

STATE OF NEW-YORK.

No. 32.

IN SENATE,

January 27, 1846.

COMMUNICATION

From the Secretary of State and Chancellor of the Regents of the University, transmitting the report of the executive committee of the State Normal School.

TO THE LEGISLATURE.

Pursuant to the provisions of the fourth section of the act chapter 311, of the laws of 1844, the undersigned have the honor to state that the Hon. Samuel Young has been appointed one of the executive committee for the care, management and government of the Normal School, in the place of Alonzo Potter, resigned, since the date of our last report; and that the full amount of the receipts and expenditures of money under the act, is stated in the report which has been received from the executive committee and approved of, and is herewith transmitted.

N. S. BENTON,

Supt. Common Schools.

Albany, January 22d, 1846.

By order.

PETER WENDELL, *Chancellor,*
in behalf of the Regents of the University.

REPORT

Of the Executive Committee of the State Normal School.

To the State Superintendent of Common Schools and Regents of the University of New-York.

The executive committee of the State Normal School

RESPECTFULLY REPORT :

The provisions of the act of the Legislature, passed May 7th, 1844, "for the establishment of a Normal School," require the executive committee to present to the Regents "a detailed report" "of the progress, condition and prospects of the school."

Of course, the last report which the committee had the honor to present, could contain no such detail, as it bears the date of January 29th, which was about five weeks after the opening of the school. Now, however, when a year has elapsed, during which abundant opportunity has been afforded of observing the practical working of the normal system, the committee feel able to give "a detailed report," and it is their purpose to obey the requirements of the law upon this point.

BUILDING AND ACCOMMODATIONS.

In the building which the city of Albany had placed at the disposal of the committee, eight rooms have been fitted up for the exclusive use of the Normal School, viz : two study rooms, four recitation rooms, a lecture room, and one apartment for the library and appa-

ratus. The study rooms are provided with comfortable desks and seats, affording accommodation for about 200 pupils. Males and females occupy the same rooms, the latter being seated in front, next to the desk of the teacher, while the males are placed immediately in the rear of them. Each study room has a clock, which is indispensable wherever punctuality is so much insisted on as it is at the Normal School.

The lecture room is a commodious apartment which will seat 350 persons.

These eight rooms are in constant use as recitation rooms, and are all provided with large black-boards.

All of these eight apartments were not however fitted up and in order upon the first opening of the school ; but new rooms were from time to time prepared, as the increase in the number of the students and the exigences of the school required. The committee have acted upon the principle, that there should be no lavish expenditure of the public money, and hence there have been few *prospective* outlays, based upon the hope or expectation of the success of the school. What the comfort of teachers and students required, has been attended to, and no more.

It is proper to remark in this place, that the exterior of the building, fronting on State-st., has been handsomely painted, and nearly the whole expense of it paid by gentlemen residing in the immediate vicinity of the school. The committee thought that such kindness ought to be suitably acknowledged, and accordingly the following preamble and resolution were passed and published in the daily papers.

“WHEREAS: Through the liberal agency of Isaiah Townsend, Esq., and other citizens of Albany, a fund has been subscribed for painting and ornamenting the front of the edifice occupied by the State Normal School,

“Resolved, That the secretary be instructed to communicate to Mr. Townsend, and through him to the subscribers, the thanks of the committee for this timely aid ; and that copies of this resolution be published in the daily papers of the city of Albany.”

STATISTICS OF THE SCHOOL.

The third term of the school is now in progress. The first term began December 18th, 1844 ; during which, the whole of the instruction, except in music and drawing, was imparted by the Principal, David P. Page, and the Professor of Mathematics, George R. Perkins.

The number of pupils, who presented themselves on the first day, was 29, thirteen males and sixteen females. The number of counties then represented was fourteen. The school gradually increased during the term, until the number on the roll reached ninety-eight ; about an equal number of whom was of each sex. Of these, sixty-nine were "State Pupils," who received a weekly allowance of money; the females receiving \$1.25, and the males \$1.00.

The school closed its first term upon the 11th of March, 1845 ; having been in session twelve weeks, during which forty counties were represented.

After a vacation of four weeks, the duties of the school were resumed on April 9th ; and every thing assumed a more favorable aspect. There were 170 pupils present on the first day, and the whole number enrolled, during the term, was 185, of whom 119 were "State Pupils," and 66 "Volunteers." More than half of the pupils during the second term were males, and about nine-tenths of the whole had been teachers for a longer or shorter period. The fact, that every county in the State but one was represented, was exceedingly gratifying, and was regarded as indicative of an increase of confidence in the school.

The weekly allowance in the second term was made without regard to sex, and each State pupil received \$1.00.

This term closed on August 27th, when thirty-four of the students completed the course, and received a diploma. See Appendix, (A.)

After a vacation of seven weeks, the school commenced its present term on October 15th. There were 180 present on the first day, and the number has now increased to 197. A few more than half are females. Of the whole number, 122 are "State Pupils," and 75 are "Volunteers," and all but 21 have been teachers, some of them for several years. Every county but one is now represented in the school; and it is proper to state, that the officers of the unrepresented county

did appoint a pupil, but for reasons of a private nature he thought it not advisable to enter. The weekly allowance to the State pupils during this term is seventy-five cents.

PLEDGE TO TEACH.

All the pupils on entering the school are required to sign the following declaration.

“We the subscribers hereby declare, that it is our intention to devote ourselves to the business of teaching district schools, and that our sole object in resorting to this Normal School is the better to prepare ourselves for that important duty.”

The committee felt themselves imperatively bound to guard the trust committed to them from abuse. The design of the Legislature was not to endow an institution, whither any or all might resort, who desired to obtain a solid education ; the act expressly declares, that it was founded “for the instruction and practice of teachers of common schools in the science of education and in the art of teaching.” The end of the law would therefore have been defeated, if the doors of the school had been thrown open to any who would enter. This consideration induced the committee to demand the above pledge, which they wished to make as stringent as possible. And it gives them pleasure to state, that they have not the shadow of a reason for doubting the honesty of the pupils who have signed it. It may also be stated here, that of the thirty-four graduates of the school, thirty-three are actually engaged in common schools, and one is fulfilling the duties of a county superintendent.

