

ones to others, and finally, they are beginning to be felt in the body of the common schools of the state.

The undersigned is under the impression that the course of studies require some modification, and that the school should be made more strictly a professional one. Its object is not to give teachers their first education in the elementary branches, but to take them, after those branches are acquired, and instruct them in the *theory and practice of teaching*. In doing this, they will necessarily be to a considerable extent practised, and thus improved in elementary studies, but this should be regarded as simply an incidental benefit, and by no means an excuse for the want of a good previous acquaintance with those studies—or for that same slow and elaborate course of instruction in them which is practised in elementary schools. The state provides other and far less expensive schools for the latter purpose. Here the object is to *make teachers*; and it requires time and expenditure enough to do so, with a standard of admission which would dispense with the necessity of any thing more than a rapid and merely review course, in the common branches of an English education. The executive committee of the normal school have this subject under examination, and will in due time take what they regard as the appropriate action upon it.

Owing to a variety of causes, not necessary here to be detailed, the normal school has undoubtedly been an expensive one, for the amount accomplished by it. Many of those causes, though inevitable, were temporary in their nature, and are already beyond recurrence. Of the usual liberal annual appropriation by the Legislature, of \$10,000, for the support of the school, the executive committee have been able, during the current year, to save two thousand, and carrying out the earlier liberal policy of the institution toward its pupils, the balance has been appropriated to assist them in defraying the expense of their board. It is believed the expenses of the institution may be still further reduced without any injury to its efficiency. Its receipts may also be increased from several sources, and more particularly by an extension of the experimental department, which will also give additional facilities for instructing the pupils of the higher one, in the *practice* of teaching. All these topics are engaging the attention of the executive committee.—*State Superintendent's Report for 1851-2.*

EDUCATION AND IGNORANCE IN FRANCE.

An American in Paris, in concluding a long letter on the Boarding Schools in France, makes the following general statements:—

The population of France is 36,000,000. In her primary schools she has 2,332,580 pupils, or the ratio of one-sixteenth of her population, supported at an annual expense of \$1,800,000, or an average to each pupil of about 75 cents. The State of New York, in 1851, expended on 724,291 pupils in her common schools, \$1,432,096, or an average of nearly \$2 a-head for one-fourth of her population, while she has a fund of \$6,612,850 devoted to purposes of education. The actual difference is, that while New York expends twice and two-thirds as much on each pupil as France, she educates her population also in the ratio of fourfold in point of numbers. France expends more upon the tomb of Napoleon than upon her entire "Ecoles Primaires;" and the city of Paris, from 1800 to 1845, has spent at the Hotel de Ville, in fêtes to the several governments of France, \$2,000,000—a sum sufficient to support its common schools, at the present rate of appropriation, for fifteen years. Previous to 1830, the cost of primary instruction in Paris was but \$16,000 annually. Since then it has been increased to \$250,000, and the number of children frequenting the schools is about 45,000, or one twenty-second part of the population. In the colleges, institutions, and boarding-schools of the city, there are 11,000 pupils, but these embrace the elite of the south from all parts of the country. The total number of pupils in the lyceums, colleges, and private institutions in France, for 1850, was 92,231; making a total of 2,424,811 children only, out of the 18,000,000 in France, receiving any degree of education.

The military conscription shows, that out of every thousand young men drawn, about 40 know how to read and write, 500 to read only, and more than 400 have no instruction whatever.

ESSENTIALS IN COMMON SCHOOLS.

We are happy in being able to make the following extracts from an excellent School Lecture by L. Chipman, Esq., Local Superintendent of South Burgess:—

