

# State of New-York.

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No. 119.

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IN ASSEMBLY, APR. 12, 1852.

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## REPORT

Of the committee on colleges, academies and common schools relative to the causes of the panic attending the late public exercises of the State Normal School.

“IN ASSEMBLY, *March 11, 1852.*”

“*Resolved*, That the committee on colleges, academies and common schools be and hereby are instructed to inquire into the causes of the panic attending the late public exercises of the State Normal School, and that they cause such examination to be made as shall satisfy them of the safety or unsafety of the building for the purposes to which it is devoted.

“*Resolved*, That said committee be instructed to inquire into the internal administration of the affairs of the institution, the duties and salaries of the board of instruction, the representation of pupils from the various counties of the State, together with all such other matters as they may deem proper, and that they be required to report the result of such investigation to this house with the least practicable delay.

“By order,

“R. U. SHERMAN, *Clerk.*”

In accordance with the instruction contained in the foregoing resolutions, the committee on colleges, academies and common schools,

### REPORT :

That the panic attending the semi-annual exhibition of the State Normal School arose from the settling of the floor of the room in which the exercises were held, caused by the breaking of one of the main timbers which supported the floor ; and your committee feel called upon to express their decided opinion that from their own personal observation, from the statements of the principal and teachers, which are annexed to this report, and from the statement of membes of the executive committee made after a careful examination of the building, that the room occupied for the exercises and the stairway leading to the same are in an unsafe condition for an assemblage as large as was convened on that occasion. That the alarm was not causeless is quite evident, and the executive committee are about to make some necessary improvements which will render the building more secure. But as a panic of this kind as often arises from imaginary as from real danger, your committee believe that the situation of the room on the highest floor of the building renders it decidedly objectionable as a room for public exhibitions, and therefore recommend that the executive committee be restrained from using the same except for the ordinary purposes of the school. The steep and narrow staircases leading to this apartment, rendering it not improbable that in case of a sudden alarm an accident might occur here similar to that which has recently occurred in one of the ward schools of the city of New-York.

The Normal School was established in 1844 for the instruction and practice of teachers of common schools in the science of education and the art of teaching. Until 1849 the school occupied rooms furnished gratuitously by the authorities of Albany.

In 1848 an act was passed by the Legislature "for the permanent establishment of the State Normal School," appropriating \$15,000 towards the erection of a suitable building. The following year, an additional appropriation of \$10,000 was made for its

completion. To this building the school was removed on the 31st of July, 1849.

Each county in the State is entitled to send to the school a number of pupils (either male or female) equal to twice the number of members of the Assembly in such county. The pupils are appointed by the town superintendents, at a meeting called by the superintendent of the county town for that purpose.

Pupils once admitted to the school will have the right to remain until they graduate; unless they forfeit that right by voluntarily vacating their place, or by improper conduct.

All pupils are educated and furnished with books free of charge, and are allowed three cents a mile for travel from Albany to their homes and return. A good philosophical apparatus and a small library belong to the institution. An experimental school is also connected with it.

The object of this school is to afford each Normal pupil an opportunity to practice the methods of instruction and discipline inculcated at the Normal School. Each member of the graduating class is required to spend at least two weeks in this department.

In the experimental school there are eighty-eight pupils between the ages of six and sixteen years. A portion of these are free pupils; the remaining pupils are charged twenty dollars per year for tuition and use of books. The school has been in operation for seven years. From the last annual report, presented December 22, 1851, we learn that the whole number of pupils connected with the school since its organization is 1,638.

The following table will show the number of pupils during each term, and also the number of graduates:

		Pupils.	GRADUATES.		
			Males.	Females.	Total.
First year,..	1st term.....	98	0	0	0
	2d " .....	185	29	5	34
Second year,	3d " .....	197	30	17	47
	4th " .....	205	37	26	63
Third year,	5th " .....	178	27	19	46
	6th " .....	221	37	25	62
Fourth year,	7th " .....	198	25	25	50
	8th " .....	208	17	29	46
Fifth year,..	9th " .....	175	22	21	43
	10th " .....	196	19	18	37
Sixth year,..	11th " .....	223	12	20	32
	12th " .....	219	21	13	34
Seventh year,	13th " .....	232	12	14	26
	14th " .....	236	11	17	28
		<u>2,771</u>	<u>299</u>	<u>249</u>	<u>548</u>

The following are the names of the teachers with their salaries and the several departments of instruction in which they are engaged:

George R. Perkins, A. M., Principal, \$1,700 and house.

William F. Phelps, A. M., Superintendent of the experimental school, \$1,000, paid out of tuition received of pupils of experimental school.

Silas T. Bowen, A. M., teacher of Intellectual and Moral Science and Rhetoric, \$1,000.

Sumner C. Webb, teacher of Arithmetic and Bookkeeping, \$750, \$50 as librarian, \$50 as master of order and \$25 as post master.

Truman H. Bowen, teacher of the Science of Government, Grammar and Vocal Music, \$750 as instructor in music in experimental school.

Dr. James H. Salisbury, teacher of Physiology, Natural Philosophy and Chemistry, \$800.

John Felt, Jr., teacher of Grammar and Algebra, \$700.

Elizabeth C. Hance, teacher of Reading and History, \$500.

Ann Maria Ostrom, teacher of Drawing, History and Geography, \$500.

In the testimony of the principal which is annexed to this report, will be found a full statement of the internal administration of the affairs of the school, with the duties performed by the board of instruction. Also a tabular statement of the representation of the pupils from the various counties of the State. For the causes of the present inequality of representation, the committee refer to the statement of Mr. William F. Phelps and Mr. William W. Clark, and for further information relating to the affairs of the schools to the statements of Mr. Silas T. Bowen and Mr. Sumner C. Webb, which are also annexed to this report.