ORGANIZATION AND INSTRUCTION.

As upon the first of opening of the school, the number of the pupils was small, all the instruction, except in vocal music and drawing, was given by the Principal and Professor of Mathematics.

Observation as well as experience had produced the conviction, that the first great thing to be done in the school, was, to imbue the pupils with a sense of the *importance of the teacher's work*, and of the necessity of high qualifications for the successful discharge of a teacher's duty.

To accomplish this a course of lectures was at once commenced by the principal, on the "Responsibilities of the Teacher;" the "Habits of the Teacher;" "Modes of Teaching;" "Modes of Government;" "Qualifications of the Teacher;" "Securing parental Co-operation;" "Waking up Mind; in School, in the District;" "Motives to be addressed," &c. &c.

A very commendable spirit soon manifested itself in the school, in the *teachableness* of the pupils. It was found that the most of them were willing to descend again to first principles, and to lay anew the foundation stones of a good education. Thus, too, the way was prepared for the classification of the students, a duty always difficult and often unpleasant for the teacher, especially when the pupil shows an unwillingness to take his proper place, thinking more favorably than his teachers of his own proficiency. But the influence of these lectures carried the majority of the students to the extreme, the opposite of self confidence, for they seemed to feel that they had every thing to learn, and they were willing to be classed among those who were to acquire the elements of knowledge.

When the way was thus prepared for labor, the instructors, to make themselves useful to the school, relied mainly upon *actual teaching* and *thorough drilling*. The classes were soon formed, and the elementary branches thoroughly taught, and at every step with a special reference to the manner of teaching them again in the district school.

The teachers had no desire to introduce *novelties* or extraordinary methods to the attention of the school. It was their desire rather to bring before them such methods, as their own experience had proved to be most useful. "Not how much, but how well," was one of their mottos, and "Books are but helps," was another. They endeavored to awaken an interest in the *subjects* treated upon, while books were regarded only as instruments. Above all, it was kept steadily before the minds of the student that he was *receiving*, that he might again *dispense*; hence the question was so often asked, "How would you explain that to a child?" that it was not unfrequently anticipated by the reciter; who would say, "If I were teaching a class, I would explain it thus."

Much time was spent during the first term upon the common

branches — reading, spelling, writing, geography, arithmetic and grammar. For it was soon discovered, that in the various schools where these pupils had been educated, these branches — the first two especially — had been almost entirely neglected, for the pursuit of the *higher branches*. Many had studied philosophy, whose *spelling was deficient*; and others had studied algebra, who found it very difficult to explain intelligibly the mystery of “*borrowing ten and carrying one*” in simple subtraction. And yet a large number of these pupils had been engaged in teaching the district schools of the State.

It was therefore believed, that the usefulness of the Normal School would be best promoted by at once directing attention to these *little things*. Reading and spelling became therefore daily exercises, and were conducted with special reference to the manner of teaching these branches most thoroughly in district schools.

In teaching reading it was thought of the utmost importance, to break up the mechanical mode in which, it is too often taught in the schools. Reading, it was believed, had its rules and reasons and principles, as much as any other branch of study, and the point sought was to lay hold of these principles and to develop them — in other words — to teach reading philosophically, and not mechanically. This was attempted and prosecuted by Mr. Page in the following manner. It is well known that there are about *forty elementary sounds* in our language. The first step therefore was, to teach every pupil the utterance of these sounds. For this purpose a *chart* was prepared with much care by the Principal, upon which these sounds were indicated by their *most common representatives*. After this, the less frequent representatives were explained under the name of *equivalents*. When the students were able to give perfect utterance to the “*simple elements*,” they were next exercised upon a series of combinations of these elements, until many of the most difficult in our language were mastered. Thus words were analyzed into their elements, and the elements again combined into words; and then the whole was applied to the reading lessons. The effect upon the tones of the voice, and upon articulation was speedily obvious to all. When perfect utterance was acquired — the first essential step toward good reading or speaking — then the inflections and modulations of the voice, pauses and emphasis, quantity and force, in a word, all those nicer

variations, attention to which make the perfect reader, were not neglected.

The effect of this thorough course of teaching in improving the reading and especially the articulation of the pupils, was so apparent as to excite the remarks of all who visited the school; and the committee were much gratified in observing, that in proportion to the thoroughness of the instruction, there was a corresponding disposition on the part of the students, to be strictly thorough themselves.

No unimportant part of the instruction in reading, was that devoted to giving an idea of the *best methods of teaching children to read*. Here, instruction in the elementary sounds at a very early stage of the child's progress was earnestly urged.

These methods were fully illustrated in familiar lectures by the Principal, but further detail seems here inadmissible, since it would occupy too great space.

Spelling was taught to a considerable extent by the use of the slate, It was believed that *oral* spelling had been too much relied on in district schools; and the evil of such exclusive reliance is apparent from the fact, that good oral spellers frequently commit mistakes, when called on to write. Various methods were therefore practised, not only with the view of immediately benefitting the pupils, but also to furnish them with the means of securing an interest in this important branch of education, when they were called to teach.

In teaching geography, the great aim was, to fix in the mind of the pupil an idea of the shape, extent and general features of a country; the character of the surface, as level, undulating, hilly or mountainous; the course and extent of the mountains, the basins or great reservoirs for the streams of the uplands; the position of the cities; the canals, railroads, &c. To accomplish this, the students were required to draw at home an outline map of the country, delineating, as far as possible, these general features. And from the instruction in drawing, which had been imparted, the students executed this task with much accuracy and even beauty. Then in the class, they were required to draw, *from memory*, the same map upon the black board, which after some practice, they were able to do with despatch. After this,

they recited, somewhat in the form of a lecture, all the information which they had acquired concerning the history of the country, including the form of government, language, religion, laws, customs and remarkable events. At this point, the teacher, either by questioning the other pupils, or by his own statements, corrected mistakes, or communicated such additional information, as he deemed to be important.

