

R E P O R T

OF THE

Superintending School Committee,

OF THE

TOWN OF PELHAM,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH, 1858.

LOWELL:

BROWN & MOREY, BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS.

44 Central Street.

1858.

The Superintending School Committee of this Town, for the year ending March 9, 1858, would respectfully submit the following

R E P O R T .

The Statute requires that this Report shall state "the number of weeks which the Public Schools have been kept in each District in Summer and in Winter, and what portion thereof by male, and what portion by female teachers; the whole number of scholars that have attended each school; the progress made in each school in the various branches of learning; with such suggestions as may be useful on the management of schools and the subject of education."

Before entering on a detail of the different Schools your Committee would beg leave to express a decided approbation for the interest manifested by the Prudential Committees of the different districts; and the success attending their efforts, in the selection of teachers; none having been employed but those who were *well qualified* in literary acquirements for the duties of their station.

THE SUMMER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICT NO. 1.

Prudential Committee.—DR. AMOS BATCHELDER.

This School was taught 14½ weeks by Miss Maria E. Burnham, of this town. Whole number of scholars, 38. One over 16 years of age. Average attendance, 28. Miss Burnham was successful in her efforts, and gained the love of her scholars, and sustained a good interest in her school to the last; and the closing examination showed very conclusively, that "to teach the young idea how to shoot," is a trait in her character quite fully developed.

DISTRICT NO. 2.

Prudential Committee,—MR. EDMUND D. TENNEY.

The School in this District was under the instruction of Miss Caroline Ann Greeley, for a term of $14\frac{1}{2}$ weeks. Whole number of scholars, 44; two of them being more than 16 years of age. Average attendance, $37\frac{1}{2}$. On account of sickness the School was obliged to close, abruptly, a day or two before the close of the term, so that there was no closing examination; and your Committee cannot report the progress made in the School. Still, the known ability and fidelity of the teacher, and the confidence placed in her by the district is sufficient warrant to believe that the School was successful and satisfactory.

DISTRICT NO. 3.

This District, having accepted the benefit of a late act of the Legislature, have discontinued its organization under the Somersworth act; thus becoming a town district.

Prudential Committee,—MR. JEPHTHAH UNDERWOOD.

The School in the North School House was under the instruction of Miss Abbie L. Coburn, of this town, for a term of 7 weeks. Whole number of scholars, 32; two being over 16 years of age. Average attendance, 28. Considering the shortness of the School, it is but proper to say that all was done that could reasonably be expected. The time of the closing examination was very unfavorable for the best appearance of the School; it being on the afternoon preceding the 4th of July, when the minds of the teacher and her scholars were absorbed in preparations for that occasion.

The School in the South School House was under the instruction of the same teacher 7 weeks, and 4 weeks under the instruction of Miss Artoinette J. Baker, of Lowell; in all 11 weeks. Miss Coburn wishing to leave at the end of 7 weeks, Miss Baker was employed to finish the term. Whole number of scholars, 10—all between 4 and 16 years of age. Average number, 7. Some of the scholars who attended this School are destined probably to take a high stand, some few years hence, in the examinations of that School. On the whole, the School appeared very well.

DISTRICT NO. 4.

Prudential Committee,—MR. HENRY CHASE.

The School in this District was under the instruction of Miss Emily Green, of Lowell, for a term of 12 weeks. Whole number of scholars, 32,—all under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 28. The School made very good progress in the branches pursued, and the examination at the close was highly satisfactory to the parents and others who listened to it. It being one of the most sultry days of last summer, the little children as well as the larger ones, were very quiet and attentive, showing conclusively that the School was well disciplined. Miss Green governs easily and with kindness. She is truly a *teacher*. Ever finding employment for her pupils, they find no time for disorder.

DISTRICT NO. 5.

Prudential Committee,—MR. EZÉKIEL RICHARDSON.

The instruction of the School in this District was under the care of Miss Mary T. Gage, of this town, for a term of 14 weeks. Whole number of scholars, 27,—two being over 16 years of age. Average attendance, 20. Miss Gage fully sustained her character as an accomplished and thorough teacher; and the class of young ladies, who enjoyed the privilege of her instruction, showed by their prompt recitations and the advance they made in their studies, that they appreciated their advantages. Some of the younger classes appeared *very well*.

