

produced in other communities differently situated. Had it been adopted in Connecticut, as it has in its essential features in most of the other New England States, there can, we think, be but little doubt of its immense superiority over the existing system. But in New York, Pennsylvania, and other large States, comprising a great diversity of population, and numerous territorial subdivisions, it would, we apprehend, have been found wholly impracticable. And even in the new States springing up in the West, we are inclined to the opinion that, while the fundamental principles upon which the Massachusetts system rests may advantageously be adopted, yet the main provisions for the support of schools should be derived from the aggregate taxable property of the whole community, and equitably distributed over the entire surface by general laws. In this respect we think the New York system, upon the whole, decidedly preferable—modified, as we are happy to state, it has recently been by the action of the Legislature, requiring a permanent annual State tax of three fourths of one mill upon every dollar of taxable property, and restoring in an improved form, the County Superintendency. Still a careful study of the Massachusetts system will develop numerous excellences and practical adaptations, to the condition of every community, which can not fail to commend themselves to the judgment of every enlightened friend of popular education.

Statistics.—From the last annual report of the Secretary of the Board of Education, we learn that the whole number of Public Schools in the State is 4,215; the number of pupils of all ages, 202,709 in winter, and 189,997 in summer; the average attendance 157,657 in winter, and 143,073 in summer; the number of teachers employed during the past year 7,134, of whom 5,325 are females, and 1,809 males; the average wages of male teachers \$41 45 per month, and of females \$17 29, including board; the whole amount of money raised by tax for teachers' wages, board, and fuel, \$1,137,407 76; and the income of public and local funds, \$43,867.

BOSTON TRUANCY ACT.

Under the authority of "An Act concerning Truant Children and Absentees from School," passed by the Legislature of Massachusetts in 1850, and modified in 1853 and 1854, the city of Boston has adopted ordinances to secure the general attendance of children at schools. Dr. Bishop, the City School Superintendent, presents the following main feature of the plan in actual operation.

"The territorial limits of the city are divided into three districts, and a 'Truant Officer,' so called, is appointed for each district. He is required to spend his whole time during school-hours in traversing streets, lanes, alleys and other places in search of absentees from school. These are of several different classes. One class is composed of the children whose parents have recently moved into the city, and who being more or less indifferent to the education of their children, have neglected to find places for them at school. Whenever the truant officer finds any of these children idle in the streets of his district, he makes such inquiries of them as may be necessary to ascertain their condition. If he deems it expedient he accompanies them to their places of residence, and by conversing with their parents in kind and respectful terms, he generally succeeds in persuading them to send their children to school, without any show of his authority, which should always be kept out of sight until other means have failed, and then be exercised as a last resort.

Another class of absentees stay away from school for want of shoes or such clothes as will enable them to make a decent appearance among the pupils at school. By patient efforts, on the part of the truant officer he can generally obtain from various sources such new or second-hand articles of wearing apparel as will keep this class of pupils respectably clad, and thus enable them to continue in school.

A third class of absentees is composed of children whose parents are so unfortunate, or idle, or vicious, as to require them to stay away from school for the purpose of gathering fragments of fuel and of food for the family at home. The officer can do much in his district to diminish the number of this class of absentees, but in cases of extreme poverty the absence can not be prevented, for necessity knows no law.

The fourth and last class embraces the idle and dissolute runaways from school, who not unfrequently absent themselves against the wishes and commands of their parents. Even such children the officer tries to win back to habits of attendance and good conduct, and is often successful. But when other means fail, he complains of the offender, who is arraigned according to law, and if found guilty is sentenced to some reformatory institution for a period varying from one to two years, where he will be instructed in the common school studies, and also taught to labor at some trade. In some cases the child is sentenced to the State Reform School during his minority, not so much to punish him as to save him from apparent ruin, and to give him an opportunity of growing up under good influence, and of becoming a good member of society.

During the year the three truant officers have investigated about three thousand instances of absenteeism. It must not be inferred,

however from this statement, that three thousand different children have required attention from a truant officer. Probably one thousand children or even less, have occasioned this number of visits, as an officer has sometimes been obliged to call on the same individual six or eight, or even ten times during the year to keep him in school. About one-third of the one thousand absentees do not deserve to be blamed for not being in school, while the remainder are more or less censurable for their absence.

The truant officers have, in course of the year, complained of one hundred and twelve children as idle and dissolute, and about one hundred of them have been committed to various reformatory institutions where they will receive proper instruction and discipline, and enjoy the means of reformation."

LADY JANE GREY'S SCHOOLMASTER.

[If our readers do not enjoy the following choice bit from "*The Schoolmaster*," a work by that pattern for all schoolmasters, the good old Roger Ascham, preceptor and Latin secretary to Queen Elizabeth, then they do not agree with us. It is full of hints to more than one class of persons, or we are greatly mistaken. The quaint, old style of its English is no detriment to it, and does not in the least detract from its beauty and worth. Read it.—Editor *R. I. Schoolmaster*.]

"It is a pity that commonly more care is had, and that among very wise men, to find out rather a cunning man for their horse, than a cunning man for their children. To the one they will gladly give a stipend of two hundred crowns by the year, and are loth to offer the other two hundred shillings. God, that sitteth in heaven, laugheth their choice to scorn, and rewardeth their liberality as it should; for he suffereth them to have tame and well ordered horses, but wild and unfortunate children.

One example, whether love or fear doth work more in a child for virtue and learning, I will gladly report; which may be heard with some pleasure, and followed with more profit. Before I went into Germany, I came to Broadgate, in Leicestershire, to take my leave of that noble Lady Jane Grey, to whom I was exceeding much beholden. Her parents, the duke and the duchess, with all the household, gentlemen and gentle women, were hunting in the park. I found her in her chamber, reading Phœdon Platonis in Greek, and that with as much delight, as some gentlemen would read a merry tale in Bocace. After salutation and duty done, with some other talk, I asked her, why she would lose such pastime in the park? Smiling, she answered me, 'I wiss, all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure which I find in Plato. Alas! good folk, they never felt what true pleasure meant.' 'And how came you, Madame,' quoth I, 'to this deep knowledge of pleasure? And what did chiefly allure you into it, seeing not many women, but very few men, have attained thereunto?' 'I will tell you,' quoth she, 'and tell you a truth which, perchance, ye will marvel at. One of the greatest benefits that ever God gave me, is, that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, eat, drink, be merry or sad, be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I must do it, as it were, in such weight, measure and number, even so perfectly as God made the world, or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways, which I will not name for the honor I bear them, so without measure misordered, till I think myself in hell, till time come, that I must go to Mr. Elmer; who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing, whiles I am with him. And when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because, whatever I do else, but learning, is full of grief, trouble, fear and whole misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more, that, in respect of it, all other pleasures, in very deed be but trifles and troubles unto me."

THE EDUCATION OF WOMAN.

To direct all the power of the home aright—to be efficient in the performance of her various offices as wife, mother and domestic manager—woman must be fortified and directed by intelligence. All the arguments which have been from time to time advanced in favor of the education of man, plead equally strongly in favor of the education of woman. In all the departments of household industry and management, intelligence adds to her usefulness and efficiency. It enables her to employ the means with which she is furnished, and the influence which nature has designed her to exercise, to the best purposes. Mental culture is the handmaid of comfort—that thoroughly English word, signifying the true element of physical and moral well-being. It enables her to anticipate, gives her forethought, suggests modes of providing for the future happiness of herself, her children, and her husband. It gives her strength in all ways, and enables her to conduct herself creditably in the various relationships of life—