A very thorough course of lectures was also delivered by the professor of mathematics, on the use of the globes and on mathematical geography, in which many of the elementary principles of astronomy were appropriately introduced.

In commencing the mathematical course, it was thought that *thoroughness* alone could secure a pleasant and profitable progress. To gain this, instruction commenced at the fundamental principles of arithmetic. The students were required to solve *orally* and without the aid of a book, all the questions in "Colburn's Intellectual Arithmetic." After the attainment of considerable proficiency in this exercise, they were allowed to propose to each other, such questions as involved the principles already acquired. This gave additional interest to the subject of study; while the brevity and clearness displayed in stating the questions, and the facility and ingenuity in solving them, clearly proved, that the students were making not only a thorough but rapid advancement.

In teaching written arithmetic, great care was taken that the principles on which the rules were grounded, should be fully comprehended. To this end, the pupils were required to go to the black board, and taking the position of a teacher, to go carefully through the analysis of each topic; while any member of the class was permitted to point out whatever he deemed incorrect or defective, and the *temporary* teacher was called on to defend his course, or to correct his mistake. Thus rigid criticism was encouraged, and no subject was dismissed, until it was so well understood, that any of the class could act the part of a teacher, and explain it at the black board. Frequently several members of the class were called on in succession to elucidate the same subject; thus affording an opportunity for comparing the relative merits of various methods.

The same course was pursued in algebra and geometry.

In order to be certain that the instruction was thorough, frequent reviews were required ; and the maxim was continually repeated "not how much, but how well."

Lectures were also delivered by the professor of mathematics, on the best methods of demonstrating the rules of arithmetic, and these lectures included a consideration, as well of the most intricate, as of the elementary principles of the science of numbers.

The instruction in grammar awakened, from the first, much interest among the students. All of them had studied the subject somewhat ; and many of them had come to the school with strong predilections for the peculiar opinions of particular authors. Bullions, Goold, Brown, Pierce, Kirkham, Smith, &c. had their friends, and the school, in this respect, resembled somewhat Paul's account of the church at Corinth, where every one had "a doctrine." This, of course, awakened interest, called forth inquiry, and tended much to increase the knowledge of the science. And the committee can say of themselves, that they never attended the recitation of the grammar classes, without receiving some profitable suggestion, or finding their own minds fillipped to think.

After the elementary studies were thus reviewed, some of the higher branches were taken up. Among the number were natural philosophy and human physiology, besides higher arithmetic and algebra, of which mention has been already made. Composition and declamation were also regularly attended to.

A teacher of vocal music and also of drawing were procured for the school, and commenced their instructions immediately upon the opening of it. It was believed that a knowledge of both of these branches was important to the teacher. By music, the ear is cultivated and the feelings refined, and it also affords an instructor a means of preserving a state of feeling in his school, which would, to some extent, render a resort to severity less frequent.

Vocal music has been taught elementarily, so as to prepare the pupils for teaching it to others in a proper manner. Care has also been taken to familiarize the students with many of the little songs adapted to childhood, in order that the graduates may be able to carry into their schools such music as shall be attractive to the young.

Drawing, also, it was thought, ought to be taught to all children, no less for its direct utility than for the influence it would have in the cultivation of all their powers, by disciplining the eye, improving the taste, and by awakening the observation both of natural and artificial forms. Besides, a knowledge of drawing greatly facilitates an instructor's *power to teach*; and in the absence of apparatus, it is his only way of addressing the eye.

The first term of the school was closed by a public examination, but no special preparations were made for it. It was resolved that all such examinations should be a thorough sifting of the students, and not a periodical occasion of displaying certain well conned portions of the studies pursued. Accordingly the pupils were simply informed, that they would be examined on all the subjects of study pursued during the term, and they were required to prepare themselves as well as they could. The result was highly creditable to teachers and pupils; and the committee were told by many members of the last Legislature and other friends of education, that *if the same indefatigable diligence and interest, on the part of teachers and taught, were kept up, the success of the school was placed beyond a peradventure.*

Still the first term could hardly be looked upon as a *test* of the Normal "*experiment.*" Besides being a very short term, (twelve weeks,) it was constantly interrupted by the admission of new scholars, who of course could be but imperfectly classed.

None graduated at the close of this term; as the committee had determined that no one should receive a diploma, unless he had been a member of the school for one entire term of twenty weeks. Several individuals had however distinguished themselves, as well by an aptness to teach, as by the thoroughness of their attainments as far as they had gone. By the advice of the committee, six of these were engaged as assistants for the next term. They were still to pursue their studies, while they should hear two recitations daily in the school, and for which they were to receive a small compensation.

SECOND TERM.

The school opened with about double the number of the former term; a new professor was also added to the corps of instruction.

The organization of the school was arranged with reference to a drilling of the new pupils in the elementary branches. All went on prosperously for about eight weeks, when the new professor was obliged to resign his position, by reason of sickness in his family, then residing in a distant part of the State. This was a crisis of great interest to the school. The appointment of a new professor in the middle of a term—if even a good one could have been procured—would have been a serious drawback upon the progress of the school; but no one was at hand, and the place had to be filled by adding two others to the number of the assistants. This was at first looked upon as a temporary arrangement; but as they, beyond expectation, sustained themselves in their position as teachers, it was, after mature deliberation, decided by the committee, that no further change should be made in the board of instruction during the term.