1st. *The Teacher*.—In the first place, to employ efficient Teachers in our Common Schools is absolutely necessary; nothing can make up the deficiency of an incompetent teacher. Not only is knowledge incorrectly acquired by bad teaching, but the time spent by scholars is lost forever in as great a degree as their knowledge is imperfect. The office of Teacher is one of the most important on earth; he acts upon minds which in turn act upon others, and millions may be affected before that power will cease to exist; without his aid the efforts of the

philanthropist and every well-wisher of the human family can accomplish but little in comparison to what might be done with the co-operation of intelligent, moral, and successful teachers. A teacher may be well educated, but not what is generally termed "apt to teach;" this is a serious detriment in promoting education. A teacher should have a good idea of human nature, "and a rich store of knowledge, and have images and illustrations at his command." Perhaps no occupation in life requires as much patience, perseverance, and faithfulness as that of a successful teacher. The minds of his pupils are as various as their complexions; no two require exactly the same management, and nothing but a competent teacher can ascertain the different kinds of treatment required of children in order that all may be benefitted. Inferior teachers are generally dear in the end, and if we expect the rising generation to be properly trained, and time and money profitably spent, it should be the aim of all proprietors of schools to insure, if possible, as competent teachers as their circumstances will admit.

2nd. *Convenient School-Houses*.—Proper school-houses ought to be erected, as far as practicable; the want of suitable buildings, in some sections, is a serious detriment to education, which difficulty, I am happy to say, is now obviated in several places in these townships. How inconvenient, unpleasant, and discouraging to teachers as well as scholars, to attend in an uncomfortable school-room; the progress of scholars in such cases must be slow compared to what might be expected in a commodious one. How many places of instruction do we find inferior to those erected for the comfort of domestic animals—ill-ventilated, and with not more than two or three windows—uncomfortable seats, with no backs—and desks scarcely within reach of the scholars. Another inconvenience, in some localities, is the site selected for the school-house. How often do we see it erected on the corner of some thoroughfare, or on some great elevation, without any ornamental trees or play-ground, being subject to the scorching rays of a summer sun or the chilling blasts of winter. The teacher and scholars are also annoyed by the din and bustle necessarily occasioned by people passing and repassing. The scholars are more subject to accidents by being compelled to take for their play-grounds the highway or "long-lot," as it is sometimes called. How often could the evils above mentioned be remedied by placing the school-house near some grove, or an artificially made one; thus giving beauty and elegance, besides comfort, in all seasons of the year. The school-house ought to be erected as near the centre of a section as possible, to suit all parties.

3rd. *Uniform Text-Books*.—In the next place, a suitable supply of books should be provided. Schools and teachers labor under many difficulties, on account of not having a uniformity of books, but this is now nearly overcome in most sections.

4th. *Discipline*.—I am of opinion that moral suasion, in most schools, is preferable to coercive measures. Moral suasion is now recommended by most of our teachers, both in common schools and higher institutions, as being the most sure way of stimulating scholars to any laudable enterprise. Coercive measures are certainly contrary to our feelings, and ought not to be inflicted except in obstinate cases. The influence parents and guardians have upon children in providing for their education, is far greater than most people imagine; were parents ready and willing to assist their children in obtaining a good education, and instilling into their minds its importance, there is but little doubt but that they would become good scholars.

5th. *Parental Attendance at Examinations*.—Parents have also a great influence on their children by attending the quarterly examinations; the scholars will endeavour to learn, with the expectation of being encouraged and rewarded. Where no interest is taken by parents in the education of their children it is often a serious difficulty in their advancement, although much depends on the scholars themselves as regards their improvement, but it cannot be expected that all are equal in point of natural talents or ability. The Creator has been pleased to give a higher degree of instinct to some brutes than others, so He has given some of the human family a higher order of intellect than others. There are many, no doubt, but would reach the highest point of intellectual greatness whose talents lie buried, because they have never been cultivated properly, and some with scarcely common intellect, by close and unremitting study, have become famed for their knowledge, and outstripped our greatest anticipations. An opinion is prevalent among some that education tends to disqualify mankind for the domestic concerns of life, and if nothing more is sought than intellectual culture, there is a degree of plausibility in it; but education in its general sense has for its object (besides that knowledge which informs and enlightens the understanding) that which will instill the principles of the arts, sciences, religion, behaviour, and in short all the requirements necessary for our happiness in time and eternity.

GOLDEN HOURS AND DIAMOND MINUTES.

We find the following gem in a New York paper: Lost—Yesterday, somewhere between sun-rise and sun-set, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone for ever.