy of a better house."

REMARKS ON THE EXTRACTS.

It will require but little inspection to see how valuable are these reports from the various Superintending Committees, prepared with care, with apparent fidelity, and a most earnest interest for the prosperity of the important charge placed in their hands. The "Extracts," brief as they have been, fully show the spirit of the persons who have not shrunk from their responsibility. But they show more than this. They reveal the *practical working* of the Common School system, as the exhibition of its *inner life*; they bring to light the defects; they let its friends see the hindrances; they give an inside view of the school house, the teacher and pupils at their work; they tell where he is wanting, and where he is well qualified, his failures and far more more often, his success. The last item of this enumeration would appear still more plainly if the reports had been given in full, as for many reasons would have been desirable. They prove what are the wants to be supplied, so that the money raised by the authority of the State can be applied in a way to make the whole of it useful to promote the highest welfare of the institution which the State claims as her own; to bring each scholar within its range into such a relation thereto, as that he shall receive his full benefit from the taxation, made for the good of the whole; and so become the intelligent citizen, and with other aids, the good man, ready to meet any of the events of time, or those to come after time is ended.

These wants have been noted in the course of these "Extracts." But it may be well to bring them together in compact form, so that they can be the more easily approached, and the more readily remembered and met.

I. *The Choice of Agents.*—On this part of the school system greatly depends the success of the individual schools. The officer here should be taken from the most intelligent portion of the district. He should be a person who has insight into character, and will devote willingly the necessary time to carry out the purpose of his office. If the choice has been fortunate, let it be repeated in a re-election. Then will the judicious course already begun be continued, until the *habit of having good schools* is established. By

all means let the *legal notice* be given to the Superintending Committee of the time of opening and closing the school; and let the Registers be duly returned.

II. *The Selection of Teachers.*—A good school cannot be expected where the leadership is defective in qualification, or inefficient in action. Two requisites must be present;—a sufficiency of learning, and the power of discipline. The learning should indeed be more than sufficient for the standing of the school, so that by full explanations and ready illustrations, the pathway of the pupil may be enlightened by the information given outside of the words of the printed lesson. It is for this reason that the teacher who can read well, can teach the alphabet better than one who can read only with hesitating voice; and they who are well acquainted with the principles and rules of grammar, can bring a class forward better in reading, than one in whose mind this knowledge has no place. It is the same with other studies, each in some way helps another.

The second necessity is the ability to govern. The teacher may have all the literary qualifications that the best seminaries of instruction can furnish. But unless there be the power to regulate the conduct of the scholars so that order shall prevail, while the methods of teaching are being applied, the learning of the teacher will be slow to reach the minds of the pupils, and complaint and confusion will be spread throughout the district. The agent should ascertain if the candidate for the place is endued with self-possession. Calmness of disposition and coolness of temper are specially valuable in the disposal of the untoward events arising from the impatience, irritability and insolence which may come in his way, both from children and the interference of parents. With these endowments he will be prepared to sustain his position and authority, first by firmness and persuasion, and when these means are disregarded, by such other forces as would be justified in the parental discipline, delegated to the teacher when the scholars are placed under his care.

The teachers, therefore, should be selected with special reference to their attainments and capability of governing. The design of the Normal School specially contemplates these two essential properties. The hope is confidently entertained that the graduates of this promising institution will enter on the duties of the school-room so well prepared with the experience derived from their

teachers, as to begin and continue their work, as if the experience was self-acquired; and to show constantly, that love for the pupil and interest in his improvement are the leading motives in their mode of instruction; and that the severer modes are to be used only when the milder fail. A true love for the school and the highest welfare of the scholars will be sure to use the *rod* of discipline, only when the *affection* of discipline is refused by an ill-disposed pupil, and advantage is taken of the mildness and gentleness of the teacher, to despise his authority, and bring idleness, ignorance and disorder into the minds and deportment of the scholars. It is a pleasant thought that the reports enumerate more good teachers than bad. It is a sad reflection that they show how in some cases, bad scholars have paralyzed the skill and efforts of good teachers.

III. *Parents Faulty*.—In no one feature does the large majority of the reports agree more uniformly, than in their opinion that the chief drawback upon the prosperity of our schools is to be found in the lack of *parental interest* as shown in a want of unity of feeling and action among parents; in penuriousness in not raising a suitable amount of money; in the disposition to listen to the complaints of children; in finding fault with teachers; in not visiting the schools for encouraging their good order and progress, and in allowing tardiness and inconstancy of attendance. Surely here is a serious catalogue of charges. But the Committees are ready to bring the evidence of their truth. In some instances they go farther than these reports, and say that the principal difficulties in schools arise from the interference of parents with the affairs of the school-room.

The great wants here are, that parents should be awake to secure the opposite excellencies; to promote harmony of views and action; to shut their ears against the little complaints that are encouraged by their inquiries; to say all the good they can of a teacher, and if he is faulty, to speak to him privately and carefully, and thus solicit an amendment; to visit their schools for the purpose of aiding them in their good work; and in their persistent care to have their children punctual and constant in their attendance. To this should be added the effort to maintain the most friendly relations with the teacher, both with regard to themselves and their scholars; and not, as is too often the case, allow their children to consider the teacher as their enemy; or, rather as a

kind of detective police officer, hired to watch and worry and correct them so as to make them unhappy; and whose observation it is a lawful employment of their time and position to endeavor to evade. Parents can do much to make the school good. Home influences should be of the right stamp; for the universal testimony of teachers has passed into the proverb: "Let me know the boy at school, and I will tell you what he is at home."

IV. *Poor School Houses.*—Brief allusion has been made to this head of remark in an earlier part of the present Report. But if the subject had then been as fresh in the mind of the Superintendent, as it is since he has read the almost incessant complaints of the Committees on this subject, he would have entered more largely into the evils of the many poor places where children are to be taught how to be useful citizens, voters and supporters of the social fabric; in all of which essential characteristics they would certainly be destitute, unless other influences were vastly superior to the too often miserable, dingy and cold structures, miscalled school-houses. There is wealth enough in their neighborhoods to have better. Some districts, during the last year, have made the improvements demanded for more available instruction. It would be a brilliant report to make if all the needs in this direction should be supplied in the coming year.

Conclusion.

The undersigned has now presented to your Excellency, and the honorable body associated with you in the Council, his views of many of the wants, advantages and duties of our Common School system of education in the State, as they have been specially offered to his mind, during the six months of his first official term. He has seen far more to encourage than to discourage his hopes in the future. He believes the pathway of improvement was fairly opened, before he was called to be the guide of the interests to be promoted by its means; and now that the smiles of peace and the invitations of prosperity are beckoning us onward, a larger attention, a more generous support and a deeper, wider interest will be applied to the unfolding the powers of the youthful mind. We are educating our children not for the State alone, but for other parts of our extended land, whither the characteristic enterprise of our people carries them in their chosen pursuits of life. The principles of action, the rules of life, and the useful knowledge received

in our schools, will be borne with them at home and abroad. They will help to give shape and direction to the wants of our times; and their persevering influence will be exhibited anew in the maintenance of the institutions which have been procured for us by conflict and carnage, and which can be maintained in peace and success only by the presence of knowledge, and the practice of virtue under the guidance of the truth, revealed from on high.

EDWARD BALLARD, *Brunswick.*

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