

REPORT

OF THE

Superintending School Committee

OF THE

TOWN OF PELHAM,

MARCH 11th, 1856.

OWELL:

PRINT, 27 CENTRAL STREET

1856.

The subscriber, Superintending School Committee of this Town, in compliance with the laws of this State, hereby submits to his fellow-citizens the following

REPORT

of the condition of the Schools in the Town for the year ending with the date hereof.

SUMMER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICT NO. 1.

Prudential Committee,—JOSEPH BRIGHT.

Teacher,—MISS MARY E. HOBBS.

Length of Term, 14 weeks. No. of scholars, 33,—all under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 25.

History, Physiology, and Algebra, were attended to by a portion of the scholars, in addition to the branches required by law.

By a somewhat close examination of the School, at its termination, I was satisfied that the scholars, who had attended the school with *regularity* and *punctuality*, had made as much progress in their studies as scholars usually make, in the same length of time, in our best regulated schools. The order of the school was excellent.

DISTRICT NO. 2.

Prudential Committee,—DAVID BUTLER.

Teacher,—MISS CAROLINE A. GREELEY.

Length of Term, 16 weeks. No. of scholars, 40,—all under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 34.

History and Physiology, the extra branches attended to.

This was the first school which Miss Greeley ever taught. From her remarkably good success, in this instance, I think her eminently

qualified for the position of a teacher. Her government was mild, yet firm and energetic. She seemed to possess the faculty of *leading* the pupils of her charge in the right direction. The improvement and progress of the school was to me highly satisfactory.

DISTRICT NO. 3.

[This District having adopted the Somersworth Act, so called,—see Report of Committee of that District appended hereto.]

DISTRICT NO 4.

Prudential Committee,—MARK H. WEBSTER.

Teacher,—MISS M. LIZZIE LEE, of Dracut.

Length of Term, 12 weeks. No. of scholars, 45,—all but one under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 30½.

History, Physiology and Algebra, the extra studies pursued.

In consequence of the very irregular attendance of many of the scholars, this school did not make so much progress, in all its departments, as I expected it would from the very promising appearance it presented at the commencement of the term. Very seldom have I found my expectations raised so high for a very successful school, by a first visit, than they were by the visit I made at the opening of the school. The teacher exhibited a skill and tact for teaching which fully sustained the high reputation which had preceded her as an accomplished instructor. But I am compelled to say that, at the closing examination, my expectations in regard to the school, as a whole, were not realized. Yet there was an evident improvement in their studies by those scholars who had regularly attended during the term. *Thorough* teaching, in all branches taught, and the preservation of good order, were distinguishing features in Miss Lee's management of her school.

DISTRICT NO. 5.

Prudential Committee,—CALEB CARLTON.

Teacher,—MISS ABIGAIL COBURN.

Length of Term, 13 weeks. No. of scholars, 35,—all under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 28.

History and Physiology were the extra studies pursued.

The progress of this school was highly creditable to teacher and

scholars. Miss Coburn is a young lady of fine accomplishments. Her government was firm and energetic, as was apparent from the excellent discipline of the school. Her modes of conveying instruction clear, thorough and faithful. The scholars, with a single exception, as I believe, fully appreciated her endeavors to promote their general good, by an attentive and respectful observance of her instructions.— But I regret being compelled to state, that in one instance, the teacher felt herself obliged to demand of me, in my official capacity, the expulsion of one of her scholars, for refractory conduct. I immediately attended to the matter of complaint, but was happily relieved from any action in the matter by the voluntary withdrawal of the offending scholar from the school; so no investigation of the matter was necessary. I am glad to say that this was the only case of the kind which has occurred during the year in any of the schools under my supervision.

DISTRICT NO. 6.

Prudential Committee,—WARREN SHERBURN.

Teacher,—MISS MARY ANN BUTTERFIELD.

Length of Term, 12 weeks. No. of scholars, 16,—all under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 13.

History and Drawing, the extra studies.

I visited the school soon after its commencement, and found every thing looking prosperously for a successful term under the instruction of their oft-times tried and accomplished teacher. By reason of illness, I was unable to visit it at its close; so I am unable to report the progress made during the term.

WINTER SCHOOLS

DISTRICT NO. 1.

Teacher,—MR. J. K. HAYWARD.

Length of Term, 14 weeks. No. of scholars, 44,—seven over 16 years of age. Average attendance, 37½.

History and Algebra, the extra studies.

The progress of the school, under existing circumstances, was all that could be reasonably expected. The order and discipline was ex-

cellent. The exercises in mental and written Arithmetic, very fine ; Reading, very good ; Spelling, rarely exceeded ; Geography, indifferent ; Writing, very good ; Compositions of a high order ; Declamations, creditable.