The facts developed by the investigations of your committee lead them to the following conclusions:

1. That the Normal School when organized and conducted according to the true design of such institutions, is an invaluable if not indispensable aid to the advancement of the cause of popular education, by training up a class of well qualified teachers, educated with special reference to the wants of our common schools.

2. That although there has been some departure from this true design, and a misdirection of the energies of this school, your committee feel it incumbent upon them strongly to recommend these institutions not only to the fostering care of the State but to the confidence and kindly sympathies of every citizen, while they would beg leave to suggest that such means may be devised as will in future prevent the recurrence of such misdirection of the energies of the school as this investigation has demonstrated to exist. Facts have come to the knowledge of your committee which conclusively prove that the Normal School is gaining in the estimation of the people every where. Five States of this Union have already not only acknowledged the soundness of the proposition that to have good teachers we must establish institutions for their special training, but have practically adopted it by the establishment of one, two or more Normal Schools for the supply of their educational wants.

In accordance with these convictions your committee beg leave to submit the following suggestions, which they earnestly commend to the serious attention and prompt action of the Legislature :

1. That an appropriation of six thousand dollars per annum be made to the Normal School located in this city, and that the same amount be given for the support of a like institution in such city or village west of and including Syracuse as shall provide within one year from the passage of the act submitted by your committee, the best accommodations for such institution.

The wisdom of this policy must, in the view of your committee, be obvious to every intelligent citizen. One Normal School for so large a territory as is embraced within the limits of our State cannot supply a tithe of the teachers necessary for our common schools. This was never expected. Our present institution was established as an experiment. Its wise founders have placed the fact upon record that did this experiment prove successful, others would be called for by the people. This call has already been made. The friends of education in western New-York have for more than a year been discussing through the public press and otherwise their claims to such facilities as are now enjoyed by their more fortunate brethren at the east. The Normal School at Albany is in a great degree becoming local in its character, as might naturally enough be expected in a State embracing so much territory as our own. These considerations, therefore, as well as many others which a comprehensive survey of the subject would indicate, but which your committee cannot now dwell upon, lead them strongly to urge upon the attention of the Legislature the foregoing suggestion.

This change can be made without materially increasing the expense to the State, while the advantages derived will be more than doubled. Your committee beg leave to subjoin an estimate of the expenditures necessary to the support of these two institutions, which they are confident, after a careful examination of the subject, will be sufficient for the purposes indicated.

## STATEMENT.

For salary of Principal, exclusive of house rent,.....	\$1,200
Two professors, each \$1,000,.....	2,000
Three male teachers, " \$700,.....	2,100
One female " " 500,.....	500
One " " " 400,.....	400
For stationery, library, apparatus, text books, &c.,.....	300
Insurance, fuel, cleaning, and janitor's work, .....	1,000
Total,.....	<u>\$7,500</u>

To meet these expenses, there will be the following sums :

By annual appropriation of Legislature,....	\$6,000
Tuition of 100 pupils in experimental school, at \$10 per term, .....	2,000
Tuition of literary students, estimated .....	1,000
	<u>\$9,000</u>

It will be seen by reference to the tables of salaries first given, that the principal of the present institution receives, as compared with the other professors, an enormous salary ; being \$700 per annum, together with house rent and other perquisites, over and above the amount paid to any of those who, as the investigation shows, bear the burden and heat of the day in the labors assigned it. By the above estimate, these salaries are more nearly equalized—two hundred dollars with the rent of his house, being deemed by the committee a sufficient award for the difference of labor and responsibility between the principal, and the professors and teachers.

It will also be perceived that the salaries of the teachers have been graded according to the degree of labor and responsibility devoted upon each, your committee being fully persuaded that well qualified persons may easily be procured for the amounts above specified.

With reference to the item of \$2,000, mentioned above as being collected from the experimental school, it may be well to remark

that in the Institution already established there are 100 pupils in this department. About 60 of these pay a tuition of \$20 per year, each, and the committee are informed that at these rates there are constantly more applications for seats than the department is able to accommodate; 46 of these pupils are free; but the committee are of opinion that since the public schools in our cities are all free, no reason now exists why those who prefer the normal mode of instruction should not be willing to pay for the same, thus rendering available, for the support of the Normal School, the full sum of \$2,000 per year as above stated.

In the estimate of expenses as given above the committee have rejected the item of mileage to the students, which, by the last report of executive committee amounts to nearly \$1,000 per year. If another institution be established, no reason remains for holding out this inducement to students, since both sections of the State will thus enjoy equal advantages in having a Normal School in their neighborhood.

Your committee have also been informed that, from the organization of the present establishment in this city, applications have been numerous for admission from those who were unwilling to pledge themselves to teach. This class of persons your committee have judged it might be proper to admit on their paying in advance a tuition of \$15 per term, which would realize an additional sum to aid in the support of the Normal School.

In conclusion, your committee beg leave to state that in the present system, a simple declaration of intention to teach common schools, is all that is required of a student as a guarantee of his fidelity to the cause of education in this State, by actually engaging in the service of our common schools. Your committee would, therefore, recommend that an actual pledge be required of all who receive gratuitous instruction in the State Normal Schools, that they shall actually teach common schools in this State one year for every term of such instruction, or in default thereof, that they shall pay a tuition of \$15 per term as required in the case of literary students. Your committee cannot forbear in closing, again to recommend these institutions to the fostering care of the Legislature as pre-eminently worthy of that



“material aid,” so necessary to advance every human interest, and none more than that of diffusing universal intelligence through our common schools, with well trained teachers at their head, such teachers as these seminaries are adapted to supply.

Your committee have weighed carefully the changes now proposed by them, fully assured that if adopted, the interests of education will be greatly advanced. They are of the opinion that without any material increase of expense, the annual appropriation of \$12,000 can be made to sustain two schools each, as large in numbers as the present one, by allowing said institutions to receive pay pupils under such regulations as the trustees may provide, and without interferring with the interests of the pupils of the State. It is believed that more than one of our western towns will be found willing to provide all necessary buildings for such a school, in case the same shall be located within their borders.

