

SENATE....No. 19.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

Concord, January 29th, 1850.

To the Hon. M. P. WILDER, President of the Senate :

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit to you, the report of the Committee on Education, of the last year, on the State Normal Schools, which they were instructed to visit and examine, during the recess of the Legislature, with the request that you will communicate it to the Senate and House of Representatives.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN S. KEYES,

In behalf of the Committee.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION OF THE LEGISLATURE OF 1849, ON THE STATE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

The undersigned, in behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on Education, of the last year, respectfully reports, that, in conformity with orders of the last Legislature, the committee visited and examined the three Normal schools of the State, at Newton, Bridgewater, and Westfield. They visited the school at Newton twice,—once while it was under the superintendence of its late principal, Mr. Pierce, and again after its present principal, Mr. Stearns, had undertaken its charge. In every instance they were accompanied and aided by the Secretary of the Board of Education, and devoted an entire day to the examination. The character and qualifications of the several teachers, both principals and assistants, and the general arrangements and administration of the schools, as well as the deportment and scholarship of the pupils, were found to be entirely satisfactory. The designs of the Legislature in establishing them, the efforts of the Board of Education to carry them into efficient operation, and the anticipations of the friends and benefactors of common school education, are all in a sure way of accomplishment. No institutions have ever been devised more effectual in promoting popular education and in elevating the general standard of intelligence. The influences that will proceed from them upon the district schools, the families, and the true civilization, and refinement of the Commonwealth, cannot be enumerated in all their details, or estimated in their whole extent and comprehension.

The great defect of our district school system is in the qualification of teachers. This defect the Normal schools will meet and remove. For this they provide the only adequate and sure remedy.

The committee are confident that no member of the Legislature, after a personal inspection and examination of these schools, would hesitate to extend to them, with cordial liberality and earnest promptitude, the support and patronage of the State.

They are already crowded. More seek their privileges than can be accommodated. Without going into details, which are better furnished by the report of the Board of Education, there was evident need of increased accommodations, either at these schools or in new ones. It is presumed that the Legislature will feel bound to provide, not for a part only, but for the whole people, and that the number, or the size of these schools, will be enlarged, until they extend to all the advantages to which all are equally entitled.

The committee would, in conclusion, observe, that their presence at the schools, in their legislative character, and by the order of the government, was regarded with interest, and appreciated, in each case, by the teachers and pupils. The effect produced upon the spirit and condition of the schools was evidently most auspicious, binding all connected with them to the State, by ties of increased affection, gratitude, and pride, and stimulating them with new ardor and energy in the great work of the education of the people.

JOHN S. KEYES, *for the Committee.*

January, 1850.

*To the Honorable the Senate
and House of Representatives.*

