

Township, or each Township, under your superintendence. In my Circular to County Clerks, I have adverted to the manner in which these data should be furnished to any local Superintendent who may not have obtained them.

2. Having apportioned the school money to the several sections within the limits of his charge, the local Superintendent's next duty is to pay the money thus apportioned to *legally qualified Teachers, and no others*, on the lawful orders of Trustees. The proviso of the *fifteenth* section of the Act gives validity to the certificates of qualification by local Superintendents during the present year. No Teacher who has not such a certificate, or who cannot procure one, is entitled to any part of the School Fund. Before the end of the current year, I trust regulations and provisions will be made for the more uniform and thorough examination of Teachers, and the more systematic and equitable classification of them. In my circular to Wardens of Counties, and in my remarks in chapter V. of the Forms and Instructions, I have sufficiently adverted to the manner of paying Teachers, and accounting for School moneys under the provisions of the new Act.

3. The next, and of all the duties of the local Superintendent, the most vitally important, is the *inspection* of Schools. The provision of the law is explicit, both as to the *frequency* and the *manner* of this inspection. The law requires each local Superintendent, "To visit each School within his jurisdiction, at least once in each quarter; and at the time of each such visit, to *examine into the condition of the school*, as it respects the *progress of the pupils in learning*, the *order and discipline* observed, the *system of instruction* pursued, the *mode of keeping the school registers*, the *average attendance* of pupils, the *character and condition of the building and premises*, and to *give such advice* as he shall think proper." I do not think it is possible for a local Superintendent to observe, with any sort of fidelity, even the letter of the law, without spending nearly, if not quite, half-a-day in each School at each visit. To deal in a few vague generalities on such occasions, and to make it a kind of exhibition, is a burlesque on the object and duty of the *inspection* of Schools. Such an exhibition of general results is appropriate at a public quarterly examination; but the object of inspection is much more detailed, practical and thorough, and relates to the *mode* of proceeding in every particular of school instruction and government. The infrequency and very defective manner in which the Schools have been inspected in some districts, has given rise to objections against the very office of local Superintendent.

To perform this duty with any degree of efficiency, a local Superintendent should be acquainted with the best modes of teaching every department of an English School, and be able to explain and exemplify them. It is, of course, the local Superintendent's duty to witness the modes of teaching adopted by the Teacher, but he should do something more. He should, some part of the time, be an *actor* as well as *spectator*. To do so he must keep pace with the *progress of the science of teaching*. When young, I taught a District Grammar School some two years, and with some degree of reputed success; but the kind of teaching and school organization which would, in many instances, have been applauded in this country twenty-five to thirty years ago, ought not to be tolerated now. Every man who has to do with Schools, ought to make himself master of the best modes of conducting them in all the details of arrangement, instruction, and discipline. A man commits a wrong against Teachers, against children, and against the interests of school education, who seeks the office of local Superintendent without being qualified and able to fulfil all its functions. In respect to the manner of performing the *visitatorial* part of your duties, I have nothing material to add to the suggestions which I made in my circular to District Superintendents of Schools in December, 1846. They are as follows:—

Your own inspection of the Schools must be chiefly relied upon as the basis of your judgment, and the source of your information, as to the character and methods of school instruction, discipline, management, accommodations, &c.; and on this subject, we ought not to content ourselves with those exterior and general facts which have hitherto been the special, and almost only subjects of School Reports, such as the number of schools, that of pupils, their age, the sums expended, &c. These items of information are of unquestionable importance; and every means ought to be employed to render them more exact and complete. But it is not of less importance to know the *interior regime* of the Schools—the aptitude, the zeal, the deportment of the Teachers—their relations with the pupils, the Trustees and the neighbourhood—the progress and attain-

ments of the pupils, and, in a word, the whole moral and social character and results of the instruction given, as far as can be ascertained. Such information cannot be acquired from Reports and Statistical Tables; it can only be obtained by special visits, and by personal conversation and observation—by an examination of the several classes, in their different branches of study, so as to enable you to ascertain the degree and efficiency of the instruction imparted.

In the Inspection of Schools, I would suggest something like the following order and subjects of inquiry and examination:—

I. *Mechanical Arrangements*.—The tenure of the property: the materials, dimensions and plan of the buildings; how lighted, warmed, and ventilated; if any class-rooms are provided for the separate instruction of part of the children; if there is a lobby, or closet, for hats, cloaks, bonnets, &c.; how the desks and seats are arranged and constructed, and with what conveniences; what arrangements for the Teacher; what playground is provided; what gymnastic apparatus, if any; whether there be a well, and proper conveniences for private purposes.

