

"Melancholy evidence of the truth of their waning usefulness is presented in the fact, that an apparent diminution of 31,940 volumes is reported in immediate juxtaposition with the expenditure of over \$43,000 in the past year, which ought to have largely swelled their number. It is, doubtless, true that this reported decrease is unreal, and that it is to be charged to the defects in the statistics. But the fact that the department has been forced to present such erroneous returns in spite of its efforts to secure accuracy, is, of itself, conclusive proof that the books are so scattered that they cannot be correctly catalogued, or that the librarians, who must reflect in this particular the feelings of those by whom they are appointed, regard them as of too subordinate importance to require great exertion in obtaining minute information about their condition. The increasing application to this department for permission to expend the library money for the payment of teachers' wages, confirm the evidence."

The total number of volumes in the school and district libraries have been reported for a series of years on the first of January as follows: in

Date.	Volumes.	Date.	Volumes.
1847	1,310,986	1853	1,604,210
1848	1,338,848	1854	1,572,270
1849	1,409,154	1855	1,494,542
1850	1,449,950	1856	1,418,100
1851	1,507,077	1857	1,377,933
1852	1,570,131		

It will be seen from the above table, that notwithstanding the large amounts annually appropriated to this purpose, the number of volumes in 1857 is 226,277 less than was reported in 1853. The Superintendent of Public Instruction states, that he is unable to account for this falling off, which in the last four years has amounted to an average of 56,569 volumes per annum. The interest in these libraries seems to have ceased in many parts of the State, and may be owing to the fact, that in too many cases works of an ephemeral character have formed their contents, more to the gratification of the publishing agent than the benefit of the district.

The payments made by the State for libraries in the year 1857 were \$6306 68 for cities, and \$25,857 07 for the rural districts. Total, \$32,163 75.

The portion of the literature fund for the purchase of libraries, apportioned to New York City, has been annually received by the Board of Education, and although, by its by-laws, it has declared that school libraries, under the control of the officers of the ward, should be established, yet no part of these moneys has been applied to such purpose. On the 1st of August, 1855, a Report was made, by a Committee of the Board, favourable to the establishment of libraries in the various grammar schools, and of a library in the hall of the Board; but no action, up to 1858, had been taken in regard to it. In the Report, the Committee say that the sum, so appropriated, then amounted to about \$100,000; that it had been exhausted not for libraries, but for the current expenses of the Board. The friends of the schools No. 44, and No. 40, in the 5th and 18th wards, have established libraries in them, by voluntary subscriptions.

## OHIO.

The law devotes one-tenth of a mill upon the dollar valuation, on the grand list of property taxable for State purposes, as an annual fund "for the purpose of furnishing school libraries and apparatus to all the Common Schools of the State," and provides that "every family in each district or sub-district shall be entitled to the use of one volume at a time from the school library, although no member of such family attend any of the schools of the township." The Township Boards of Education are vested with the power to "make and enforce such rules relative to the use and preservation of the school libraries and apparatus, as they may think advisable," including the appointment and direction of librarians. These libraries are "deemed the property of said several boards, or local school officers, to whom the same may have been delivered, and shall not be subject to execution, sale, or alienation for any cause whatever." Section 51 further provides that "as soon as the revenues raised for the purpose of furnishing the Common Schools with libraries and apparatus will admit, it shall be the duty of the State Commissioners of Common Schools to purchase the same, and the books and apparatus so purchased shall be distributed, through the Auditor's office of each county, to the Board of Education in each township, city, or incorporated village, according to the enumeration of scholars."

Perhaps no single recommendation has been more frequently made, by State officers charged with the superintendence of Common Schools, than some public provision for Township or District Libraries.

In the report of H. H. Barney, March 12, 1856, it is stated that "the whole number of volumes purchased and distributed, or to be distributed, is 321,793, costing \$198,092 54."

Receipts, District School Library Fund, during 1854-'55,

\$80,639 75; disbursements, \$84,095 35. Receipts during 1855-'56, \$83,257 20; disbursements, \$82,906 47.