DISTRICT NO. 6.

Prudential Committee,—MR. PHILANDER WELLS.

The instruction of the School in this District, was under the care of Miss Rebecca A. Whitehouse, for a term of 8 weeks. Whole number of scholars, 11; all between the ages of 4 and 16. Average attendance, 10.71. The progress of the School was very commendable. This was the first effort of the teacher in the business of teaching; and it can truly be said of her, that she bids fair to make a superior teacher.—Her School being small, she had not a large field to try her skill; but she governed with ease, with dignity, and with kindness.

and thorough; and satisfactory to the very numerous company of visitors who listened to it. The scholars of this School have enjoyed a precious opportunity in receiving the instructions of so faithful and energetic a teacher. No doubt circumstances which will be alluded to in another place, had much to do in elevating this, and most of our other Schools, to that high stand which they now occupy. Yet it is very just to say that this School has made large advances the past winter. The specimens of Declamation were very pleasing; and the *Paper* prepared by the young ladies was very praise-worthy.

DISTRICT NO. 3.

Both the South and the North Schools in this District were under the instruction of Mr. Walter E. Stevens, of Methuen, for a term of 8 weeks in each part of the District. Number of scholars in the South School, 23;—average attendance, 18. Number of scholars in the North School, 40;—average attendance, 35. Mr. Stevens is a young teacher, having taught but one term previous to this; but he entered on his duties as a teacher, with a determination to do his whole duty, and how far he succeeded is best known by the fruits of his labors.—That the School under his care have made a good advance on their former acquirements is quite certain, and if the Schools in this District do not stand in the front rank in comparison with some of our other Schools,—yet they possess the elements of progress, which rightly cultivated, will soon place them on a level with any School in town. The examination of the Schools in this District were satisfactory, and very creditable both to the teacher and scholars, and the papers read at the close of each examination, were very fine productions.

DISTRICT NO. 4.

The School in this District, now in progress, is under the instruction of Moses H. Johnson, Esq., of Atkinson, who, having for many years past, made teaching his winter employment, feels the importance of thorough instruction,—so that no class can slide over their lessons as a boat glides over the water, leaving no permanent track of its passage,—but his in-

structions are more like the building of a railroad through a hill, the progress may be somewhat slow, but the effects are sure and permanent. On an examination of the School at the close of the 8th week, the School was found in a very good condition. The Reading Classes were particularly noticed as having made much improvement; also, a class of the younger scholars in Colburn's Arithmetic, were very prompt. The Writing Books were kept with neatness and exhibited many specimens of fine writing, with good improvement in most.—The Declamations and Compositions exhibited, were very creditable to the School.

DISTRICT NO. 5.

The School in this District was taught for a term of 10 weeks by Mr. Eliphalet B. Gage, of this town. Number of scholars, 35. Average attendance, 30. Though this was the first effort of the teacher,—yet it would require a pretty close scrutiny to discover by his management in School, that he was not experienced in the business. He gained the good will and the confidence of his scholars, so that they made rapid and thorough advance in most of the studies pursued, as was evinced at the closing examination. The first class in Greenleaf's Arithmetic placed on the blackboard several of the more difficult problems contained in that book, and explained them with a promptness and facility that showed a thorough knowledge of that study. The class in Natural Philosophy did well. In regard to Writing, the books as a whole, did not show that neatness and care that could be wished; though some of them exhibited considerable progress. The class in Geometry and the classes in Algebra made good progress. On the whole the School appeared well, and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

No doubt much credit is due the teacher of the Summer School for the high stand the School now occupies among the Schools in town, and the District may well bestow much praise on both Summer and Winter teachers, and be encouraged to future efforts to sustain their present position, and advance still more.

DISTRICT NO. 6.

Prudential Committee,—MR. WARREN SHERBURNE.

Teacher, Miss Maria E. Burnham, of this town. Number of scholars, 26; 6 of them came from Hudson. Average attendance, 18. Length of term, 12 weeks. This District being small, they are obliged usually, to have short terms of Schools, and as a consequence, the scholars of this School must either study hard or be rather behind the other Schools in town.—Miss Burnham conducted her School with her usual ability, and the progress of the School was very conspicuous, and the scholars appeared to manifest a disposition to progress as fast as those of more favored Districts.

