

1860

# Town of Manchester School Report

Manchester (Me.)

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# TOWN OF MANCHESTER.

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## SCHOOL REPORT.

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THE Superintending School Committee, for the Municipal year ending March 5, 1860, make the following report:—

Owing to circumstances well known to the citizens of the town, your committee found themselves placed in a position somewhat novel. Clothed with the dignity of Agents as well as Committee, they were obliged to perform numberless little duties, not very onerous when discharged by persons in the several districts; but involving, in their case, considerable time and some annoyance. The necessity for this change in the usual method of procedure having, as we think, transpired, we hope the town will see fit to return to its former usage, and relieve your committee of this additional burden.

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### DISTRICT No. 1.

SPRING TERM, 10 weeks.—Miss Lizzie H. Tuck, *Teacher*.

With the good impressions and habits acquired during the excellent winter term which preceded it, the older scholars who attended this were better prepared than usual to appreciate and to endeavor to secure to themselves its offered benefits, and the behavior and attainments of this portion of the school were very commendable and satisfactory; the exercises of many giving evidence of earnest study and judicious teaching. Among the smaller ones, there was less improvement, and more unmistakeable indications of laxity of government. Miss Tuck has had considerable experience as a teacher, and there is much in her method of teaching and manner of conducting a school that we highly approve, and, if she can acquire a faculty of government commensurate with the qualifications she already possesses, she will be able, we doubt not, to maintain a high position as a teacher.

YELLOW SCHOOL-HOUSE.—Irene L. Pope, *Teacher*.

This was a pleasant little school, quite orderly, and, in general, well conducted. Miss Pope appears to be a prompt teacher, ready to give her scholars all needed aid; and, though her efforts were not so well seconded as they should be by her scholars, the results of the term may be set down as fair. Closer application, and consequently better recitations, would have made the term more valuable.

FALL TERM, 10 weeks.—Miss Tuck, *Teacher*.

There was quite an increase of pupils this term over the preceding, amounting to fourteen pupils; giving forty-seven as the whole number registered. Almost half of this number consisted of scholars under nine years. Under these circumstances, it is evident that a teacher must possess an inexhaustible fund of patience, energy and physical endurance. To keep so large a number of children of that age in an endurable state of disorder, is a task of no small magnitude; to keep them still, simply impossible. At the close of the term, the school was very thoroughly examined, and the result, on the whole, very satisfactory. The progress of most of the pupils was marked. In the different classes in Arithmetic, there was evidence of careful and thorough training. We like Miss Tuck as a teacher, and give her praise for sustaining herself so well in her trying position; and, would she fortify her judgment more strongly against tenderness of feeling, and mingle more of the mistress with the teacher, she would place herself in the very front rank of her profession.

WINTER TERM, 14 weeks.—Mr. Jos. G. Pinkham, *Teacher*.

The school, this term, is much larger than it has been for several previous terms, registering some sixty pupils. A few have been admitted from District No. 5. Others, from abroad, boarding within the limits of the District. Mr. Pinkham is a young teacher, of limited experience, but ample literary qualifications, thoroughly devoted to his profession, bringing to his work a fund of enthusiasm and well-directed energy. From all indications, we expected a highly profitable term. Nor were we disappointed. Although the final examination was somewhat hastened by the necessity of perfecting this report for your annual meeting, giving the school time only for a partial review of the studies of the term, the examination, in all the branches, except, perhaps, Grammar, was highly satisfactory. We think we have never seen scholars perform

abstruse questions in intellectual Arithmetic with such rapidity and accuracy, evincing not only mathematical capacity but well disciplined powers. A class of six in Algebra had made good and permanent progress. If Mr. P. has faults as a teacher, they are such as will be most readily remedied by experience and his complete and earnest devotion to his profession.

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### DISTRICT No. 2.

SUMMER TERM.—Lizzie M. Hawkes, *Teacher*.

The attendance at this term was small and irregular; several who were present at the commencement left before the close, and, in their stead, were found others who did not attend the early part of the term. Under such circumstances it would seem hardly proper for your committee to express any decided opinion of the merits or demerits of the school.

WINTER TERM.—Mrs. Maria G. Bailey, *Teacher*.

This school, at its commencement, was highly satisfactory in appearance and prospect. The teacher was evidently at home in her vocation; prompt, ready and energetic. The school was closed by the teacher before the appointed time and did not receive a final examination; hence we are unable to say what was the progress made or the value of the school. If the promise of its commencement was fulfilled, the citizens of that district have no ground of complaint.

Whole number registered, 15; average attendance, 12.

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### DISTRICT No. 3.

SUMMER TERM.—Miss Lizzie Robinson, *Teacher*.

There was hardly enough of this school to base a report upon. An average attendance of only five small scholars certainly affords small chance for a show. The few who attended, however, appeared to have been well instructed in such matters as they were capable of learning. Miss R. is a fine scholar, has good ideas of teaching, and, but for the embarrassment and restraint imposed by excessive diffidence, might become a useful teacher in schools of a high order.

WINTER TERM.—Miss Florence S. Wilder, *Teacher*.

The school this term was but little larger than the summer school. Whole number registered, 9; average, 7.

It is almost universally the case, in a school so very small, that both teacher and pupils become worn out by their loneliness, and zeal and enthusiasm die from lack of a wholesome degree of rivalry and competition. We hesitate not to say, that the teacher who can maintain in a school of nine pupils the necessary amount of energy for successful progress, is possessed of more than ordinary resources.