H. L. WEBB,  
WILLIAM TAYLOR,  
GEO. M. COPELAND,  
D. W. LAWRENCE,  
J. P. CHAMBERLIN,

*Committee.*

## QUESTIONS TO PRINCIPAL.

1. When did you first become connected with the State Normal school?

2. What is the object of the Institution?

3. What are the internal arrangements for securing this object?

4. Upon whom does the duty of instructing in the art of teaching devolve?

5. How many pupils are there in the school at the present time?

6. Do these come from the several counties of the state in accordance with the proper apportionment?

7. What counties send the largest number?

8. Are any counties not represented, and if so what ones?

9. What number of pupils have graduated from the school since it was instituted, and how do they stand divided among the several counties of the state?

10. What number have entered who have not graduated, and how are they divided among the counties?

11. In case any county has sent a larger number of pupils than is now entitled to send, have they been charged for tuition and how much?

12. What method do you adopt to keep up the representation from the different counties of the state?

13. Are you or the executive committee in the practice of filling the vacancies of distant counties, with Albany or other neighboring students?

14. If so, do the pupils so selected usually become teachers?

15. Do the pupils educated at this school all pursue teaching as their avocation? What proportion do not, if any?

16. How many hours is each teacher employed in school duties per day? How many days per week? and weeks per year? Have any of these teachers extra school duties to perform? Are all these teachers exclusively employed in school duties during the regular sessions? Is it customary for any of your teachers to be absent for any considerable period during their time?

17. Have any of the pupils been charged with, or proved to have committed any gross immorality during their connection with the school? and how many? How many have been expelled?

18. Do you frequently visit the boarding houses of your pupils and ascertain whether the laws regarding visits are faithfully carried out? Do your teachers do so?

19. Are you personally acquainted with all persons receiving pupils to board? and are they, in your opinion proper persons to be entrusted with these pupils?

20. Are any of your pupils in the habit of attending places of public amusement?

21. Do you require your pupils to attend some stated place of worship on the sabbath? and are they in the habit of so doing?

22. Have you any means of ascertaining whether or not your pupils are out late at night?

23. Do you receive any reports concerning their conduct from the persons with whom they board? and if so, what disposition do you make of these reports?

**ANSWER OF GEO. R. PERKINS, PRINCIPAL OF STATE  
NORMAL SCHOOL.**

1. I have been connected with the State Normal School from its first organization, on the 18th of December, 1844. I discharged the duties of Professor of Mathematics until the death of the Principal, David Perkins Page, January 1, 1848, at which time I was elected his successor, and have continued to discharge the duties of the Principal, and also, in part, my former duties as Professor of Mathematics, down to the present time.

2. The Act of the Legislature for the establishment of a Normal School, passed May 7, 1844, declares that the money appropriated by that act "shall be expended in the establishment and support of the Normal School for the instruction and practice of teachers of common schools in the science of education and in the art of teaching."

The above, I believe, expresses the true object of the Institution.

3. The whole organization and arrangement of the Normal School is made in direct reference to its primary object, as above expressed.

The experimental school which was first established during the second term, is taught by the pupils of the senior class. The design of this experimental school is to afford the Normal pupil, under the eye of the Principal, an opportunity to practice the methods of instruction and discipline inculcated at the Normal School, as well as to exhibit his "aptness to teach," and to discharge the various other duties pertaining to the teacher's responsible office.

Uniformity of instruction is secured by the appointment of a permanent teacher, or superintendent of this school.

I consider the experimental department of great importance and value in connection with the Normal School. It is a sort of workshop where each teacher has an opportunity to work at his profession.

Afternoon exercises and lectures are given by the different teachers of the Normal School, which have for their object the elucidation of the best methods, not only of imparting instruction, but of discharging other usual and necessary duties of the common school teacher.

During six weeks of each term, the seniors have a daily recitation in theory and practice of teaching, using, as a text book, a work prepared by our late Principal, shortly before his death. This recitation was conducted by myself about two years after Mr. Page's death. It is now conducted by Mr. William F. Phelps,

the superintendent of the experimental school, who is not at the present time required to hear class exercises in his department.

4. The duty of instructing in the art of teaching devolves, to a considerable extent, upon all the teachers. The pupils of all the classes are frequently called upon to give the whys and wherefores, and are asked how, in their opinion, they could best impart to others the knowledge which they are at that particular time receiving.

This knowledge of the art of teaching is also imparted by those teachers who give afternoon lectures. Also in the other exercises of the afternoon, such, for instance, as in the instruction given by the teacher of vocal music. The pupil is not only taught the elements of music, and how to sing, but he is also taught how to teach music to others.

5. The number of pupils of the present term is two hundred and twelve.

6. Of the 212 pupils of this term 100 have received regular appointments from the town superintendents of their respective counties, 105 have received their appointments at large, by our Executive Committee, and 7 Indians have been admitted by virtue of an act of the Legislature, passed March 23, 1850.

