

1861 was somewhat smaller than during 1860. The prevalence of scarlet fever throughout the greater part of the city, for the larger portion of the year, the salutary regulation which prevents the attendance at school of any member of a family in which infectious disease is known to exist, and the natural, if not always wise reluctance of some parents to send their healthy children to school, lest they should encounter infection there, will adequately explain the diminished attendance of the year now under review.

The average late attendances for the year, however, compare favourably with those of 1860.

The general efficiency of the schools has continued unimpaired. Every effort, indeed, has been made with a view to its improvement. The spirit urged on the Teachers of our Schools is that of thoroughness in distinction from that of mere display. On the part of pupils, accuracy and carefulness in acquainting themselves with elements, are more desired than extensive nominal attainments.

Our schools provide a solid and useful education, at a reasonable rate per pupil; a rate lower, indeed, than that expended on public school education in most other cities of equal or greater importance. In the Appendix to my Report for 1860, I compared the cost of our Public Schools with that of the Public Schools of Detroit and Oswego. In the Appendix to this Report—see Appendix I, (Table K)—will be