The discipline of all the Schools, both summer and winter, with the exception of part of one term in one school, has been excellent. Corporal punishment has been resorted to in only a few instances. And the teachers appear to have adopted the principle, that kindness and firmness, with constant employment and suitable encouragement, are the great preventives of idleness and disobedience, and incentives to industry and good order.

Much interest has been manifested the past year on the subject of education, in addition to our District Schools. And it is noticed in this report, not only because of its being worthy of note, but because the present prosperity of our Schools is owing, to some extent, to the influence of those select Schools which have been enjoyed by many of our best scholars.

A select School was kept in Capt. Coburn's School-house in early Spring for a term of six weeks, in which some 25 scholars, mostly from this town, enjoyed the instruction of Miss Mary C. Richardson.

There was a private or select School kept in the North School-house in the third District for a term of 7 or 8 weeks, where 25 or 30 of the scholars of that District received the instruction of Miss Zoa Hills, of Nashua, in which the branches of education usually taught in our schools, were pursued with very good success.

During the interval between our Summer and Winter Schools, there was a *High School* in Major Woodbury's Hall, where 30 or more young gentlemen and ladies, mostly of this

town, received the instructions of Miss Mary C. Richardson and Miss Mary T. Gage, of this town. In this School and also in the School in Capt. Coburn's School-house, Reading, English Grammar, Modern, Ancient and Physical Geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Surveying, Astronomy, Philosophy, Chemistry, and the French and Latin languages, together with Declamations and Composition, were all taught successfully and thoroughly. The fame of these teachers needs no trumpeting in this report.

Considerable attention is being bestowed on Penmanship. The Writing School taught by Mr. Henry Huse, at Mr. Woodbury's Hall, made good progress in that art. Mr. Huse is instructing a class in the third District. Mr. Huse possesses rare talent in this beautiful art. There is also a Writing School now in progress in the fourth District that is giving satisfaction to those concerned.

A Table is here subjoined, showing some facts in relation to the Schools not otherwise particularly noticed.

No. of District,	SUMMER.						WINTER.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Loss per cent. by non-attendance,	26½	13½	30 12½	13	26	2	34½	12	21½ 12	3½	14	17	10
No. of tardy marks, - - -	155	287	193 36	152	140	17	70	94	105 47	43	73	66	
No. in Reading and Spelling, -	38	44	32 10	32	27	11	44	59	40 23	58	35	26	
No. in Writing, - - -	9	25	21 6	14	10	5		53	25 8	42	23	9	
No. in Arithmetic, - - -	23	32	22 8	19	22	6	28	39	36 20	43	31	20	
No. in Geography, - - -	18	17	10 2	10	4	5	10	59	13 6	20	11	6	
No. in Grammar, - - -	7	10	18 5	7	8	4	21	44	21 11	30	17	10	
No. in Composition, - - -	4	12	2	4	7	4	5		10 6	9	12	10	
No. in History, - - -		13	5 2			1			3 5	4	2	2	
No. in Philosophy, - - -					2					5	3		
No. in Algebra, - - -		5	1		2			6	5	7	7		
No. in Geometry, - - -	1				1		1	5	1	3	2		
No. in Physiology, - - -		3						4					1
No. in Book-keeping & Surveying,							1		2	2	1		

	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.	No. 4.	No. 5.	No. 6.
Wages of Female Teachers per month, including board, - -	\$15 00	17 00	14 00	20 00	18 00	8 00 in summer. 12 00 in winter.
Wages of Male Teachers per month, including board, - - - -	\$35 00	30 00	28 00	47 50	35 00	
Average amount for each scholar,	\$3 26	2 79	3 40	3 00	4 11	3 48
No. of Scholars in each District,	57	68	54	68	45	20

There has been no change made in text books the past year, except in Geography; though it is thought that some change in our *Arithmetics* might be beneficial, as the authors of some of our good *Arithmetics* are so bent on improvement, and are revising their works so often, that teachers complain of the innovations made, and of the difficulty of classifying their scholars in a suitable manner. If a good *Arithmetic* could be found that might remain unaltered for 8 or 10 years, it would be for the interest of the Schools to adopt it, in preference to retaining those now in Schools, however good they may be.