The 212 pupils, of the present, or sixteenth term, are divided among the different counties as given in the following table :

COUNTIES.	Regular appointments the present or 16th term.	Appointments at large 16th term.	Indian pupils 16th term.	Whole number of graduates.	Whole number of undergraduates.
Albany, .....	7	50	.....	38	135
Allegany, .....	.....	.....	.....	6	4
Broome, .....	.....	.....	.....	2	4
Cattaraugus, .....	.....	.....	.....	6	5
Cayuga, .....	3	.....	.....	10	20
Chautauque, .....	1	1	.....	10	9
Chemung, .....	2	1	.....	5	10
Chenango, .....	1	1	.....	9	16
Clinton, .....	1	.....	.....	2	6
Columbia, .....	5	3	.....	8	34
Cortland, .....	2	.....	.....	10	4
Delaware, .....	.....	.....	.....	13	9
Dutchess, .....	.....	1	.....	10	18
Erie, .....	3	1	3	16	27
Essex, .....	.....	2	.....	8	6
Franklin, .....	1	.....	.....	7	2
Fulton and Hamilton, .....	.....	1	.....	5	4
Genesee, .....	4	.....	2	13	10
Greene, .....	1	1	.....	10	23
Herkimer, .....	2	2	.....	9	17
Jefferson, .....	4	.....	.....	22	22
Kings, .....	2	.....	.....	7	8
Lewis, .....	.....	.....	.....	1	7
Livingston, .....	1	.....	.....	14	11
Madison, .....	1	.....	.....	16	17
Monroe, .....	3	.....	.....	16	25
Montgomery, .....	2	1	.....	7	21
New-York, .....	3	1	.....	9	62
Niagara, .....	.....	.....	.....	6	14
Oneida, .....	4	3	.....	14	36
Onondaga, .....	4	.....	2	29	27
Ontario, .....	1	.....	.....	14	12
Orange, .....	4	.....	.....	11	30
Orleans, .....	.....	.....	.....	3	6
Oswego, .....	1	1	.....	11	9
Otsego, .....	4	2	.....	14	28
Putnam, .....	.....	.....	.....	5	5

TABLE—(CONTINUED.)

COUNTIES.	Regular appointments the present or 16th term.	Appointments at large 16th term.	Indian pupils 16th term.	Whole number of graduates.	Whole number of undergraduates.
Queens, .....				1	8
Rensselaer, .....	5	7		16	50
Richmond, .....	1			1	3
Rockland, .....	1			6	2
St. Lawrence, .....	2			4	13
Saratoga, .....		6		16	27
Schenectady, .....	2	7		8	15
Schoharie, .....	2	2		13	27
Seneca, .....	1			4	11
Steuben, .....	1			12	9
Suffolk, .....	3			9	20
Sullivan, .....	2	1		5	12
Tioga, .....				4	2
Tompkins, .....				13	8
Ulster, .....	3	1		4	17
Warren, .....	1	1		6	13
Washington, .....	3	3		17	26
Wayne, .....	1	1		14	10
Westchester, .....	3	3		8	17
Wyoming, .....	1			10	8
Yates, .....	1	1		7	5
Totals, .....	100	105	7	574	1,006

7. By reference to the foregoing table, it will be seen which counties have sent the most pupils, the present or sixteenth term; also during all the sixteen terms.

8. The above table also shows which counties are not represented in the present term, viz: Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Delaware, Orleans, Putnam, Queens, Tioga and Tompkins.

9. The whole number of pupils which have graduated from the school since it was instituted, is five hundred and seventy-four. They are divided among the different counties as given in the foregoing table.

10. The number of pupils who have entered the school and have not graduated is 1,006. The table already referred to, shows how this number is divided among the different counties.

11. No tuition money has ever been charged any of the pupils, except in one single instance. A regularly appointed pupil, after graduating, desired to be released from his pledge to become a teacher. On application to our Executive Committee, they consented to release him by his paying a certain sum, which they supposed to be a fair equivalent for the instruction he had received.

12. Near the close of each term, we publish in a circular form, a statement of the number of vacancies to be filled by the respective counties, for the next term. A number of copies equal to the number of towns in each county, is sent to the town superintendent of the county-town, who is authorized to call a meeting of the town superintendents of his county, he acting as chairman. At such meetings the appointments are made. When we had county superintendents, our circulars were sent to those officers.

That portion of our circular, giving the number of vacancies, is published in four of the Albany city newspapers, also in the District School Journal. During the session of the Legislature, copies are placed upon each member's desk. We also distribute copies among the Normal pupils.

13. Since the abolition of the office of county superintendent, our Executive Committee have given appointments at large to such applicants as complied with the same regulations as are required of the regularly appointed pupils. The following, in regard to appointments at large, is copied from our circular: "Persons failing to receive appointments from their respective counties, should, after obtaining testimonials of a good moral character, present themselves the first day of the time, for examination by the Faculty. If such examination is satisfactory, they will receive an appointment from the Executive Committee without being placed in any particular county, provided any vacancies exist."



The pupils so appointed by the Executive Committee, have never been considered as filling the vacancies of any of the counties, neither have they ever received any mileage. The vacancies of the different counties have never been affected by such appointment. Pupils appointed at large, are liable at any time to be required to withdraw, to make room for regularly appointed pupils.

I think the regularly appointed pupils are more disposed to go through with our whole course, and not to leave us until they have graduated, than are those appointed at large. Such as do graduate are pretty sure to become good teachers. I should prefer to have all the pupils regularly appointed. My opinion is that the pupils appointed by the Executive Committee are quite as likely to become teachers, as are those regularly appointed, provided we except those appointed from the city of Albany and its immediate vicinity.

15. I have no certain means of knowing what proportion of the pupils whom we educate, fail to engage in teaching. I believe the number is very small, however, compared with the whole. Of those who go through with our entire course and graduate, there are scarcely any who do not teach.

All the pupils, on entering the school, since the opening of the second term, have been required to subscribe to the following declaration:

“We the undersigned, hereby declare that it is our intention to devote ourselves to the business of teaching district schools; and that our motive in resorting to the Normal School, is to prepare ourselves the better to discharge that important duty.”

In 1849, the graduates of the State Normal School organized themselves into an Association, for the purpose of keeping up a system of correspondence between the Institution and its graduates, and furnishing schools with well qualified teachers, and well qualified teachers with schools. By the Constitution of this association, the Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary are to be elected from the Faculty of the Normal School. Mr. Sumner C. Webb, is at the present time Treasurer

and Recording Secretary, and Mr. William F. Phelps, is the Corresponding Secretary.