The Register, as kept by the teacher, shows that the scholars attended the school regularly and *punctually*, generally. It strikes me, however, that it is a remarkable coincidence of facts, that each scholar should be returned as tardy, in his attendance, *once*, and *once only*, during the school.

I consider Mr. Hayward an accomplished, ingenious teacher. He well knows how to create, and keep up a lively interest in the minds of his pupils in the exercises of the school-room. As, has been alleged by some, he may have erred in some of the details of his management of the school as to their effects upon the future progress of some of the scholars ; but, if such errors were attributable to him, I feel assured that they were caused more by mistaken judgment than from wrong intention.

DISTRICT NO. 2.

Teacher,—JOSEPH E. MARSH, of this Town.

Length of Term, 13 weeks. No. of scholars, 50 ; over 16 years of age, 10. Average attendance, 47 $\frac{1}{2}$.

History, Algebra, Physiology, Geometry, Astronomy and Drawing, extra studies.

This school made all the progress, during the term, that any one could expect, or ask for, in a good, well regulated school. The teacher, well qualified for the performance of his duties by literary attainments, energy, quickness, decision, and an apparent love of his calling, seemed, without any effort on his part, to enlist the feelings and purposes of his pupils with his own, that the school should fully sustain the high character which has been accorded to it for years past.

The exercises in Arithmetic, mental and written, were almost faultless ; Geography, superior ; in Grammar, a little hesitancy ; Compositions of a high order, in a paper form ; Writing, very neat and fine specimens ; Reading, in too many instances, too hurried and wanting a sufficient quantity of voice ; Spelling, good ; the Drawings of Maps, finely executed.

These were the exhibitions of the school-room at the closing exami-

nation, where I had the pleasure of meeting about sixty ladies and gentlemen, parents and friends of the scholars and teacher. Whenever or wherever we find such an interest exhibited in a school, as I then witnessed, we may feel assured that every thing pertaining to it is nearly right.

DISTRICT NO. 4.

Teacher,—JAMES M. WHITAKER, of Windham.

Length of Term, 12 weeks. No. of scholars, 55. Average attendance, 40.

History, Physiology, Philosophy, Algebra, and Geometry, were the extra studies taught in this school.

The improvement made in the term was respectable—not much more, nor much less. Arithmetic, Colburn's and Adams', and Writing, very good indeed. The classes in Grammar appeared very well; Geography not so good as it ought to be; some good reading. These were the notes I made of the school at the closing examination. The order of the school was good. In my judgment, Mr. Whitaker's literary qualifications for a teacher are of a high order. He is a young gentleman of excellent character, and his moral example such as would have a beneficial influence upon the conduct of his pupils. A little more energy and animation than he exhibited, may be necessary to manage so large a school, as he had in charge, so successfully as it might be.

DISTRICT NO. 5.

Teachers, { WH. H. CLARK, of Derry, 6½ weeks;
GEORGE H. BURNS, of Hudson, 5 weeks.

Length of Term, 11½ weeks. No. of scholars, 36. Average attendance, 27. No. of scholars over 16 years of age, 6.

History, Algebra and Physiology were the extra studies attended to in this school.

Of the *progress, or improvement*, of this school I cannot say so much as I wish I could in its favor. Mr. Clark, the first teacher, sustained a good examination in the literary requirements prescribed by law. His moral character undoubtedly good. I called upon his school soon after its commencement. While some of the scholars, by their good deportment, were worthy of all praise, others appeared to care but

little about the teacher, or his instructions, or any thing else. The appearance of the school-room, as to neatness or cleanliness, could not possibly have been much more forbidding; chips, shavings, torn leaves of books and parts of books lay scattered and mingled with mud, dirt and filth around the school-room. A good school, with such surroundings, cannot be expected any where.

The improvement made, under Mr. Clark's instructions, I have no means of knowing, as he relinquished his charge from some cause to me unknown, only by report, when he had a little more than half completed his term, and I had no notice of the close of his school.

Mr. Burns succeeded Mr. Clark in the charge of the school for five weeks. In so brief a period of time, a great amount of improvement could not be expected. I visited the school soon after Mr. Burns took charge of it, and again near its close; and from those examinations, I should say that, in some of the branches taught, fair progress was made. The Reading of some of the scholars was very good; Grammar and Arithmetic well taught; Writing, only two specimens exhibited. I would respectfully invite the attention of the citizens of that district to some abuses that have been perpetrated upon, or rather within, their school-house. The marks of the axe, nearly through the floor in a number of places around the stove, and holes crushed through the plastering, or walls of the house, are rather strong proofs of a Vandal spirit in somebody. But as this is none of my business, perhaps, I will say no more about it, than to express my belief that no *teacher*, who ever taught in that house, would, knowingly, tolerate such abuses.