It is hoped that all our School-houses may be furnished with outline and other Maps, for the very important reason that a large part of our geographical knowledge is more easily and more thoroughly learned from Maps than in any other way. Another reason why Maps are useful is, small children even before they can learn to read, may learn many important lessons in Geography, and it has been noticed in our Schools the past year, that those which are furnished with Maps manifested more interest in that useful study, and exhibited greater promptness in their recitations, and made more progress in that study than those Schools which are not provided with Maps.

The object of our Schools is not fully obtained by a knowledge of those branches of studies taught in our text books, but the discipline of our Schools has an important bearing on their usefulness and on their results. Our Schools for the younger portion at least, of our children, are worth all they cost, if we estimate only in regard to the discipline they receive,—such as being kept from idleness, and learning obedience to fixed rules. Our Schools are calculated to confer a very great benefit on all classes of our youth and children,

by bringing in their associated capacity,—mind to bear on mind, disposition to come in contact with disposition, prejudice with prejudice, &c., and thus if rightly directed, the rough features of the mind may be smoothed, the selfish dispositions may be taught to respect the rights of others, and *all* may be taught to feel and act as members of the same family or community, and thus the first lesson of our free institutions and free government be imparted.

In conclusion, we should remember that though our Schools are in a very good condition, still they are susceptible of yet higher attainments, and as there is no danger of our over estimating the value of a good education, so there is no danger of our making too great exertions to improve our Schools; and thus raise the standard of intellectual attainments in all classes and conditions of society.

ABEL GAGE,

Superintending School Committee.

PELHAM, March 9, 1858.

The undersigned, appointed at the annual meeting of the town of Belham, in March 1857, as Auditors of the Accounts of the Treasurer and Selectmen, for the year ending March 9, 1858, have attended to the duty assigned them, and respectfully submit the following

R E P O R T .

The Treasurer charges himself as follows, to wit:

1857, March 11, Cash in hand of Treasurer, at that date,.....	\$1,052 46
“ April 24, Cash received of County of Hillsborough,.....	41 58
“ Nov. 3, Cash rec'd of County of Hillsborough,	136 34
1858, Feb. 2, Cash rec'd of County of Hillsborough,	44 38
“ Feb. 22, Cash rec'd of David Cutter for Grave Yard Lots,.....	3 00
“ March 8, Cash received of Collector for 1857,	1,557 00
Amounting to.....	\$2,835 21

For the above the Treasurer claims credit as follows, to wit:

1858, March 8, By Cash paid on sundry orders drawn by the Selectmen during the year ending with date,.....	\$2,338 64
“ March 8, By Cash in Treasury,.....	496 57
Amounting to.....	\$2,835 21

Of the above orders, nine hundred and twenty-four dollars were for Schools; about two hundred and twenty dollars was paid for support of Insane, at the Hospital at Concord; about five hundred dollars for the expense of the Poor in town, and the remainder was paid for the current expenses of the town.

The Treasurer reports the amount of outstanding Taxes in the hands of the Collector for 1857, to be \$747 72.

THE LITERARY FUND.

Of this fund the Treasurer gives the following account:

1857, March 11, Cash received of Treasurer for 1856,	\$78 71
“ June 29, Received of the State Treasurer by the hands of John Woodbury,.....	83 10
Amounting to.....	\$161 81
Of which he has paid sundry drafts drawn by the Selectmen in favor of the several Prudential School Committees, during the year ending with date,	\$78 71
Cash in hands of Treasurer,.....	83 10
	\$161 81

POOR FARM FUND.

The Treasurer reports the amount of the Fund resulting from the sale of the Poor Farm, &c., as amounting at this time, including interest, to \$2,410 38.

SURPLUS REVENUE FUND.

The Agent having charge of the above-named Fund, reports the same as amounting, on the 18th of March present, including Cash on hand and Notes on interest, to \$1,312 59.

We find the Treasurer's Accounts correctly kept, correctly cast, and properly vouched.

ABEL GAGE, }
MOODY HOBBS, } *Auditors.*