The Executive Committee, in their report made to the Legislature on the 8th of January, 1851, speak of the advantages of this association as follows: "During the past year, nearly two hundred applications for teachers have been made from all parts of the State, which fact may tend to show more strongly perhaps, than any other, the estimation in which the Normal School is held. The call, at the present time, for Normal graduates, is so great, that it is impossible to supply the want; and this difficulty will probably remain, until another class is graduated in the spring. In addition to the above facts, it may be well to mention, that the call for Normal teachers is not limited to this State alone; frequent applications from other States, and from the British Provinces, are received; but it has not been deemed proper to recommend the graduates to places without the boundaries of our own commonwealth since the Normal School was established and is supported by the State for the supply of its own educational wants."

This association still continues in a prosperous and flourishing condition.

Strong pecuniary inducements are offered to our teachers to continue in their profession. Some of our last graduates receive from \$400 to \$600 per annum, and some receive still larger salaries.

16. Since the first organization of the school, many changes have taken place as to terms, vacations, course of study, number of teachers and duties required of each.

At the present time we have each year two terms of twenty weeks each. The first week of each term is consumed in examination, classification, &c., of the new pupils. All the teachers assist in this work except the teacher of the experimental school. The last week of each term is devoted to public class examinations, closing exercises, &c. In these exercises, each teacher conducts the examination of his own classes. Thus we have, in each term, eighteen weeks of recitation, of five days in each week.

As principal of the Normal School, I have the supervision of all the departments connected with the institution. I have one recitation each day with the gentlemen of the seniors, five days in each week during each term.

I give to the gentlemen of the seniors, each term, from three to six field exercises with engineering and surveying instruments. I give during the first week of the term a lecture to the old pupils on the relations they sustain to their teachers, and to each other, and on deportment in general. I also give them lectures on Mathematical Geography. There are many other duties out of regular school hours and in vacations, which must of necessity devolve upon me.

Mr. William F. Phelps has the superintendence of the Experimental School; he has one recitation each day for six weeks of each term with the seniors; he also gives five afternoon lectures during each term.

Mr. Silas T. Bowen has five recitations each day for six weeks, and four recitations each day for the remaining twelve weeks of each term. During the fifth hour of the twelve weeks, when not engaged with a class, he is employed in correcting the rhetoric exercises of one of his classes. He gives during each term seven afternoon lectures. He corrects the regular compositions of the seniors, and also the usual essays and poems for the closing exercises of each term.

Mr. Sumner C. Webb has five recitations each day for the whole eighteen weeks of each term; he gives eleven afternoon exercises or lectures, and corrects the compositions of the juniors, No. 1.

Mr. Truman H. Bowen has four recitations each day for twelve weeks of each term, and then each day for the remaining six weeks. He is employed four days each week in the afternoon, in giving instruction in vocal music. He arranges for the music at the public reading of compositions, also for all the music used at the closing exercises of each term. During each term he gives eight afternoon lectures; he also corrects the regular compositions of sub-seniors No. 2.

Dr. James H. Salisbury has four recitations each day during six weeks, three during the remaining twelve weeks of each term. He corrects the regular compositions of sub-seniors No. 1. He also has all the care of the apparatus and articles belonging to the departments of natural philosophy, chemistry, and human physiology.

Mr. John Felt, Jr., has five recitations each day for the whole eighteen weeks of each term. He corrects all the compositions of juniors No. 2. He also gives eight afternoon lectures.

Miss Elizabeth C. Hance has five recitations each day for twelve weeks, and four for the remaining six weeks of each term. She corrects the compositions of sub-juniors No. 2. She also has charge of the public reading of the selected compositions.

Miss Ann Maria Ostrom has five recitations each day during the eighteen weeks of each term. She corrects the compositions of sub-juniors No. 1.

Our forenoon session of five recitations is of five hours duration. The afternoon exercises are each one hour long.

Many of our exercises require, on the part of the teacher, much labor when not with his classes, such as making ready for recitation and lectures, by preparing diagrams and tabulated matter on the black-board or otherwise; also the subsequent examination and correction of the pupils' abstracts of the recitations and lectures.

The only extra duties required of our teachers are as follows. Mr. Sumner C. Webb, has been selected by our executive committee as librarian, as master-of-order of study room, and as postmaster for the institution. They have also requested Mr. Truman H. Bowen to give instruction in vocal music to the pupils of the experimental school. For these extra duties they receive extra compensation over and above their salaries.

Our teachers are all exclusively employed as a general thing, during the regular sessions of school, in duties connected with the interests of the school. The superintendent of the experimental school, Mr. Phelps, attends, however to the duties of

corresponding secretary of the association of graduates, during the time of the regular sessions. And I have myself sometimes found time to attend to such letters as circumstances would seem to require an immediate answer.

It is not customary for any of the faculty to be absent for any considerable period during term time. Except in cases of sickness of a teacher, or of some near relative, I do not think any one of our faculty has ever been absent more than two or three days at a time. When a teacher has unavoidably been kept from school on account of illness, the other teachers have so far as they could do, generously heard the classes of the absent teacher. In some instances the teacher has temporarily supplied his or her place until sufficiently restored to health to resume his or her duty.

17. I am sorry to say that since the first organization of this institution our executive committee have deemed it necessary to expel three male pupils, and two female pupils. Of the male pupils, one was expelled for noisy and indecorous conduct at his boarding place, and for indulging in spirituous liquors; one for passing a counterfeit coin, and the other for persisting in breaking a rule of the institution, which prohibits the gentlemen of the school from calling upon the young ladies of the same, after 6 o'clock, P. M. The two female pupils were both expelled for theft; they having been detected in purloining small articles of dress, &c., from their school mates. These are the only cases of expulsion that I know of.

The committee have also dismissed one Indian pupil for drawing a knife in a quarrel with another pupil. This is the only case of dismissal that I know of.