The course of instruction during the second term did not materially differ from that pursued before. Experience of course suggested some modifications, and among these was the introduction of what is familiarly called the "*Sub Lecture Exercise.*" Shortly after the middle of the term, a demand was made by the county superintendents, for teachers who should assist in the county institutes, which were to be convened during the approaching vacation of the Normal School. In order therefore to prepare the students for this duty, by improving their *ability of communicating* their knowledge, the "*sub lectures*" were introduced. Some fifteen of the more advanced pupils were appointed weekly, who were expected to prepare themselves to elucidate a given topic on the following Wednesday. The pupil, in the presence of the whole school, was then required to assume the attitude of a teacher, and by means of diagrams on the black board, &c., to explain, as best he could, the particular point assigned. The lecture of each pupil was limited to six minutes, and when each had performed his duty, his *matter, manner* and style were criticised by the principal. The improvement observable from week to week, showed this exercise to be one of no small importance. See Appendix (B.)

The lectures of the principal before the whole school were continued, in which all the important subjects already spoken of were carefully discussed.

The second term closed with the public examination ; at this, large audiences were present ; and as far as the committee had opportunity to learn the opinions of those who attended, but one sentiment was expressed : *that for honesty and rigour, the public examinations of the Normal school might be equalled, but could not be surpassed.*

At the close of the examination, thirty-four of the pupils were judged to be "*well qualified to teach,*" and they accordingly received the diploma of the school. See Appendix (E.)

THIRD TERM.

There are, at the present time, nearly two hundred pupils in the school, who are pursuing their studies with diligence and profit.

The assistants having sustained themselves so well during the second term, it was, after mature deliberation, thought best not to appoint another professor with a large salary, but to employ instead several of those who had been temporarily engaged as assistants, to become permanent teachers. Accordingly four males and one female, were appointed, who are devoting their whole time to their work. The aggregate compensation, received by these five, scarcely exceeds the salary of one professor ; while it is believed, that the services rendered by several of them—owing to their knowledge of the plans and wishes of the principal—are quite as valuable as could be procured at any price.

The following is a list of the names and duties of the present corps of instructors :

DAVID P. PAGE, *Principal.*

GEORGE R. PERKINS, A. M., *Professor of Mathematics.*

DARWIN G. EATON, *Teacher of Mathematics, &c.*

SUMNER C. WEBB, *Teacher of Arithmetic and Geography.*

SILAS T. BOWEN, *Teacher of Grammar.*

W. W. CLARK, *Teacher of Nat. Philosophy and Chemistry.*

ELIZABETH C. HANCE, *Teacher of Reading and History.*

WM. F. PHELPS, *Permanent Teacher of the Model School.*

F. I. ILSLEY, *Teacher of Vocal Music.*

J. B. HOWARD, *Teacher of Drawing.*

The number of the pupils having increased so much, a modification of the duties of the principal was imperatively required. A general

supervision of the teachers is necessary, and this could not be exercised, so long as the principal was confined during all the school hours, engaged in actual teaching. At the first, necessity required his services in the recitation room, but it was even then felt to be an evil, which ought to be corrected as soon as possible. Accordingly his duties as an actual teacher have been somewhat lightened, and a portion of every day is spent by him, in visiting the classes taught by the assistants.

The course, together with the kind of instruction now imparted is much the same as in former terms. The *elements* are first taught, and the *higher branches* afterwards. In addition to the Wednesday "sub lectures," some of the more advanced classes spend an hour each week, in what is denominated an "*Institute Exercise*." Three or four persons are designated, who having prepared themselves, take the place of *Institute Teachers*; thus a facility is acquired in performing an important service which will be expected of them when they graduate.

There are also in the school, several associations which meet every Saturday, for the purpose of discussing the duties of the teacher, the best modes of discipline, and the means of elevating the profession of the teacher, so that it may become worthy of the public respect; it is believed that these associations are exerting a salutary influence.

At a meeting of the executive committee held on the 25th of last August, the following resolution was unanimously passed:

"*Resolved*, That constitutional law, together with select parts of the statutes of this State, most intimately connected with the rights and duties of citizens, shall be pursued as a study in the normal school."

Accordingly this branch of study has been introduced, and is now pursued with much interest, and it is believed, with profit.

A class is also now forming, which will commence the study of intellectual and moral philosophy.

PUNCTUALITY AND SYSTEM.

Punctuality is esteemed essential for the teacher, who wishes to preserve his own self-respect, or to be useful to his pupils; its observ-

ance has therefore been earnestly urged upon all, both by precept and example ; and the normal school affords an example of the ease with which punctuality may be observed in a school, by teachers' being punctual themselves. The normal school teachers are never "behind the time."

Success also in a school depends much upon adherence to *system* in all its arrangements and exercises. The rule of the normal school is, that there is "a time for every thing, and every thing must be in its time." To illustrate this, the "Programme" of the exercises of the school is subjoined, it shows the classification of the school, the studies at present pursued, and the order of time. See Appendix. (C.)

DISCIPLINE.

It was thought best to have *few laws*. The *wish of the Principal*, kindly expressed, has been the law of the school, while the good intention and ever ready compliance on the part of the pupils, to that wish, has made the discipline of the school an honor to teachers and students, and a gratification to all who have witnessed it.

LIBRARY AND APPARATUS.

In the report of last year, it was stated, "that a donation for an educational library has been made to the normal school, by the executors of the Hon. James Wadsworth, out of certain funds left by that distinguished friend of education, to be disbursed in such manner as would best promote the interests of the schools of the people." This valuable donation has been received, and composes the principal part of the "Miscellaneous Library," which now numbers 601 volumes.

The expense of the school, in the purchase of text books, has also been much lessened by the liberality of publishers. The number of volumes in the "Text Book Library is 5,005. The number of volumes in both libraries is 5,606.

In the purchase of chemical and philosophical apparatus, the committee have sought to avoid all extravagance ; and they believe, that the school now has all that is needed for the present.

EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL.

During the second term, an experimental school was opened, consisting of forty-five children between the ages of five and sixteen years. This school was taught during that term by the graduating class, who went in *by turns* for that purpose.

The design of this school is, to afford the normal pupils an opportunity, under the eye of the principal, to practise the methods of teaching inculcated in the instructions which they have received. They spend two weeks each in the school. The first week, they act *as observers*, and the second as teachers. As observers, it is their duty to notice closely the mode of discipline, teaching, &c. ; also at every recitation to keep the "class book," and to mark therein the manner in which every child recites his lesson. The second week, the observers become teachers, and new pupils come in from the Normal School, to take the place of observers.