DISTRICT NO. 6.

Teacher,—MISS BUTTERFIELD.

Length of Term, 15 weeks. No. of scholars, 12,—all under 16 years of age. Average attendance, 10.

History, the only extra study.

The school, during this term, made a commendable degree of progress in all branches. The exhibitions in Reading, and Spelling, and mental Arithmetic, very good.

Miss Butterfield has taught this school for several successive terms, and of course has given good satisfaction to her employers in times past, as I know she has to the Superintending Committee. I be-

lieve her labors, the past winter, to have been attended with her usual success.

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| No. of scholars in the Town over 4 years of age, | 281 |
| No. over 16 years of age, | 38 |
| No. attending Summer Schools, | 205 |
| Average attendance in Summer Schools, | 160 |
| No. attending Winter Schools, | 257 |
| Average attendance in Winter Schools, | 214 |
| No. of scholars in District No. 1, | 48 |
| “ “ “ No. 2, | 54 |
| “ “ “ No. 3, | 63 |
| “ “ “ No. 4, | 60 |
| “ “ “ No. 5, | 40 |
| “ “ “ No. 6, | 16 |
| Amount of money to No. 1, \$179 09,—To each scholar, \$3 73 | |
| “ “ No. 2, 179 33, “ “ 3 32 | |
| “ “ No. 3, 184 43, “ “ 2 92 | |
| “ “ No. 4, 186 46, “ “ 3 05 | |
| “ “ No. 5, 176 66, “ “ 4 40 | |
| “ “ No. 6, 77 78, “ “ 4 86 | |

\$993 75, To each in town, \$3 53

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| No. of visits by Superintending Committee, | 24 |
| “ “ Prudential Committee, | 9 |
| “ “ citizens, | 365 |

The Registers of the Summer Schools were accurately kept by the teachers. That in No. 4 appeared as though it had received rather hard usage.

The Registers of the Winter Schools were deficient in ~~many~~ respects. Some omitting the ages of the scholars, some the daily attendance, some the tardy marks, some the department, and one nearly all these requirements.

The importance of keeping a correct account of their schools, as prescribed by the forms of the Registers furnished by the Board of Education, is not fully estimated by many teachers. The law provides that “ It shall be the duty of every teacher of a public school to make at the close thereof, a report to the Superintending Commit-

tee of the town, of the number of scholars, male and female, that have attended the school; the branches taught and the progress made. And no teacher shall be entitled to pay for his services until this provision has been complied with." As the Superintending Committee has to depend upon the returns of teachers for most of the statistical matter, in regard to the schools, which, by law, he is obliged to return to the Board of Education, or our portion of the Literary Fund is forfeited, it is necessary, therefore, that promptness and accuracy in these returns should be observed by teachers. I would suggest, that it may be well for Prudential Committees to see that such duties have been satisfactorily discharged, by their respective teachers, before they pay them for their services.

REMARKS.

Prudential Committees. The gentlemen selected by the different Districts, the past year, for this important trust, have generally shown a deep interest in the success of their respective schools. With a single exception, they have given due notice of the commencement and close of their schools, as required by law, and I am under great obligations to them for their cordial coöperation with me in all my efforts to promote their improvement and progress.

The office is one of great responsibility, and the best men should be selected to discharge its duties without regard to political, or partisan predilections. Politics should never enter a school district meeting. This is the first time I ever named the word in a School Report, and I now trust that I shall give no offence by this suggestion. The improvement of our common schools, is a platform long enough, wide enough, and strong enough for us all to stand upon and labor, shoulder to shoulder, as well-wishers of the success of our republican institutions, and the developement of the capacity of man for self-government.

From the foregoing it may be inferred that our schools are in a prosperous condition; I think they are so, generally. As in every

other enterprise, gales and buffetings can not be avoided, so our schools must have, occasionally, adverse influences to encounter. The past winter, as all well know, has been of protracted length, and of unusual severity. For a great portion of the time the travelling has been very bad, which has prevented so constant attendance of some scholars as would otherwise have been exhibited. Besides these unavoidable difficulties, various objects of attraction have existed in our midst that have, in some degree, drawn aside that interest in their studies which had formerly characterized some of our scholars. Parental influence, I fear, has, in some instances, been in the wrong direction. But, the amount of improvement made under such circumstances, and the interest shown by so many of our citizens in the prosperity of our schools, as evinced by the unusually large number of visits made them during term time, and at the closing examinations, are cheering indications that their future progress will be made a matter of the highest consideration, as well as that their present importance is justly appreciated.