I would add, however, that in several instances the faculty have advised pupils to withdraw from the school, on the ground that they were not believed to have sufficient intellectual strength, or were too giddy, or indifferent in regard to their studies, to promise much as teachers.

I am not aware that any gross immorality has been committed by any of our pupils, other than as above specified.

18. I do make it a point to visit our pupils at their boarding places as often as my time will admit of; especially, am I particular to visit such pupils as are sick. My teachers also frequently call upon our pupils at their boarding places. Miss Hance and Miss Ostrom have for several terms made it a point of calling at all the boarding houses of the young ladies at least once during such term. During the present term, the duty of visiting pupils has been assigned to the different teachers by classes.

19. I am not personally acquainted with many of the persons who take our pupils to board. When I am not acquainted with any who propose to take boarders, I require them to give good and satisfactory testimony of moral worth and purity. Many of the boarding places for our female pupils have been kept by the same persons for four, five or six years. A large proportion of our male pupils club together, and board themselves at the average price of \$1.50 per week, including room, rent, and all other expenses chargeable upon board. Of the gentlemen of our present senior class, all except one board themselves.

I do believe that all the persons boarding our pupils are proper persons to be entrusted with them.

20. None of our pupils are, to my knowledge, in the habit of attending places of public amusements.

21. We do not require our pupils to attend any stated place of worship on the Sabbath. But so far as I have been able to learn, a very large majority are in the habit of attending divine worship on Sunday.

At the opening lectures of each term, as given by Mr. Silas T. Bowen to the new pupils, and by myself to the old pupils, we usually make an earnest request that they should attend each Sunday some place of divine worship, leaving it to them to select such place as would be most agreeable to themselves, or to their friends at home.

22. We have no special means of ascertaining whether our pupils are out late at night.

23. The only reports which we receive from persons keeping boarders are voluntary on their part. When such reports have been received, we have invariably acted upon them as the circumstances of the case seemed to require.

GEO. R. PERKINS.

*City and County of Albany, ss:* George R. Perkins, of said city of Albany, being duly sworn, deposes and says, that the foregoing statement by him subscribed is true, according to the best of his knowledge, information and belief.

GEO. R. PERKINS.

Sworn this 5th day of }  
March, 1852, before me, }

J. B. BRINSMADE, JR., *Com'r of Deeds.*

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#### QUESTIONS TO MESSRS. PHELPS, BOWEN AND WEBB.

1. Are you in any way connected with the State Normal School?
2. How long have you been connected with the same?
3. Were you present at the public exercises of the school, held on the 5th day of February last?
4. Was there any unusual excitement on that occasion?
5. What were the causes of this?
6. How were these sounds produced?
7. Do you consider this portion of the building safe for the purpose to which it is appropriated?
8. In what part of the building is this room located?
9. Are the means of ingress and egress safe and convenient?
10. Do you consider this building well constructed and substantial?
11. Were the foundations well laid?
12. Are the walls all sound yet?
13. How long has it been built?
14. Do you know any reason why it was not more substantially constructed?

15. How much money has been appropriated to the construction of the building ?
16. Was this money all expended for the construction of a building to be used exclusively by the school ?
17. For what other purposes was money expended ?
18. Were these appendages necessary to the welfare of the Institution ?
19. Do you think the money expended on the principal's residence, had it been expended on the school building, would have been sufficient to have insured its stability ?
20. Were not the best interests of the school in a measure sacrificed by the building of this residence ?
21. Under whose advice and direction was the building planned ?
22. By whom were the contracts given out ?
23. Was there opposition to this plan on their part ?
24. Is this building as well ventilated and conveniently arranged as such a building should be ?
25. When did the Institution first go into operation, and what is the object of the Institution ?
26. What are the internal arrangements for securing this object ?
27. Upon whom does the duty of instructing in the art of teaching devolve ?
28. Does not the Principal personally engage in this duty ? and if not why ?
29. Do you think him capable of doing so profitably to the students ? (i. e.) is he an educational man ?
30. Is not this the appropriate field of labor for the Principal of such an institution ?
31. How many pupils are there in the school at the present time ?
32. Do these come from the several counties of the state in accordance with the proper apportionment ?
33. What counties send the largest number ?



34. Has this always been so since the establishment of the school? When was it different?
35. Who was the Principal of the school at that time?
36. How did he keep up the proper representation from distant counties?
38. Do these pupils from Albany generally become teachers?
39. As far as this surplus of pupils from Albany and adjoining counties is concerned do you think the objects for which the school was established are fulfilled?
40. Do you think this difficulty could be remedied? and in what way?
41. How many teachers are engaged in the school, and what are their names, duties, salaries, &c.?
42. How many hours is each employed in school duties per day? This question is answered by the programme as published in the report just referred to.
43. Have any of these persons extra school duties to perform?
44. Are all these teachers exclusively employed in school duties during the regular session?
45. Has not the Principal, since his connection with the school, been much occupied in authorship?
46. Has he used his time during school hours to prepare these books and to correct his proof sheets?
47. Do you know that he has ever employed students to aid him in so doing to their detriment as scholars?
48. Has he ever employed students as agents?
49. Has he ever used his position to urge his own books and those of his publishers into the school contrary to the opinions of many of his associates?
50. What do you think of the utility of this school and of its importance in our common school system?
51. Does the principal ever absent himself from the Institution during term time?
52. Do you know of the teachers, at any time, complaining or conversing about the absence of the Principal from duty? Name them if so.

