

## CHEMISTRY AS APPLIED TO AGRICULTURE TAUGHT IN COMMON SCHOOLS.

*From the Official School Journal, State of N. Y.*

We are glad to see that the subject of Chemistry as applied to Agriculture, is receiving encouragement at the N. Y. State Institution. The following circular will show the interest felt in this matter by the officers of the Normal School :

*To the Graduates of the State Normal School :*

In pursuance of the request of the Executive Committee of the Normal School, I have prepared the following Circular. Its object is to bring before each of you, the claims which the Agricultural interest of New York have upon you, for your co-operation in aiding, so far as you can consistently with your duties as common school teachers, in making known the true principles of Farming. The science of Agriculture is not only of great utility, but is the foundation of the wealth of all nations, and consequently should receive, to a certain extent, the fostering care of government.

It is believed that you, who have, in part, been educated by the liberality of this State, will respond cheerfully to any reasonable demands which may be made for the advancement of her interests in this respect. It is also believed, that your attention being once called to this subject, you will readily see that you have it in your power to do much good in this direction ; and that you will not only feel a willingness, but a desire, thus to extend the knowledge of this important branch of education.

Those who shall hereafter receive a Diploma of this Institution, will be required to understand, to a certain extent, the elementary principles of Agriculture, and for this reason they, as teachers, will be better prepared than yourselves to diffuse this knowledge through the community, by means of the common schools. To supply in part the deficiencies under which you will labor in the advancement of of this knowledge, our Executive Committee have directed me to transmit to each of you a copy of Prof. Johnston's Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology, which work has been recently adopted as an elementary text book for this school. They are enabled to do this by the liberality of James S. Wadsworth, Esq., of Geneseo, acting as the representative of his late father.

The earnestness which the Committee feel in this matter will be seen from the following extract, taken from their last annual report made, through the Regents of the University, to the Legislature, Feb. 11, 1850.

"The Committee, appreciating the great and growing importance of agricultural science, and considering it, in its elementary principles, an appropriate subject for common school instruction ; and considering also, that with the aid of suitable text books now, or soon to be attainable, the subject, always appropriate, has at length become feasible for such instruction ; have recently assigned it to a more prominent place than it had before held in the Normal School, by making it a separate and independent branch, and requiring it to be taught as an essential or constituent part of the course of study pursued in the school. The committee, impressed, as they themselves are, with the great importance of this new subject of study, hope to be able, through their normal graduates, acting under a like impression, to cause it to be introduced into all the schools taught by such graduates, and through their influence and that of such schools, to cause it to be finally adopted as part of the regular course of study in all the common schools, at least in the rural or agricultural part of the State.

The Committee have learned, with much satisfaction, from the proceedings of the State Agricultural Society at its last annual meeting, that a treatise on the subject above referred to, has been recently prepared by Professor Norton and submitted to the society, who, after due examination, have recommended it as a very valuable production, specially appropriate for the use of common schools, and have directed it to be published with a view, as is understood, to such a use. Such a treatise at this time, together with the text books already published and in practical use, will, in the opinion of the committee, furnish all needful facilities for common school instruction on the subject above referred to."

GEORGE R. PERKINS, Principal, N. S.

*Normal School, Albany, March, 1850.*

The Executive Committee are happy to express their commendation of the above circular, prepared by Prof. Perkins ; and would respectfully and earnestly urge upon the graduates of the Normal School

the importance of introducing the study of Agricultural Chemistry into the schools under their charge.

CHRISTOPHER MORGAN.

Chairman of the Executive Committee.

GIDEON HAWLEY,

WM. H. CAMPBELL,

CH. L. AUSTIN,

} Committee.

*Albany, March, 1850.*

## INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' INSTITUTES UPON TEACHERS AND THE PUBLIC MIND.

*From the last Annual Report of the Boston Board of Education.*

It will be seen by the Secretary's report, that, within the past year, six Teachers' Institutes have been held in as many different parts of the Commonwealth, each of six days' duration. The attendance upon them has been considerably larger than in former years, and a very general interest in them has been manifested among the teachers of those portions of the State selected for holding them. Gentlemen of experience and reputation as teachers have been employed to aid in conducting them, and the Secretary has himself attended them personally, and contributed much, by his advice and active participation in their proceedings, to the measure of success they have attained. It is believed they have already accomplished much good, and that much more will result from them hereafter, as they shall be better understood, and more generally held and resorted to in all the different sections of the Commonwealth. So well satisfied are the Board of their utility that it is their intention to make provision for holding twelve in the course of the next year. They occupy a position for the instruction and improvement of teachers much below that of the Normal Schools, where all the requisite time may be devoted to the object, with all the means and appliances which the largest experience and most practised skill, aided by the most approved apparatus, can supply ; but the opportunity they offer to the teacher, who has neither the time nor the pecuniary ability to attend the latter, is of great value, and it is hoped will hereafter be embraced. Very visible improvement has been manifested in those who have attended them. New notions concerning the methods of teaching are suggested, and greater skill in the prosecution of them imparted. But what is of more value still, a generous emulation is excited, and a new impulse in the right direction given to a large body of teachers, at every institute held ; and in this way, when the whole Commonwealth shall be systematically reached by them, a spirit of improvement will be infused into the mass of the teachers throughout the State, which cannot fail to produce highly favorable results. The Board regard them among the most efficient means of improving our Common Schools, and recommend them to the continued patronage of the Legislature.

*From the last Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board.*

The experience of the present year goes to confirm that of past years, that no means employed by the State for the improvement of the schools have an immediate efficiency equal to that of the Institutes. They perform the office of light-armed troops, and by the celerity of their movements accomplish much that lies quite beyond the reach of the Normal Schools. They interfere neither with the latter nor with Teachers' Associations, but constitute the connecting link between them, and thus complete a well-arranged system of organizations. While those associations answer all the ends of similar associations among other professions, securing the pleasures of intercourse, the benefits of sympathy, and the information derived from mutual conference, discussions and lectures, the Institutes are, during the day. Normal Schools in miniature, and, at evening, popular meetings for enlisting the community at large in the work of education. \* \* \* In two instances during the present year,—those of the Institutes held at Hyannis and at Sandwich,—the inhabitants of the place entertained the teachers during the whole time without charge ; an example of public spirit which, it is believed, others will emulate.

As a proof that the influence of such meetings upon the towns where they are held is regarded as valuable, it may be mentioned that the people of Hyannis and Sandwich expressed the conviction that they had themselves received a greater favor than they had conferred. And if we rightly estimate the value of an improved public sentiment in respect to the importance of education, of more