

3. EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

The State Superintendent presents a valuable report:—There are 11,285 school districts, 11,824 school-houses, of the value of \$31,017,904, each have an average value of \$935; the whole number of children is 1,585,01, of these 1,067,199 have attended school more or less during the year; 541,610 are to be found in the schools on any one of the school-days. In Cohoes there are 269 school-age-children to one teacher; in New York 161; in Chenango County 35. In Oswego the average attendance of pupils is 77 per cent.; in New York 48; in Rockland Co. 41. There were 30,209 teachers employed (females 22,522, males 7,687), at an average salary of \$411.83 or \$11.73 per week, the salary-average to each pupil is \$7.46; amount raised by one and one-fourth mile tax \$2,948,229; total for public instruction, \$11,438,038, (in 1866, \$6,632,935; 1855, \$3,323,049), of this for teachers' institutes, \$16,436; normal schools, \$177,235. His suggestions as to the normal schools are certainly timely and just and imperative. He says that of the 6,000 in the eight state normal schools, less than one half are there to become teachers. All will agree that the object of "our normal schools, should be for the training of those who intend to become teachers." He recommends that school commissioners be required by law to devote their whole time to their work; also that they should possess State certificates or diplomas from a normal school, or other higher institution of learning, with experience in teaching. He says, "that economy is poor which stints the growth of education by cutting off any part of the tax necessary thereof." Just and statesmanlike words.—*N. Y. School Journal*.

4. LONDON SCHOOL BOARD'S BOOK STORE.

Up to about a year ago, the School Board for London had been in the habit of obtaining its books, stationery, models and apparatus through agents in the ordinary way of trade at wholesale prices, which plan, it was thought, might be improved upon by the Board establishing a store of its own, and appointing officers to conduct it.

On the removal of the staff from the old offices in New Bridge-street to the new building on the Thames embankment, it was decided to utilize the old premises as a warehouse for the new branch of business.

Mr. George Frater was appointed the superintendent, and various clerks were placed under his care.

It was believed that books could be supplied to Board schools economically if the Board made direct arrangements for discount with the various publishers and manufacturers. In the second place, it was felt that delays (often unavoidable), which had arisen when the goods were ordered from agents, who themselves had to obtain the goods from others, would be reduced to a minimum when a stock was always kept in hand at a central store. In the third place, it was thought desirable to exercise more direct control over the goods supplied, comparing them in every instance with the samples on which tenders had been made.

Adopting these views of the committee, the Board gave notice to the agents previously employed, that the contracts with them would cease at Christmas last; and in September the store superintendent commenced his duties. Between the time of his appointment and Christmas, he was engaged, under the direction of the committee, in preparing the old board offices at 33, New Bridge-street, for the purpose of a store, and analysing the requisitions which had been sent in by different schools, so as to form an estimate of the stock which would probably be required quarter by quarter, and in arranging terms with the various publishers, manufacturers, carriers, &c.

The School Management Committee have since reported to the Board on the result of this new experiment for the first six months. They are of opinion that the delivery of goods to the various schools throughout the metropolis has been greatly facilitated, and that the teachers have now no practical cause for complaint. They are also of opinion that the quality of the goods supplied has been checked in a more satisfactory manner. With reference to the cost of the new system, the committee believe that the Board will find the result perfectly satisfactory. The committee add that the store department has assisted the general work of the office in many matters which did not strictly come within their duties; as, for example, in making arrangements for the delivery of certificates and books in the case of Mr. Peek's prizes for religious knowledge, in preparing cards and certificates for Board examinations, and in drawing up a form of tender for the supply of general stationery to the Board offices.

Having regard to the above facts, the committee were of opinion that steps should be taken to establish a permanent store, more

especially as the tenure of the house which is at present used as a store terminates at Christmas. They accordingly recommended that the Works Committee be instructed to arrange for a purchase of a building in the immediate neighbourhood of the Board offices, and to adapt it to the purpose of a store.

Although the new plan had been adopted less than a year, the results showed a saving at the rate of nearly £2,500 per annum; and great as this advantage may seem, there is the still greater one—that the schools are better supplied with books and apparatus than formerly, and that also without delay. The new plan appears to have effected a saving of about 20 per cent. upon the cost of this branch of School Board work—partly in consequence of the Board being able to obtain their goods on similar terms to those of private firms, without being at the expense of advertising or employing travellers as ordinary trading firms have to do.

The Board has authorized the Works Committee to purchase land, and to adapt buildings existing upon it at the rear of the new offices on the Embankment, where the store is to be conducted in future, thus centralizing the work of the office, instead of having it conducted in two separate buildings as heretofore.

The land is purchased for £8,500, and the committee have authority to make the necessary adaptation at an expense of £1,500. The work is being already proceeded with, and will probably be completed within a few weeks. Mr. Frater may be congratulated on having successfully established this branch of business, and affirmatively and satisfactorily solved the problem somewhat gloomily put at the commencement—Will it pay?—*South London Press*.

III. Selections from Periodicals.

1. SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.

Abridged from Blackwood's Magazine.

Amidst much activity, and not a little wrangling, the primary education of Scotland has been re-organized and extended. Whatever may be thought of the educational policy of the late Government, its practical result will be to multiply primary schools in proportion to the wants of the population. These schools, moreover, will be distinguished, whether advantageously or not, by uniformity of character and of management. The schools will be everywhere diffused, and the firm and wise operation of the compulsory clause will gradually sweep within them the whole of the youthful population. In short, an adequate elementary school system is established, or in process of being established, throughout the length and breadth of Scotland.

But the very completeness with which this result is being accomplished, has only brought into clearer light the difficulties with which our higher or secondary instruction is struggling. The old parochial education was of a mixed character. It embraced secondary no less than primary subjects—mathematics, Latin, and sometimes Greek, no less than reading, writing, and arithmetic. The Scotch "dominie" of a former generation was frequently a quaint and impracticable type of human creature, with no knowledge of, and no concern for, methods or standards, and no dreams of a timetable; but he was also commonly a man who had been a session or two at college, and who had brought away from the *alma mater*, to which he never failed to look back with some degree of pride and reverence, reminiscences of higher studies. In addition to the more ordinary work of the school, there was always the master's special class of boys, sometimes with a more than usually bright girl or two mingled with them, who were busy with *Cæsar*, or *Ovid*, or *Virgil*, or the Greek Testament, or *Xenophon*, or *Homer*, or to whom the propositions in the first books of *Euclid* were sufficiently familiar. These were the classes in the parish school from which the Scotch universities drew their pupils; and even to this day the number of first-year students who find their way directly from the parish schools to the universities is about a half of the whole number.*

But this old characteristic of Scotch education is rapidly disappearing. In large districts of the country, where it never probably had the hold that it has always had in certain northern counties, it is already effaced. A Latin, Greek, or mathematical class is no more to be found in any save a few exceptional parish schools; and even were there boys willing to go on to these higher subjects, the teacher is in many cases unwilling or incompetent to take them on. He is not himself a university man. If he has had a little Latin or mathematics at the Normal Training College, from which the great bulk of teachers are now directly drafted, he has either for-

* "While 42 per cent of students come from the burgh and middle-class schools, the rest come from the parochial and other elementary schools, or from abroad."—Third Report of Endowed Schools Commission, p. 98.