Uniformity of instruction and government is secured by the appointment of one of the graduates of the Normal School, as a *permanent teacher*. It is his duty to keep the school well classified and in good order ; to give occasional specimens of teaching, and to make such suggestions to the teachers as he shall think proper.

It is proposed to open shortly another experimental school, the city of Albany having agreed to pay \$200 for fitting up and furnishing the room. Both the schools will be under the supervision of the "*Permanent Teacher*," while more ample opportunity for practice in teaching will be afforded to the normal pupils.

Hitherto the instruction in the experimental school has been gratuitous, but it is the purpose of the committee, hereafter to charge those who are able to pay a tuition fee ; thus it is intended, that the schools shall defray their own expenses. An idea of the organization and management of this school, may be obtained from the "suggestions in aid of the experimental school." See appendix. (D.)

THE PROSPECTS OF THE SCHOOL.

The executive committee have thus detailed at length "the progress and condition" of the school ; but this is only a *part* of the duty required of them by the provisions of the act for the establishment of

the Normal School: for they are also enjoined to give "a detailed report" "of the *prospects* of the school."

Of course the Legislature did not expect the committee to perform the prophet's functions, and to foretell the future. They are simply commanded, as men having the oversight and direction of the school, and who *ought* to be conversant with its details, to tell their honest opinion about it. The committee think they hear the voice of the Legislature, speaking to them in the act of May 7th, 1844, and saying: Tell us honestly what is your opinion of the Normal School? Will it accomplish the proposed end? As far as they are able, the committee will answer these inquiries.

The end proposed in the establishment of the Normal School was, to educate teachers for our common schools; to send forth those, to take charge of the susceptible minds of the children of this commonwealth, who, together with high moral principle, should possess the requisite knowledge of the branches to be taught, and withal be "apt to teach." The school was designed to educate the moral qualities of the instructor—to impress him with the solemn responsibilities of his work—so that he might feel the blessedness of being patient, long suffering and unwearied in his efforts for the good of his pupils. It was intended to teach its students, and by their precept and example to impress all, who aspired to the honor of instructing, that the work of teaching was so important, that no labor of preparation could be too great, since the good, that could be accomplished, was vast, beyond the powers of human conception. Hence a stimulus was to be imparted to the teacher, which should never be spent, but be continually operative, urging him to the acquisition of higher attainments in virtue, knowledge and aptness to teach. This, it is conceived, was the philanthropic end which the Legislature of 1844 had in view, when they established the Normal School.

But it may be asked, "was not the establishment of this school unnecessary, since the teachers of the State were already fully competent for the discharge of their duties?" In reply, it may be asked, are the district teachers as a *body*, such men as the Legislature hope to send forth from their Normal School? The annual reports of the Superintendent of Common Schools give in answer a decided negative. While these reports speak of many of the teachers, in terms of high

and deserved praise—declaring their entire competence as to virtue and knowledge, and their unwearied, self-denying toil for the good of the young—they also say, with a mournful truthfulness, that the number of really competent teachers constitutes but a small fraction of the whole class. They state, that there has been and is a gradual improvement in the condition of the district schools; but it is, alas, too apparent from their urgent requests for farther legislation, that they regard the bettering process as far too slow, to meet the wants of the rising generation. Governor De Witt Clinton used the following language in his executive message of 1819: “The most durable impressions are derived from the first stages of education; ignorant and vicious preceptors, and injudicious and ill-arranged systems of education must have a most pernicious influence upon the habits, manners, morals and mind of our youth, and vitiate their conduct through life.” Similar language has been repeated ever since by governors, the educational committees of the Legislature, and the superintendents of common schools, accompanied by the urgent request, that some plan should be devised for elevating the character of the teacher.

The Legislature was not inattentive to these earnest prayers, and the incorporated academies of the State were looked to, as capable, under certain modifications, of affording a remedy for the evil.

It was said by those who devised what, for convenience, may be called the *Academical plan*, that it “was more advantageous than to create separate seminaries for the instruction of teachers.” But, as was predicted by many of the friends of education, little was effected by this plan. A distinguished gentleman writing upon this subject in 1839, remarked, that “the pursuits and objects of a common academical class are so different from those of a normal one, that it would seem to us, that the two can be far more successfully prosecuted separately than together.” But experience taught even a stronger lesson, that the amalgamation of an academical and normal school was incompatible, and when united, that a normal school could only succeed, in any degree, by defeating the ends for which academies were instituted.

It would appear, therefore, that the present Normal School owed its establishment to the *actual educational wants* of the State, and the

hope was cherished that it would supply, to a considerable extent, a remedy for some of the existing evils.

But is there a reasonable prospect that the Normal School, as an educational scheme, will be more successful than the plans which have preceeded it? To this it is answered, that if the school continue under the charge of teachers, every way so competent as the present instructors, and if fostered by the Legislature, it cannot fail. And the committee feel justified in speaking strongly, from the success that has already crowned the effort. The minds of the pupils have been aroused, and they have labored with most commendable zeal in the acquisition of knowledge and of the best modes of imparting instruction. No one can enter the recitation rooms of the Normal School without feeling, that teachers and taught are *in earnest*, that here there is no child's play. Of nearly all the thirty-four graduates who have gone forth from the school, it may be affirmed, that their educational fabric is granite from the base to the top stone. And those who occupy the seats during the present term, are busily engaged in quarrying, polishing and laying the same solid material.

