

bered 30, a small town, raises \$3.77. The town numbered 280 raises by tax \$1.43 per scholar, which is 3 cts. more than every scholar in Connecticut receives from the School Fund.

In New-York, when the legislature in 1838, virtually increased the capital of the School Fund from \$2,000,000 to near \$5,000,000, the obligation on the part of the towns, to raise an amount equal to that distributed was not removed. Thus, while the appropriation by the State was increased from \$100,000 in 1835, to \$275,000 in 1845, the amount required to be raised by tax in the towns increased in the same proportion, viz., from \$100,000 to \$275,000, and the amount voluntarily raised by the towns and districts in 1845, more than quadrupled the amount raised in the same way in 1835.

In Rhode-Island, the State appropriation has increased from \$10,000 in 1829 to \$25,000 in 1845, while the towns in 1829 received the State appropriation unconditionally, but are now required to raise a third as much as they receive.

In Maine, 40 cts. must be raised for every inhabitant, which is perhaps more than is required in any other of the New-England States.

Second, as to the supervision of schools. The first effort, to set apart a class of officers for the special duty of visiting schools and examining teachers, was made by Connecticut in the school law of 1793, and there Connecticut has left the matter, except that the towns may now make returns to the Commissioner of the School Fund, who is also Superintendent of the schools. In the mean time other States have taken the suggestion from Connecticut and improved upon it. Massachusetts has a State Board of Education, with one individual devoting his whole time to collecting facts and diffusing information for the improvement of schools. New-York has not only a State Superintendent, but a school officer for each county, and a Superintendent for each town. \$28,000 was paid in 1844 as salaries to the County Superintendents. Vermont and Rhode-Island have recently adopted the system of State, County, and Town Superintendents.

Third, as to the education and improvement of teachers. The first elaborate effort to call public attention in this country to the importance of Normal Schools or Teachers' Seminaries, was made by Rev. T. H. Gallaudet, in a series of essays published in Hartford, in 1825. Massachusetts put this idea into actual being. By the offer of \$10,000 from Hon. Edmund Dwight, of Boston, the legislature unanimously appropriated an equal amount for the annual expense of three Normal Schools for three years, and at the close of the third year, provision was made for the erection of buildings and the permanent support of these schools. In New-York, a State Normal School has been established in Albany, and \$10,000 annually appropriated for this object.

The first assembly of teachers, like those now known as Teachers' Institutes, ever held in this country, was held at Hartford in 1839, and it is believed to have been the last but one held in Connecticut. This important agency has since been introduced into New-York, Ohio, Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, and Vermont. In New-York more than 6,000 teachers assembled in the different counties in the autumn of 1845. In Massachusetts, \$2,500 have been appropriated by the legislature for their encouragement during the current year.

Fourth, School-houses. The first essay which is known to have been prepared to expose the evils of school-houses badly constructed, warmed, lighted, and ventilated, was read at a State Convention of the friends of education in Hartford, in 1830; and for nearly 9 years after, five school-houses only in the State are known to have been repaired and built in accordance with its suggestions. The same essay was read and published in Boston, in 1831, and was followed by immediate attention to the subject in different parts of the State. In 1838, a new impulse was given to this kind of improvement by Mr. Mann's Report on the subject, and from that time till 1844, the amount of \$634,326 was expended for the construction and permanent repairs of school-houses. Within the past two years, one-third of the school districts of Rhode-Island have repaired old school-houses or constructed new ones after improved plans. Since 1838, more than \$200,000 has been expended in this way.

Fifth, School-libraries. The first *juvenile library* perhaps, in the world was established in Salisbury, Conn., more than half a century since, and the originator of the school district library enterprise was a native of this State. This is about all that Connecticut is known

to have done in this department. In 1838, New-York appropriated a sum equal to about \$5 for every school district, or \$53,000 for the whole State, on condition that a like amount should be raised by the several towns, both sums to be spent in the purchase of books for school district libraries. Six years after this law passed there were more than one million and a half of volumes scattered through every neighborhood of that great State. Massachusetts, for one year, appropriated the income of its school fund for this object on certain conditions, and at this time every school district is supplied with a library open to all the children and adults of the community.

We adduce these statistics as testimony concerning the degree of interest which is felt in Connecticut on this subject, compared, with the zeal that prevails in the above named States. We discuss not here the importance or the wisdom of these measures. We have other testimony still more direct. It comes from the people themselves. Let any man study the returns of the school visitors as reported to the legislature in 1845, let any man study the reports now on file in the Commissioner's office for the year just closing, and he will receive one uniform and desponding confession in respect to the apathy that prevails—like an atmosphere of death. Particular defects are named and remedies are suggested, but the want of public interest is uniformly named as the worst and most disheartening evil. Then let him contrast these returns with those of many other States, and what a change will he notice. On the one hand is heard the voice of declension and despondency, on the other, the language of progress and hope.

But this does not exhaust the evidence. Those who go from Connecticut into other States, and from them into Connecticut, feel a shock in the transition. It is like going from a cellar into the sunshine, or from the sunshine into a cellar. We know an intelligent gentleman who has seen his scores of years, who has recently removed from Rhode-Island into the "land of steady habits," and can hardly understand or believe that the apathy which he finds, can be a reality. The writer has within a few years made the change the other way, from Connecticut to the Bay State. He too has been forcibly impressed with the contrast. In one particular, this contrast is very striking. In Connecticut, the people have been persuaded, that to be taxed for the support of Common Schools, is a levy upon the poor, for the schools of the rich. In Massachusetts, the people know that all such taxes are a lawful tribute from the rich, for the benefit of the poor. We have seen in the latter State, in a crowded town meeting, a thousand hands raised as by magic, to vote the largest of two sums named by the school committee, a sum which was nearly a dollar for every individual of the entire population, men, women, and children. The motion was made by one of the wealthiest men in the town, whose own children were too old to attend the public school. It was supposed by others wealthier than he, and having no interest of their own in the schools. A proposition to set apart five hundred dollars as a fund to be distributed to the feebler districts, at the discretion of the town committee, was moved in the same way, and carried without the show of opposition. In the same town, the year following, the school tax was increased by two thousand dollars, though the most important district had ten days before taxed itself nearly nine thousand dollars for land and a building for a high school. This occurred in a town by no means the foremost to engage in school improvements, and not even now the most conspicuous for its zeal or its expenditures. In Lowell, Salem, Worcester, Springfield, Roxbury, and in towns of less importance, the public school-houses are the best buildings in the town, inviting without for their aspect of beauty and solidity, and within for their convenient apartments and their abundant apparatus. We have seen something of the working of this school system for years. We have observed the conscientious and honourable pride felt in the public schools, by those influential for wealth and talent, who give to these schools their influence, and send to them their sons and daughters. What is of far more consequence and interest, we have freely mingled in the families of those in humbler life, and learned from the lips of parents their high sense of the value of these schools which cost them little or nothing, and which promised to give their children all the education which they desired. We have heard from the mother of a large family of boys, hearty regrets, that her sons must be removed from the school by the departure of the family from town. Seeing these things, we could not but conclude that public schools may attain high perfection, and that such schools are the choicest of earth's blessings.