The total number of school libraries in Ohio in 1855, was 4777; value \$84,737 90; volumes 136,121. Amount expended for books in 1854 and 1855, \$150,787 08.

The receipts of the District School Library Fund for the years 1854, 1855, and 1856, amount to \$218,130 53. One-half of all the taxes levied in 1855 by State authority were for Common School and Library purposes. The total amount was \$1,377,403 75; of this \$78,848 68 were for libraries.

The orders for books were then executed by a general agent, H. W. Derby, of Cincinnati. All the books are bound in full library style, with dark sprinkled or marbled edges, covers embossed and stamped.

Information from various parts of the State disclose very dissimilar views in regard to this feature of the present system, in most instances the expression being warmly of approval, and of anxiety that the annual supply of books may be continued; while in some quarters a peculiar prejudice seems to exist against this provision of the law.

## PENNSYLVANIA.

The public grammar and secondary schools of the First Section of the First School District of Pennsylvania (embracing the central part of Philadelphia) have libraries averaging 500 volumes each, established and maintained by the income arising from a bequest of \$10,000, by Stephen Girard, for that purpose.

## RHODE ISLAND.

Mr. Henry Barnard's labours in the cause of education in Rhode Island, some years ago, met with much success. Before he left the State, a library of at least 500 volumes had been secured for at least twenty-nine out of the thirty-two towns.

"The Portsmouth school district library was the first established, mainly by a liberal donation of \$100 from Miss Sarah Gibbs.

"The library at Lonsdale was purchased, at an expense of \$550, by the Lonsdale Company. The books are lent out, to any who applies for them, at a cent a volume. More than \$70 were realized, the first year, from the circulation of the books.

"The library at Slatersville was purchased out of an appropriation of \$500, made by Messrs. Slater, Lockwood, and Carter.

"The libraries at Burrillville, Gloucester, Foster, Cranston, Hopkinton, Richmond, Charleston, Exeter, Little Compton, New Shoreham, Jamestown, and Barrington, owe their existence mainly to the liberality of Amasa Manton, Esq., of Providence, who, by an expenditure of \$1000, was instrumental in raising in these towns double that amount, and has thus secured the establishment of ten libraries, with at least 5000 good books."

Mr. Barnard (in the "Report and Documents relative to the Public Schools of Rhode Island for 1848," pages 425 seq.) has given an historical and statistical account of the several libraries in the State, with a sketch of the organization, and the history and by-laws of the Pawcatuck Library Association, as a favourable specimen of a public school library. He has also published the catalogue of this collection, in 94 closely printed 8vo. pages. This library was selected by Mr. Barnard, and the catalogue, with explanatory remarks and select hints on reading, was prepared by him. We extract the following paragraphs descriptive of the catalogue:—

"The first of the following catalogue is a *catalogue of subjects*. Its design is not simply to give the titles of the books of the library, but to furnish an *index to the subjects considered in the books*. To effect this, the various books in the library have been analyzed with considerable care, and the several subjects exhibited by them have been arranged under their proper heads. The analysis has been confined to distinct treatises and separate articles on subjects. The design of the analysis, it is thought, has been accomplished, viz.: to make the catalogue so full that no one shall be obliged to remove a book from the shelves in order to learn its contents or subjects, and that those who use the library may make their selection of books directly from the catalogue. Thus the convenience of persons in their selections will be greatly promoted, and the injurious handling of the books be prevented.

"In addition to the catalogue of subjects, a *catalogue of authors* is also given, in which the names of all the authors in the library are placed alphabetically, and under each name all such works of that author as belong to the library. By the aid of these two catalogues any person, even those the least familiar with books, may very readily refer to any work or any subject which they may wish to examine. In both catalogues the number of each book, as it stands on the library shelves, is carried out on the margin of the page against its title."

## VERMONT.

There are a few school libraries in this State, but the secretary of the Board of Education, J. S. Adams, Esq., writes (1856) that,