Nothing in the school makes so strong an impression upon the minds of visitors, as the display of a determined purpose on the part of the students, to get at the truth upon every subject of study. Implicit faith in the dicta of a teacher is not an article in the educational creed of the Normal School, and the instructors are doing their utmost that it may never become so. At recitation the pupil has the privilege of stating his difficulties and doubts, and even his objections, and the subject under consideration is not passed until it is thoroughly sifted. The committee watched with deep interest, and not without apprehension, this feature in the system of instruction of Messrs. Page and Perkins. At first they feared, lest the teachers might, sooner or later, be placed in an awkward dilemma, and be found wanting on some point; for nothing is truer, than that a person of ordinary capacity may ask a question, which a wiser man *ought*, and yet may *not* be able to answer. But the committee did not then know the teachers of the Normal School as well as they now do; and indeed all apprehension on this point was dispelled before the close of the first term. Before leaving this topic, it may, however, be well to remark, that the daily ordeal of questioning through which the in-

structors and their assistants pass, is one, to say the least, to which the executive committee would not like to be exposed. A distinguished officer in one of our colleges, upon his visit to the school, remarked that "it would not be safe to expose our college professors to such a trial," and he suggested that the privilege of questioning ought to be much curtailed, for there was danger of placing the teachers in an unpleasant position. But confidence has so completely supplanted fear in the minds of the committee, that the suggestion of the professor is not likely to be soon adopted.

The committee would therefore state their strong conviction that this gratifying state of interest and effort, as witnessed in the school, has been caused by the *excellence of the normal system, efficiently carried out.*

And if such has been the result of the first year, why may not each succeeding one witness the same or even greater results? In the first year of any enterprise, much time is necessarily spent in planning and arranging, but when the arrangements have been completed, and the whole time is devoted to the purpose proposed in the institution, greater results may be confidently expected, than could be in its incipient stages.

The committee can hardly hope, that they have escaped making mistakes in their plans and arrangements, still they do hope and believe, that if they have erred, their errors are fewer than is usual in the commencement of such an undertaking. Nor do they take to themselves any credit for this avoidance of mistakes, since they profited by the experience of those who had been engaged in the organization and management of similar institutions.

One arrangement of the school has perhaps occasioned more remarks as to its wisdom than all the rest—allusion is here made to the division of the students into two classes, called "State pupils" and "volunteers." But some such arrangement was unavoidable in the beginning of the school. The committee would have been blameworthy had they thrown open the doors, and said to all "come, we will support you." There was a limited amount of funds committed to them, and of course, they could not but fix a limit, beyond which pecuniary assistance must not be rendered. But it may be asked, why was it necessary to give pecuniary aid at all? It is replied, that with-

out this aid, students could not have been induced to enter the school. Doubts were very extensively entertained as to the feasibility of the plan ; some regarded it as a *novelty* doomed to fail, and others hinted that the Legislature of 1845 would rescind the act passed by their predecessors. Strong inducements had therefore to be presented, before students would connect themselves with an institution, the permanence of which was so doubtful. But still the committee were aware, that their arrangements were sufficient for the *education* of a larger number, than they could assist in *supporting* : hence they resolved to admit others upon examination, who should only receive tuition and the use of text books free of expense.

But the circumstances, which rendered this arrangement imperative, no longer exist. The school has grown so much into favor with the community at large, and the kind purposes of the Legislature have been so fully expressed, that it is believed the payment of a *bonus* to a portion of the students is no longer necessary. The distinction of "State pupils" and "volunteers" will consequently cease after the present term. The details of the new arrangement are not yet fully settled ; but by fitting up an additional room, 256 pupils can be accommodated, which will be twice the number of the members of the Assembly. If so large a number be admitted, they will all be classed as "State pupils," and be selected from the counties according to the ratio of representation ; and each will receive an allowance, a little more than sufficient to defray his travelling expenses to and from the school.

This arrangement, it is believed, will give the school increased favor with the community, as well as greatly augment its usefulness.

As to the influence which the school shall exert upon the standing of teachers, and the cause of education, the community must judge. The committee believe, however, that those who are thoroughly trained with reference to teaching, who have the methods of teaching and the means of exciting an interest in the young, must be more successful than those, who enter the schools without thought, and who, having nothing to guide them but a sort of extemporaneous impulse, are nearly as likely to go wrong as right.

It is believed, too, that the *indirect* influence of the school will be salutary. Wherever a normal pupil is employed to teach, there will

be a large circle of other teachers incited to effort to be his equals, who otherwise might never have been roused to any extraordinary exertion. A few poor teachers, indeed, conscious of their own inferiority, will be moved to oppose the school and denounce the system of instruction, which they cannot hope to emulate; but the majority will desire improvement, and be glad to take the hints which they can gather from any good example around them. On this point the institutes, which were held during the last autumn, may be cited as proof. In several of the counties, the graduates of the school officiated by request as teachers. So far as heard from, their reception was most gratifying. They not only did not excite any untoward jealousies, but gained largely upon the confidence and good will of the teachers assembled. This is shown by the resolutions passed by many of the institutes, a few of which will be presented.

The institute at Canandaigua, (160 members,) was mostly conducted by five normal pupils from that county. At the close the following resolution was passed:

“Resolved, That the State normal students, by the talent they have displayed, by the interest they have inspired, and by the instruction they have given during the session of the institute, have furnished a noble and praiseworthy commentary upon the utility of that institution, and conferred a lasting honor upon its principal.”

In Auburn, Cayuga county, two of the normal pupils gave nearly all the instruction for two weeks to about 150 members. The following is their expression:

“Resolved, That Messrs. W. F. Phelps and Charles D. Lawrence of the State Normal School, are entitled to our lasting gratitude and confidence for their efficient and arduous efforts as teachers of the institute.”

At Oswego, an institute of 277 members was held. They thus express themselves:

“Resolved, That in the assistant teachers, Mr. Alexander M. Baker, and Miss Martha A. Nelson, pupils of the State Normal School, we have strikingly exhibited the benefits of that institution, in their appropriate and interesting manner of communicating instruction.”

The committee have been led to quote these resolutions from their high regard for the opinions of the county institutes—a regard which it is believed, is cherished by the community at large. Hence the expressions of the institutes, in favor of the Normal School, are looked upon by the committee as high authority, evincing the increase of public confidence in the normal system.