## ANSWER OF MR. PHELPS.

Am connected with the State Normal School, as superintendent of the experimental department or model school; have been connected with the school since its organization, Dec. 18, 1844; was present at the closing exercises held on the 5th of February; there was an unusual excitement on that occasion, it was caused by a sudden sinking or settling of the floor and by sounds as of breaking timbers. I have been informed by the principal, these sounds were produced by the breaking of one of the timbers on which the floor rests. I do not consider this portion of the building safe for the purposes for which it was designed. This room is located in the 4th story above the basement. I do not consider the upper flight of the central stairs safe, they are narrow and very steep, have frequently known individuals to slip several stairs at once, when no crowd was present; have slipped two or three times thus myself. I do not consider this building well and substantially constructed; however, I am neither a mechanic nor engineer, and may not be considered a competent judge. I do not know whether the foundations were well laid or not. The walls are cracked both within and without. The cracks of the inner walls have been plastered up; it has been built nearly three years; it was not substantially built, I suppose, because built in haste, and for want of funds sufficient to carry out the plan of the whole building; do not know the full amount of the several appropriations for the building, I believe they amounted to from \$25,000 to \$28,000. These funds were not all used for the erection of a building to be used exclusively for the school. A residence for the principal and the janitor were included; these appendages were not perhaps necessary, but convenient in many respects; had these been left out, I think the funds would have been sufficient to ensure the stability of the building; the interests of the school, in my opinion, suffered by this diversion of the funds; it was planned by Mr. Geo. J. Penchard, as architect, under the direction, as I understand, of the principal, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. I do not know by whom the contracts were given out. I understood there was opposition to this plan; think this

building is not as well ventilated as is desirable for a Normal School; the school opened in December, 1848; its objects, as defined by its founders, are "the instruction and practice of teachers in the science of education and the art of teaching." To secure these objects there is a course of study, which all who graduate are required to master; the students likewise receive lectures on the details of teaching, and on general education. The special instruction upon these subjects is given by the superintendent of the experimental school, to which every member of the graduating class is sent to practice. A recitation is also heard daily for six weeks, in the "theory and practice of teaching." The principal does not engage in this duty. I do not know his reasons. This is as far as my knowledge extends, generally regarded as the appropriate field, of the head of such an Institution; there are about two hundred pupils now in the school; I have not in mind the exact number. The representation from the various counties is not, in general, in accordance with the prescribed ratio. The eastern counties have the largest number of pupils in the school. The county of Albany has had the largest representation for several terms past. This has not always been the case; it was different in the earlier period, during which the school has existed. The principal, at that time, was the late David P. Page. The representation was then better kept up I suppose by the agency of the county superintendents and by that of the late principal, who was abroad much of the time during the vacations lecturing to the people. This course is not now pursued. Some of the pupils from Albany county have not been employed as teachers; some have taught for short periods; others are now engaged in the schools of this county. This inequality of representation might be remedied, I think, by the operation of the same causes which formerly secured a more general representation. The number, names and duties of the Board of Instruction will be found by reference to the last annual report of executive committee now before the Legislature. The number of hours during which the teachers are engaged is, on the average, about *five*. The programme in the report exhibits the time table of the school. Some of these teachers have extra duties to perform, for which

they are paid. The teachers, as will be seen by reference to the programme, are generally wholly occupied in school duties at the regular hours. The principal has published several books on mathematical science since his connection with the institution. I do not know whether he has employed students to correct his proof sheets or not during school hours. I have seen the principal himself engaged in this at such a time. I do not know whether he has ever employed students as agents. He has used the influence of his position to secure the adoption of his own books into the school contrary to the opinions of some of his associates. I think Normal Schools, for the special training of teachers, to be of the highest importance to the State. I deem them the *most* important of the higher institutions of a State, and indispensable to the efficiency and success of common schools. The principal is sometimes absent from the institution during term time. I do not know on what business; sometimes I know he has been absent on account of the sickness of his friends. I have heard several of the teachers complain of his absence during session hours and during term time. Mr. S. T. Bowen and Mr. Clark so complain. I have so complained myself. I have heard Mr. S. T. Bowen say he should speak to the principal about his absence.

The above are true answers to the questions proposed by the committee of investigation, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

WM. F. PHELPS.

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#### ANSWER OF MR. W. W. CLARK.

Mr. Clark answers the inquiries of the committee on colleges, academies and common schools as follows: Is not now connected with the Normal School; was from the commencement for about six years and a half with Prof. Page and Perkins; was not present at the public exhibition, but has been there several times at closing exercises; Is acquainted with the room used on such occasions and does not consider it a suitable room for such occasions; ingress and egress unsafe in case of panic. The contracts

were let to responsible contractors, but the contracts were defective in not specifying for such a sized building; don't think the building was well built; foundation was laid in blue clay, and for that sized building don't think the foundation was sufficient. Prof. Perkins drew a plan afterwards corrected by an architect; bids were asked and contract was let for \$25,000 and from \$3,000 to \$5,000 was appropriated afterwards. The building was built expressly for a Normal School building; the plan for Professor's residence was at his own instance submitted to by the executive committee; don't think the State contemplated furnishing a residence for the Professor; thinks it would cost about \$5,000 extra for making such residence; occupies two stories of the building; is of opinion that these extras for benefit of Professor was an improper diversion of the funds of the institution, and that the school has suffered in consequence thereof; executive committee gave out contracts. Says he opposed having the residence connected with the institution; executive committee urged same, but the Professor would not consent, and induced executive committee to consent to same. Perkins got up the plan of ventilation; thinks it not properly ventilated and the plan is a failure; walls are hollow.

The design of the institution was to educate teachers for the common schools of the State of New-York. Plan of representation is for each county twice as many scholars as representatives in Assembly. Principal has but little comparatively to do with teaching; does not consider him an educational man; only as a mathematician; has only one class occupying 45 minutes; has nothing else to do with school duties; thinks he has more leisure hours than he ought to have; thinks the other teachers occupy or are engaged in school duties full time. Also, that Prof. P's health is not sufficient for his position, and considers him unfit for the place, and that the character of the school is depreciating under the present management, &c.; and that the character of the school under a more competent principal would be of great importance to the common school system. In the first stages or history of the school, nearly every county was represented; they are not now. Individuals were not admitted formerly without being duly appointed.

