Annual Report

OF THE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

OF THE

TOWN OF HAMILTON,

For the year ending March, 1863.

SALEM:
PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE SALEM GAZETTE.
1863.
REPORT.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—

At the close of another official year, it becomes the duty of your Committee to bring to your notice those facts in relation to our schools, which seem important to be gathered up in the form of an Annual Report, which we would most respectfully present.

In the discharge of our duties the past year, we have ever kept in mind, that a year in the life of the pupils in our schools, is a period too precious to be lost, or misimproved.

The sum of $600, appropriated by the town at their annual meeting in March, 1862, with the town's proportion of the State School Fund, made the amount to be expended $632 28; this sum, according to a vote of the town, was divided equally among the four school districts, the town also voted to transfer to the school districts, the power of electing their Prudential Committee, also to such committee the power to select and contract with teachers for the schools in their respective districts.

The teachers presented to us for examination, in every instance, appeared well qualified to govern and instruct those to be intrusted to their care. There being a tendency in many scholars in our schools to pursue their studies superficially, we instructed the teachers to see that thoroughness become a prominent characteristic of their school; also to establish and maintain good order.

We regret that a vacancy has occurred in your Board of Committee, during the year, of so valuable and efficient a member as Rev. F. H. Johnson.
NORTH DISTRICT.

SUMMER TERM.

Teacher, Miss Ellen S. Cook, of Wakefield, N. H.

Wages of teacher per month, ........................................... $16
Length of term in weeks, .............................................. 18
Whole number of scholars, ............................................ 38
Per cent. average attendance ......................................... 73
Number present every day, ............................................ 0
  " absent half the term, ............................................. 8
  " under 5 years of age, ............................................ 2
  " over 15 " " ..................................................... 0

Miss Cook has been employed in this school for three successive summer terms; during the present term she devoted herself to the interest of the school, and fully sustained her previous reputation as instructress. The school, from the commencement to its termination, made a continued and rapid progress.

WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Mr. David A. Caldwell, of Newbury.

Wages of teacher per month, ......................................... $30
Length of term in weeks, .............................................. 12
Whole number of scholars, ............................................ 37
Per cent. average attendance ........................................ 83.3-4
Number present every day, .......................................... 5
  " absent half the term, ........................................... 3
  " under 5 years of age, ........................................... 0
  " over 15 " " ................................................... 9

Mr. Caldwell came to this school laden with experience and ability; he readily gained the affection of his pupils, which was a great secret of his success in securing, and maintaining good order. Most of the characteristics of a model school were prominent in this, while under the charge of Mr. C., who has proved himself a thorough instructor and disciplinarian.

EAST DISTRICT.

SUMMER AND WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Miss Mary Low, of Essex.

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<td>Wages of teacher per month</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$25</td>
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<td>Length of term in weeks</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole number of scholars</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
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Per cent. average attendance, .................. 84 77 3-4
Number present every day, ................... 0 0
Number absent half the term, ............... 1 0
  " under 5 years of age, ............... 2 0
  " over 15 "  "  " .................. 0 7

The teacher has, by her method of interesting her pupils, her kindness to them and persevering efforts for their improvement, won their willing obedience, and secured the esteem of the parents; she proved herself a superior teacher while in charge of the school. Punctuality in attendance, and closer study on the part of the scholars would greatly improve this school.

SOUTH DISTRICT.

Summer Term.

Teacher ................ Miss E. Addie Patch, of Lynn.
Wages of teacher per month, ...................... $14
Length of term in weeks, ..................... 15
Whole number of scholars, ................... 37
Per cent. average attendance, ........... 65
  Number present every day, ................... 0
  " absent half the term, .................... 11
  " under 5 years of age, .................... 2
  " over 15 "  "  " .................. 2

Miss Patch entered upon her duties with the desire to do all that is required of a teacher. The school under her charge made commendable improvement.

Winter Term.

Teacher ............... Mr. Charles Caldwell, of Newbury.
Wages of teacher per month, ...................... $29
Length of term in weeks, .................... 11 1-2
Whole number of scholars, .................. 44
Per cent. average attendance, .......... 72 3-4
Number present every day, .................... 0
  " absent half the term, .................... 4
  " under 5 years of age, .................... 2
  " over 15 "  "  " .................. 12

The teacher made every effort for the advancement of his pupils, and those who applied themselves closely to their studies made good improvement; while others in this school appeared wholly to disregard all means for their improvement and good behavior.
WEST DISTRICT.