Judging from the past, I feel fully assured that the future welfare of our schools is fully secure in the hands of my intelligent townsmen. I have no new suggestions to offer, no new modes to propose, but would merely say that my opinions, in regard to the means to be used to promote the education of the children and youth of our town, remain unchanged from what they have been, as expressed in former Reports.

Thanking the teachers, generally, for their endeavors to faithfully discharge their duties; the scholars for the uniform respect shown me by them, on my official visits; and the citizens of the town for valuable aids received in the discharge of my duties, during the year, I close my Report.

MOODY HOBBS, *Superintending
Committee of Schools.*

Pelham, March 11th, 1856.

The Superintending School Committee of District No. Three for the year ending March, 1856, respectfully submit the following

REPORT.

The Summer Term was taught by Miss MARIA E. BURNHAM.

Length of Term, 13 weeks. Wages of teacher per month, exclusive of board, \$8. No. of scholars, 37. Average attendance, 30 $\frac{3}{4}$.

History and Philosophy were the higher branches taught. The improvement during this term was very good in all branches. The order and discipline of the school was very good, which gives credit to the teacher and pupils. Miss Burnham gave good satisfaction. We think she is well qualified for a teacher and that she spared no pains for the improvement of her school.

WINTER TERMS.—In this District there have been one Primary and one High School taught the past Winter.

The Primary School was taught by Mr. HENRY F. BUTLER, of this Town, in the South School-house.

Length of Term, 10 weeks. Wages of teacher per month, including board, \$30. Whole No. of scholars not less than two weeks, 25. Average attendance, 18. No. between 4 and 16, attending not less than two weeks, 20. No. over 16 and under 21, 5. No. of scholars that made Reading a study, 25; Spelling, 25; Writing, 23; Arithmetic, 22; Grammar, 11; Geography, 9; History, 3; Philosophy, 2; Algebra, 3; Physiology, 1.

This school being small gave the teacher an opportunity of devoting more attention to each scholar than could be expected in a large one. Therefore the improvement made was highly creditable, both to teacher and scholars.

The High School has been in operation about seven weeks, and is expected to continue one week longer, also under the instruction of Mr. Butler, in the North house.

Wages of teacher, including board, \$30. No. of scholars over 4 years of age attending not less than two weeks, 49. Average attendance, 41. No. of scholars in the District between 4 and 14, not attending school anywhere, 5. No. between 4 and 16, 39. No. over

16, attending not less than two weeks, 10. No. over 14, not attending in the district, 5. Whole No. of scholars belonging to the District, 63. The No. of scholars that during the term have made Reading a study, 49; Spelling, 49; Writing, 33; Arithmetic, 44; Grammar, 23; Geography, 23; Composition, 23; History, 6; Philosophy, 5; Algebra, 2; Book-keeping, 3.

Notwithstanding the existing evils the progress in this school was marked by a steady and silent growth without any artificial brilliancy. For any school to secure its most desirable results, the teacher should combine with other accomplishments, habits of moral sedateness, mingled with warm-hearted affection, by which pupils may be drawn into a consistent and unrestrained discipline, and have their school character founded strictly on principle. Such has been the characteristics of the teachers generally in this district.

It would be natural to suppose that such frequent communications on one and the same subject, would become uninteresting and unprofitable. But the fact is that our common schools are presenting themselves in somewhat a different character annually. Improvements are the pride of our country, and the health and support of her institutions. And notwithstanding the advancement that our common schools have made upon their former standing, there is no place where there is yet greater need of improvement. They require a greater effort in their behalf by the whole community than they have ever yet experienced. They call for a candid examination of many of those ancient customs which were doubtless necessary in those days, have now become galling fetters in the way of their progress; and ask their friends to view their condition without prejudice or selfishness, and be ready to sacrifice and discountenance all minor personal differences of opinion, in favor of those greater interests of a public nature to which they lay pressing claims on every hand, while they are the strength of a republic.

BOOKS USED. In Reading, Town's Series; Town's Speller and Definer. Arithmetic, Greenleaf's, Adams', Colburn's and Emersons'. Geography, Mitchell's large and small. Grammar, Wells' and Green's Analysis. Other branches, Algebra, History, Physiology, Philosophy and Book-keeping.

A. D. BUTLER,
HENRY F. MARSHALL, } Committee.
DANIEL MARSHALL.