The committee would therefore conclude their report, by stating their strong conviction, that the normal system, in connection with the county institutes, more than any thing else, will tend to elevate the character of the district school teachers of the State, and to pour blessings upon the young.

It is with deep regret, that the committee communicate the death of Francis Dwight, Esq., an efficient member of the executive committee; his unwearied services as a friend of education sufficiently speak his praise, and the memory of this good man shall not perish.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS.

The committee, on submitting to you the following statement of receipts and expenditures for the establishment and support of the Normal School, take the liberty to say, that, as their last statement was presented only a few weeks after the opening of the school, (Jan. 29, 1845,) and for that reason was necessarily limited, they have thought proper *at this time* to cover the whole period from the beginning up to December 18th, 1845, the time when by the death of their treasurer, the accounts passed into other hands.

Hereafter it is the intention of the committee to close the financial year at the termination of each yearly appropriation, which, by the act of May 7th, 1844, is on the 30th of September, annually.

The vouchers for the items of expenditure are in possession of the executive committee, who have satisfied themselves that the subjoined statement is correct.

*New-York State Normal School in account with Francis Dwight,
Treasurer.*

DR.

1845.

Dec. 18.	To cash paid for altering and improving building furnished by the city of Albany to prepare same for Normal School, and for furniture, &c., from the beginning to this date,..	\$3,586 07
"	" paid for text books and educational library books, maps, &c.,..	1,005 36
"	" paid for apparatus,....	515 53
"	" paid for salaries of teachers,.....	4,408 00
"	" paid for board of pupils,	3,138 86
"	" paid for incidentals, including salary of treasurer, janitor, librarian, fuel, &c.,..	1,189 56
	Total amount of disbursements,..	<u>\$13,838 38</u>

CR.

1844.

Oct. 19.	By cash received of the city of Albany,	\$500 00
Nov. 19.	" rec'd of Comptroller,.	700 00
Dec. 16.	" " "	500 00

1845.

Jan. 4.	" " "	500 00
" 29.	" " "	500 00
Feb. 22.	" " "	1,000 00
Mar. 10.	" " "	500 00
" 13.	" " "	500 00
April 11.	" " "	500 00
May 27.	" " "	1,000 00
June 9.	" " "	2,000 00

Carried forward,..... \$

	Brought forward,.....	\$	
July 19.	By cash rec'd of Comptroller,.	1,000	00
Aug. 19.	“ “ “	2,500	00
Sept. 6.	“ “ “	1,000	00
“ 20.	“ “ “	1,000	00
	Total amount of receipts,.....	—————	\$13,700 00
	Balance overpaid by the treasurer out of private funds and now due the representatives of Francis Dwight,		143 38
			<u>\$13,838 38</u>

Of the above \$13,700, there has been drawn, from the “ appropriation to establish the school,..... \$3,200 00

From the “ appropriation to support the school,” one year,..... 10,000 00

From the corporation of the city of Albany, as above,..... 500 00

————— \$13,700 00

All which is respectfully submitted.

WM. H. CAMPBELL,
S. YOUNG,
GIDEON HAWLEY.

I concur in the foregoing report.

N. S. BENTON,
Sup't. Common Schools.

ALBANY, *January 14th*, 1846.

DOCUMENTS.

(A.)

Copy of the Diploma of the State Normal School,

Albany, N. Y. 184 .

This certifies that A. B. has been a member of the State Normal School months, and that he is judged by the Faculty of the institution to be well qualified to engage in the duties of a teacher.

(Signed,)

{ *Principal,*
 Prof. Math.

To whom it may concern :

In consideration of the above certificate, the undersigned, the executive committee, hereby recommend the said A. B. as a worthy graduate of the State Normal School.

Signed,

{ *Executive*
 Committee.

State of New-York, }
Done at Albany, 184 . }

(B.)

Subjects of Sub-Lectures.

Circles on the globe,
Simple subtraction,
Long division,

Functions of the heart,
Propulsion of the blood,
Mechanics of circulation,

Colburn's Arithmetic,
 Names of the human bones,
 Human skull,
 Human teeth,
 Ball and socket joints,
 Human heart,
 The larynx,
 The brain,
 The nerves,
 Touch,
 Taste,
 Sleep,
 Ear and sound,
 Division of fractions,
 Multiplication of fractions,
 Discount,
 Proportion,
 Square root,
 Cube root,
 Transposition in music,
 Commencing grammar,
 Use of the ball-frame,
 Laws of gravitation,
 The lever,
 The pulley,
 The screw,
 Wheel and axle,
 Lightning rods,
 Rainbow,

Mechanics of respiration,
 Renovation of blood,
 Secretion,
 Absorption,
 Description of the eye,
 Philosophy of sight,
 The spinal column,
 The arm and hand,
 Ventilation,
 The air,
 Water,
 Heat,
 Oxygen,
 Phrenology,
 Digestive organs,
 Animal heat,
 General exercises,
 Arrangements of a school,
 "Boarding round,"
 Money for schools,
 Parallel perspective,
 Oblique perspective,
 Decimals,
 Duodecimals,
 Motion,
 Solar system,
 Motions of the earth,
 Moon.

(C.) Programme.