Prof. Perkins, to keep up the credit of the school, proposed to executive committee to fill up vacancies from Albany county, or other counties that desired to send; greater proportion of appointments were from city and county of Albany; Perkins has never made extra efforts to induce students from distant parts of the State; Prof. Page formerly done so, and endeavored to keep a legal representation; thinks scores of pupils from Albany county have received instruction from said Institution and never have been or designed to be teachers; large proportion of same are females, and have not the inclination or ability to go through the rigid course of under teachers and graduate. In their attempts at classification the under teachers have ever strove more for rigidity than the principal. A just ratio of representation can only be remedied by the principal's going into the country and meeting with common school teachers' institutes, &c. At the first stages of the school there was a greater proportion of intelligent pupils and practical teachers, more advanced in years, than at present; are nine teachers in school, and thinks a less number would not be sufficient; thinks the Professor occupies term time of school in his own private business; thinks he urges his own productions upon the school unwarrantably; thinks it has not now the character as a school that it had under its former principal. His (Perkin's) absence from school caused the under-teachers trouble, and was a cause of some remark; was rarely to be found in his room, except about the time for his recitation; it is not the habit of the present principal to visit the pupils, or their boarding-houses.

WM. W. CLARK.

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#### ANSWERS OF MESSRS. BOWEN AND WEBB.

Answers to questions proposed by the committee and sent to Mr. Phelps by the Hon. D. M. Lawrence, one of the members of the committee. The answers are numbered as the questions are.

1. I am.
2. Since its first organization, December 18, 1844.
3. I was present.

4. There was.
5. The settling of the floor of the room in which the exercises were held, accompanied by some sounds.
6. I supposed at the time, by the settling together of the timbers. I have since been informed that one of the timbers had partially given way.
8. In the fourth story above the basement.
9. I should think sufficiently so for ordinary occasions.
12. The walls of the building are cracked in some places.
13. It was first occupied by the school in July, 1849. It was completed about that time.
16. I suppose it was not.
17. For a residence for the principal of the institution, and rooms for a janitor and his family.
18. The executive committee must have deemed them necessary. If not *necessary*, they are certainly *convenient*.
19. It might perhaps have rendered the building more substantial had it been employed for that purpose, and not for ornament or other purposes.
20. I am not aware that they were.
24. The ventilation and arrangement of the building perhaps might be improved, but I think they will compare favorably with those of most buildings designed for a similar object.
25. The school went into operation on the 18th of December, 1844. Its object as defined by its founders, is "the instruction and practice of teachers in the science of education and the art of teaching."
26. All the pupils who graduate are required to complete a prescribed course of study. They also receive special instruction in the art of teaching, by means of lectures on methods of teaching, and recitations in Page's "Theory and Practice of Teaching." Connected with the Institution is an experimental school, composed of nearly one hundred scholars of various ages. This school is taught principally by the members of the gradu-

ating class. Here all who graduate are required to test their ability to apply to practice the instructions they have received.

27. In a measure upon all the teachers. Pupils, during recitation, are frequently asked how they would impart to the young the facts and principles they are acquiring. Some of the teachers lecture on methods of teaching. The special instruction on this subject is given by the superintendent of the experimental school.

28. The principal is not much employed in giving instruction in this department. One reason I suppose is, that that duty is assigned to others. If the principal exercises a supervision over all the departments of the school, he cannot well be confined to class exercises.

29. I do think him capable of giving profitable instruction to the students in this department.

30. It depends, I think, upon circumstances.

31. Two hundred and twelve.

34. I believe the counties have never been equally represented since the organization of the school. The representation, I think, was formerly more equal than at present.

35. The first principal of the school was the late David P. Page.

36. The county superintendents in connection with Teachers' Institutes doubtless contributed materially towards a more full and equal representation.

38. Most of those who graduate do.

39. Doubtless the object for which the school was established would be more effectually secured if all the counties were properly represented. It is true, however, that the graduates do not, as a general thing, teach in the counties from which they come. They go wherever there is a demand. Some from Albany county have gone to other counties to teach, while a few from other counties are teaching in Albany.



40. The best remedy I know of would be the restoration of the office of county superintendent, or the substitution of the office of assembly district superintendent.

41. For the number, names, and duties of the present board of instruction, I beg leave to refer you to the annual report of the executive committee now before the Legislature.

42. The program, as published in the report above referred to, answers this question.

43. Some have extra duties.

44. I think, as a general thing, they are employed in duties connected with the school.

45. I believe he has prepared some mathematical works for publication.

46. I do not know that he has.

47. I do not.

48. I do not know.

49. Not to my knowledge.

50. I regard the Normal School as an essential part of the common school system of our State—as indispensable to the efficiency of our schools. Institutions devoted exclusively to the preparation of teachers I consider the only means of elevating the character of common school instruction throughout the State.

51. The principal is seldom absent from the school. Except in cases of sickness of himself or family I think he has never been absent to exceed three days at a time.

52. I do not know that I have ever heard any of the teachers complain of the principal's absence from duty. I have heard Mr. Phelps complain that he could not find him in the building. I have in one or two instances so complained myself. He might, however, have been engaged with the executive committee, or in procuring books for the institution, or in directing carpenters in repairs, or in other duties connected with the institution.

I would like to be excused from answering questions 7, 14, 15, 21 and 23, relating to the construction and stability of the building, the amount of money appropriated, &c.; as I am not informed

in regard to those matters ; also, the 32d and 33d, relating to the distribution of pupils among the different counties. The register is in possession of the principal, who can more easily give you the desired information.

To the truth of the above answers I am willing if desired, to certify before a commissioner.

SILAS T. BOWEN.

I fully concur in the above answers, and am willing to certify to the same.

SUMNER C. WEBB.