Summer Term.

Teacher. Miss Sarah W. Dodge, of Hamilton.

Wages of teacher per month, $14 44
Length of term in weeks, 18
Whole number of scholars, 44
Per cent. average attendance, 81 3-4
Number present every day, 6
" Absent half the term, 7
" under 5 years of age, 3
" over 15 " 0

Miss Dodge having taught this school during the summer of 1861, was well prepared to enter at once upon the duties of instruction. At the close of the school the pupils exhibited a thoroughness in their studies, which showed faithfulness on the part of the teacher and application on the part of the scholars. The order was excellent. Promptness in reciting and ready obedience, are prominent features in this school.

Winter Term.

Teacher. Mr. Alden B. Chadwick, of Bradford.

Wages of teacher per month, $30
Length of term in weeks, 12
Whole number of scholars, 40
Per cent. average attendance, 85
Number present every day, 3
" absent half the term, 0
" under 5 years of age, 0
" over 15 " 4

The teacher has been devoted to his work, and the school has made a fair progress under his teaching. At the closing examination, the exercises were very commendable to both teacher and pupils; the reading of some of the older scholars was of the highest order.

We are happy to say that our schools the past year have met with a good degree of success. The teachers have been interested in their schools, and have endeavored to discharge their duties to the satisfaction of the parents and Committee.
While we see much connected with our schools which is pleasing, we find many things are wanting to bring them up to the standard which is desirable.

Much has been said, heretofore, by Committees, concerning the irregularity of pupils in our schools; considering the condition of them at the present time, too much cannot be said upon this subject. Some of the parents, appreciating the blessing of our schools, and desirous to receive the benefits to be derived from them, have sent their children regularly, (unless some sufficient cause prevented) inculcating in them a spirit of obedience to the rules of the school. Others seem to neglect this duty almost entirely; and their children are allowed to be out of school the greater part of the time. The average attendance for the last three years has been only 70 per cent,—far below what it should be,—showing that much instruction might have been received which has otherwise been lost. We think if parents fully realized all the evil effects of such irregularity, they would put forth every effort for the constant attendance of their children.

We are sorry to say, that at the final examination of some of the schools, quite a number of the larger boys absented themselves; whether it was owing to a lack of knowledge, having misimproved their time, or from other causes, we need not inquire; but whatever the reason may be, it is not sufficient to justify their absence, as long as they are walking the streets. Those scholars who were present at the examinations did themselves credit.

An effort has been made, heretofore, by teachers, to form classes in Geography and Grammar, of those who had passed the age at which they should have commenced the study of these branches; but, after repeated intimations from their parents, that "their children disliked these branches, therefore did not wish them to attend to them," the effort was abandoned. These scholars will, unless they
attend to those branches soon, leave our schools very deficient in them; not knowing even the boundaries, capitals, and chief rivers of the New England States; neither how to compose a letter correctly. The want of this knowledge will be felt probably through life. When another effort is made for this purpose, or a similar one, should it not meet the approbation of all? Of those in our schools at the present time, who have arrived at a proper age to study these branches, only 60 per cent. attend to Geography, and 66 per cent. to Grammar.

A law of the Commonwealth requires that instruction be given in good behavior; this very important branch we fear is too much neglected by teachers generally. The heart should be educated aright, as well as the intellect; for the intellect will be employed for good or evil, according to the education of the heart. Our youth should be early taught to discriminate between right and wrong, to love the truth and always speak it, to be honest and upright in all their dealings; respectful and courteous in their manners; that their lives may be useful and active in doing good—a benefit to the community and the world.

We feel that there cannot be too much interest manifested in regard to our schools. Our interest should increase rather than diminish. The liberties inherited from our fathers, can be perpetuated on a permanent foundation, only by the diffusion of intelligence throughout the whole community; as a means to this end, the Public Schools are open to all children, and no one should leave them without a good education.

JOSEPH P. LOVERING, School
BENJAMIN W. PATCH, Committee.

HAMILTON, March, 1863.