

suggest that, when our means shall happily admit, trades suitable to their sex may be advantageously taught to many of the girls.

For instance, female compositors are now employed in many printing offices. And I may add that, during my European tour, I found the girls in some of the institutions of the Continent, at least in that of Genoa, employed in fine needle work, as embroidery, and in making artificial flowers. To the plain dress-making carried on at the Institution may, perhaps, at some future time, be advantageously added millinery and the making of artificial flowers and other ornaments, perhaps also the plaiting of straw hats. These suggestions, however, I fear, cannot be acted on for some years yet.

#### VIII. SEWING MACHINES.

There is one sewing machine used in the tailors' shop and one in the girls' sitting and sewing room. It would be advantageous, when our means admit, to have several more; not so much, perhaps, for the saving of time in the work done here (as we have no lack of hands to ply needles,) as for the practising our pupils in the management of these machines. Some of them, when they leave the institution, will find such machines at home, and others may find remunerative employment by working sewing machines in families or in manufactories.

#### IX. GENERAL REMARKS.

##### *Policy of Teaching Trades.*

"The plan of teaching trades to our pupils was, after mature deliberation, adopted more than thirty years ago, and has ever since been held to be an essential feature of our system of instruction. The reasons have been repeatedly set forth in our annual reports, and the plan has repeatedly been approved by the State Superintendent of Education, and virtually sanctioned by the Legislature. The following extract from a report made to the Legislature as long ago as January, 1838, by Gen John A. Dix, then the able and attentive Superintendent of the Schools of New York, presents, from the State's point of view, in an admirable condensed form, the principal reasons for maintaining the shops as part of our system:

One of the most useful features of the system is that, which, by teaching each pupil a trade, prepares him for supporting himself by the labour of his own hands, and thus renders him independent of the aid of his friends and the public. If this was the only beneficial result of the system it is believed that it would amply repay the expenditure upon it. A large portion of the pupils are of families in extremely indigent circumstances, and without the advantage of an apprenticeship in some useful art, they would be a burden on their friends or the public through life, whereas, by supporting them for five years and teaching them a trade, they not only become independent of the aid of others, but the community exchanges unprofitable consumers for producers, and in the end, perhaps, is fully repaid for the expense which it has incurred in preparing them for usefulness. (Appendix to the nineteenth Report, p. 41.)

"And I add that the maintenance of the shops, thus conclusively shown to be for the benefit of the community, is demanded by no less considerations of duty to our pupils. Melancholy would be the future lot of many a pupil, if accustomed here to comfortable living and the cultivation of intellectual and refined tastes, he should at the end of his allotted term be sent into the world with no means of support.

"Till quite recently, you will recollect, the lowest age of admission (except in a very few special cases,) was twelve years. And our pupils admitted at twelve to fourteen usually remained in school till the age of nineteen or twenty. This is still the case with a large proportion of them; and of the recent admissions of destitute children under the age of twelve, most will probably remain in school till the age of from seventeen to twenty. The period of