<i>Time.</i>		<i>Teachers.</i>
9 A. M. to 9.30m.	CHAPEL EXERCISES, & C. IN LECTURE ROOM.	
9.30 to 10.15.	A. Class. Trigonometry and Surveying..... B. Class. Algebra C. Class. Higher Arithmetic..... D. Class. Algebra E. Class. Grammar F. Class. Geography.....	Prof. Perkins. Mr. Clark. Mr. Webb. Mr. Eaton. Mr. Bowen. Miss Hance.
10.15 to 10.25.	INTERMISSION OR GENERAL EXERCISE.	
10.25 to 11.10.	A. Class. Algebra..... R. Class. Grammar—Tuesday and Friday..... C. Class. Reading—Tuesday and Friday..... C. Class. Grammar—Monday and Thursday.... D. Class. History and reading, alternately.... E. Class. Geography..... F. Class. Orthography	Prof. Perkins. Mr. Bowen. Principal. Mr. Bowen. Miss Hance. Mr. Webb. Mr. Eaton.
11.10 to 11.15.	INTERMISSION.	
11.15 to 12.	A. Class. Science of Government..... B. Class. Reading C. Class. Algebra—Monday, Tuesday & Thurs. C. Class. Joins D. Class in Lecture, Natural Philosophy—Friday. } D. Class. Natural Philosophy—daily. } E. Class. Elementary Arithmetic..... F. Class. Grammar	Mr. Eaton. Miss Hance. Prof. Perkins. Mr. Clark. Mr. Webb. Mr. Bowen.
12 to 12.15.	RECESS.	
12.15 to 1.	A. Class. Geometry..... B. Class. Higher Arithmetic..... C. Class. Natural Philosophy..... D. Class. Arithmetic..... E. Class. Reading and Orthography..... F. Class. Reading	Mr. Bowen. Prof. Perkins. Mr. Clark. Mr. Webb. Mr. Eaton. Miss Hance.
1 to 1.5.	INTERMISSION.	
1.5 to 1.50.	A. Class. Chemistry..... B. and C. Classes. Human Physiology D. Class. Grammar E. Class. Mental Arithmetic..... F. Class. Elementary Arithmetic.....	Mr. Clark, Principal. Mr. Bowen. Miss Hance. Mr. Webb.
1.50 to 2.	DISMISSION.	

Wednesday is devoted to Penmanship, Composition, Declamation, "Sub-Lectures," Lectures and general exercises.

3 P. M. to 4.30.	<i>Vocal Music.</i>		<i>Drawing.</i>	
	A. Class. Monday.	} Mr. Isley.	A. Class. Tuesday.	} Mr. Howard.
	B. Class. Wednesday.		B. Class. Thursday.	
C. Class. Friday.	C. Class. Saturday.			

(D.)

Suggestions in aid of the experimental school. To be read by each Normal pupil, on entering as a visitor and teacher.

EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL.

"The care of this school has been placed under a permanent teacher, whose duty it shall be to govern, classify and arrange the school according to his best judgment.

He is to be aided, in the work of instruction and carrying out of his plans, by two "*teachers*" and two "*visitors*" each week ; it being understood that the "*visitors*" of one week shall become the "*teachers*" for the next.

In order to make this school as useful as possible both to the teachers and the taught, the following suggestions are submitted to those who may be called upon to take part in its instruction, in the hope that they will be rigidly observed.

1. That you be in the school room promptly at *twenty minutes before 9, A. M.*, every day during your stay in the school, in readiness to attend to any duties that may be assigned you.

2. That you thoroughly *prepare* yourselves for your work while here, examine every lesson before you meet your classes, and thus be enabled to conduct the exercises with animation and interest.

3. That you take special pains to interest yourselves in behalf of the school ; that you study to promote its welfare, as if its prosperity and usefulness depended entirely upon your own exertions.

4. That you be prepared, during your week of service, to present at least one "*topic exercise*" of not less than five minutes in length.

5. That you be rigidly thorough in every thing you teach, bearing in mind our motto : "*not how much, but how well.*"

6. That your intercourse with the pupils be characterized by kindness and calmness, and at the same time by firmness and decision.

7. That you punctually attend every meeting appointed for the purpose of conferring on matters relating to the school.

8. That while the *general* direction and government of the school is left with the permanent teacher, you consider yourselves responsible for the department of pupils during class exercises, as well as for their scholarship and progress while under your charge.

9. That all cases of disobedience or misconduct of any kind, be promptly reported to the permanent teacher.

10. That you keep in mind constantly the object for which this school was established, and that your own fitness, for the duties of the teacher's responsible office, may, in a great measure, be determined by your course of proceeding while here."

"The '*visitors*' are expected to keep a faithful record of the reci-

tations and deportment of each pupil in the classes they attend, and thus endeavor during the week to learn the name and attainments of each scholar. They should strive to make themselves quite familiar with all the operations of the school, that they may be the better prepared for the duties of the *second* week.

It is also the duty of the "*visitors*," to regard the deportment of the pupils *at recess*. To this end, it is desirable they should be *among the scholars*, most of the time at recess, in order to direct their sports or to restrain any noise or disorder, that would be improper or inconvenient to the Normal School.

Those who enter upon their duties as "*visitors*," are requested *carefully to read these suggestions during the first morning*, and to conform to them as faithfully as possible during their whole stay in the school."

(E)

Names and Counties of the Graduates.

- Phebe C. Cazier, Madison county.
 Nancy Cross, Schoharie county.
 Frances M. Hastings, Oneida county.
 Elizabeth C. Hance, Wayne county.
 Caroline Smith, Rensselaer county.
 James D. Adams, Ontario county.
 Nelson W. Butts, Orleans county.
 Silas T. Bowen, Otsego county.
 Reuben H. Bingham, Saratoga county.
 Wm. W. Clark, Livingston county.
 Dennis B. Chapin, Allegany county.
 Warren Demun, Genesee county.
 Marvin Edgerton, Onondaga county.
 James Lysander Enos, Wyoming county.
 James La Roy Fay, Madison county.
 Daniel Galentine, Monroe county.
 Volney S. Hubbard, Jefferson county.
 Erasmus D. Kingsley, Erie county.
 Daniel Losey, Onondaga county.
 James W. Mandeville, Chenango county.

George C. Mott, Greene county.
Henry McGonegal, Tompkins county.
Ezra Newland, Livingston county.
Alfred Nichols, Madison county.
William Nims, Washington county.
Reuben Ottman, Schoharie county.
Wm. F. Phelps, Cayuga county.
William Scism, Columbia county.
Reuben R. Stetson, Franklin county.
Edward C. Seymour, Tompkins county.
Gilbert Thayer, Essex county.
Wm. Van Olinda, Lewis county.
Wm. Watson, Monroe county.
Sumner C. Webb, Cortland county.