With the progress of this school we were more than satisfied, and consider Miss W. a very promising teacher.

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#### DISTRICT No. 4.

SUMMER TERM.—Miss Martha E. Wood, *Teacher*.

Miss Wood has had much experience in teaching, and her services in this school were productive of such results as are to be expected from the labors of experienced teachers. The fact, however, could not be overlooked, that more earnestness and energy on the part of the teacher, and the maintenance of better order, would have much enhanced the value of those services.

WINTER TERM.—Miss Mary O. Avery, *Teacher*.

It is seldom we have experienced more satisfaction in the discharge of our arduous, and, often, perplexing duties, than we enjoyed in the examination of this school. We have, in our experience, had many negative proofs of the advantage of a teacher's having clear, well defined ideas upon the various branches required to be taught; but here was evidence of the right sort,—direct, positive, convincing. This term has been really valuable, the course of instruction thorough, and the progress marked; and we can but feel that, besides the salary so faithfully earned, the parents in No. 4 owe to Miss A. a large debt of gratitude for her untiring, well-directed efforts for the education of their children.

## DISTRICT No. 6.

SUMMER TERM.—Miss Lusanna E. Young, *Teacher*.

We found this school somewhat smaller than was anticipated, consisting of twelve pupils, most of them quite small. At the close of the term, we found that the patient industry of the teacher had produced its legitimate results. The pupils had evidently been interested in their work, and had made good progress. They were orderly and well-behaved, apparently from a feeling of love and respect for their teacher. We think Miss Young's labors were successful in this school.

WINTER TERM.—Mr. P. Costelloe, *Teacher*.

In commencing this school, Mr. C. had none of that knowledge which can be gained alone from experience in teaching, nor did he seem to have that tact, which, in young teachers, in part supplies its place. After some three weeks, it became evident to the teacher himself, that his further connection with the school could produce no desirable results, and it was accordingly closed. The school was recommenced, under the charge of one of the committee, for a period of seven weeks.

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 DISTRICT No. 7.

SUMMER TERM.—Miss Abby Caldwell, *Teacher*.

Teachers of this school usually complain of certain difficulties and discouragements, which, though not peculiar to it, are perhaps found in greater force in this than in some other schools. The teacher of this term was, we think, more successful than many of her predecessors in contending with those difficulties; the attendance was more regular than usual, and more interest in study was manifested than we have ever before discovered in this school. Stimulated and aided by the unwearied efforts of the teacher, all classes appeared to have made a good and substantial advance. The condition of the school, at the close of this term, was better and more promising than it has been at any time since we have been acquainted with it.

WINTER TERM.—This term was commenced by Mr. George Keely, a young man of good literary qualifications, but of no experience in teaching. After a period of some three weeks, dissatisfaction arose in the district and Mr. K. chose to cancel his engagement. The school was then placed in the charge

of Miss M. E. Wood and is now in operation. To those who see fit to avail themselves of the advantages of the school, we think it profitable.

If parents expect their children to be benefited by a term of school, they must not only see that they are present, but, as far as their influence extends, that they should be orderly and obedient. It is passing strange that parents will be so false to the trusts committed to their charge, so recreant to their plainest and most binding obligations to their own children, as to deprive them of the blessings of schools, from some idle whim of jealousy or silly caprice. Yet so it is, and results so disastrous are produced by causes, which, in an ordinary business transaction, would not weigh a farthing. "When will the sons of men learn wisdom!"

We have thus endeavored to give a brief summary of our school operations for the past year. We think, on the whole, our schools, during that period, have, at least, maintained a standing equal to that of former years. But with this we are not and should not be satisfied, until we have exhausted all available means for their progression. We regard it as a part of our duty to present those means for your consideration; and we hope all suggestions looking to the increased efficiency and value of our public schools, from whatever source they may come, may receive an examination commensurate with the importance of the subject.

Is it not the part of wisdom and sound policy, for the citizens of a district, after having delegated to one of their number authority to employ a teacher, and that teacher comes among them with the necessary credentials for assuming his office, to look upon him as *the* teacher for the term and give to him their hearty co-operation. This by no means involves the sustaining of a teacher "right or wrong." Nor would we lower, we would rather elevate, the standard of a teacher's qualifications. But let the experiment be tried in good faith; let the teacher have the hearty and earnest co-operation of every parent and guardian in the district, and let him feel that he has it, and, our word for it, the efficiency of our schools will be vastly increased.

Our teachers are supposed to inherit some of the imperfections of humanity; their patience may sometimes be exhausted; their over-tasked energies give way. And, however valuable angelic perfections may be in their calling, their labors, vexations and treatment, are not, perhaps, best calculated to foster such graces.

Let parents, by visiting the school, show their interest in its prosperity; listen, (if listen they must,) with caution to disparaging reports concerning its management; and believe that a quiet suggestion to the teacher, or a kindly warning to pupils will remove a molehill, which, with careful nursing might become a mountain.

In fine, let us ever remember that, as we owe, in a great measure, our present social, political and moral position to our system of general education, to the same source must we look for its perpetuity.

I. N. WADSWORTH, } *Sup. School*  
 H. G. COLE, } *Committee.*

MANCHESTER, March 1, 1860.

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