II. *Means of Instruction*.—The Books used in the several classes, under the heads of Reading, Arithmetic, Geography, &c.; the Apparatus provided, as Tablets, Maps, Globes, Black-boards, Models, Cabinets, Library, &c.

III. *Organization*.—Arrangement of classes; whether each child is taught by the same Teacher; if any Assistant or Assistants are employed, to what extent, how remunerated, and how qualified.

IV. *Discipline*.—If the pupils change places in their several classes, or whether they are marked at each lesson, or exercise, according to their relative merit; if distinction depends on intellectual proficiency, or on a mixed estimate of intellectual proficiency and moral conduct, or on moral conduct only; what rewards, if any; whether corporal punishments are employed—if so, their nature, and whether inflicted publicly or privately; what other punishments are used; whether attendance is regular; what religious exercises are observed, and what religious instruction is given, if any.

V. *Method of Instruction*.—Whether mutual, or simultaneous, or individual, or mixed; if mutual, the number of Monitors, of what attainments, how appointed, how employed; if simultaneous, that is, by classes, to what subjects of instruction: whether the simultaneous method is not more or less mingled with individual teaching, and on what subjects; to what extent the intellectual, or the mere rote method is pursued, and on what subjects; how far the interrogative method only is used; whether the suggestive method is employed; whether the elliptical method is resorted to; how the attainments in the lessons are variously tested—by individual oral interrogation—by requiring written answers to written questions—or by requiring an abstract of the lesson to be written from memory.

VI. *Attainments of Pupils*.—1. *In Reading*; whether they can read imperfectly, decently, or with ease and expression. 2. *In Writing*; whether they can write at all, or imperfectly, decently, or with ease and elegance. 3. *In Arithmetic*; whether acquainted with Notation and Numeration, Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division, or not, respectively; whether skilful in them; whether acquainted with the Tables of Money, Weights, Measures, and skilful in them; whether acquainted with the compound rules, and skilful in them; whether acquainted with the higher rules, and skilful in them; whether acquainted with the exercises in mental arithmetic, and skilful in them. 4. *In Grammar*; whether acquainted with its divisions, rules of orthography, parts of speech, their nature and modifications, parsing, composition, &c. 5. *Geography, History, Book-keeping*, &c.; the order of questions, suggested by the nature of the subject. The extent and degree of minuteness with which the inspection will be prosecuted, in respect to any, or all of the foregoing and kindred subjects, must, of course, depend on circumstances.

4. Another most important duty required of each local Superintendent is, "To deliver in each School Section, at least once a-year, a public lecture on some subject connected with the objects, principles, and means of practical education." The education of a free people is, to a great extent, a system of voluntary exertion. There may be a good School law, and there may be a large School fund; and yet education may decline. Massachusetts without a farthing's State School Fund until since 1835 (and it amounts now to only a few thousand dollars a-year) has nobly advanced in the sound and universal education of her youth; while Connecticut, with the largest School Fund of any State in America in proportion to her population, has ignobly declined in the same great work of patriotism and humanity. In a "PRIZE ESSAY [published in the appendix to the last School Report of the State Commissioner] on the necessity and means of improving the Common Schools of Connecticut," I find the following, among many similar statements:—

A few years since, the name of Connecticut was mentioned in connexion with Common Schools, with honor, only; it is now, in this connexion, coupled with expressions of doubt and regret, and that by wise and sober men. Her large State endowment is described as having put her effectually asleep, as having sent her to "Sleepy Hollow," from the influence of which, when she is aroused for a moment, it is to talk of her noble School Fund and JAMES HILLHOUSE, just as RIP VAN WINKLE did of his neighbours who had been dead forty years. The School Fund is quoted every where out of Connecticut—we venture to say it is quoted in every other State in the Union—as a warning and example to deter them from giving the proceeds of their own funds, except only on the condition, that those who receive, shall themselves raise as much as they take, and report annually as to the results. Those who go from other States into Connecticut, can hardly credit the testimony of their own senses when they are forced to believe the apathy that prevails. Every newspaper and every lecturer out of Connecticut, high and low, ignorant and knowing, sneers at the Connecticut School Fund, and the present condition of Connecticut Schools.—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 sunshine, or from 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 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 a 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 supported by others wealthier than he, and having no interest of their own in the Schools.

These facts demonstrate that the onward progress of the education of a country does not depend, primarily or chiefly, upon a School Fund or School law, but upon the *spirit* and *action* of the *people*; and the great object of public School lea-