



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

OF THE

TOWN OF NEW MARKET, N. H.

1863.

DOVER, N. H.

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1863.

CATALOGUE

OF

Prudential Committees and Teachers.

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEES.

WILLIAM B. SMALL,
BENJAMIN F. HALEY,
NATHAN H. LEAVITT, JR. } DISTRICT No. 1.

JOHN ROBINSON,
RICHARD ALLEY,
WILLIAM CLARK, } DISTRICT No. 2.

JAMES WATSON, DISTRICT No. 3.

EDWARD HILTON, DISTRICT No. 4.

BENJAMIN WILLIAMS, DISTRICT No. 5.

TEACHERS.

GORDON A. SOUTHWORTH, P. H. S. }
MARY S. WATKINS, Assistant " }
JOHN H. JENKINS, P. G. S. } DISTRICT No. 1.
HELEN A. LEAVITT, Assistant " }
MELISSA J. YOUNG, I. S. }
MARTHA S. TOWLE, P. S. }

SARAH COLBY, 1st Term, }
JOHN S. HAYES, 2nd Term, } DISTRICT No. 2.

SARAH O. HALEY, 1st Term, }
HEZEKIAH SCAMMON, 2d Term, } DISTRICT No. 3.

JOSEPH E. LANG, DISTRICT No. 4.

EMILY R. BENNETT, DISTRICT No. 5.

REPORT.

To the Citizens of Newmarket, N. H.:

THE following Report of the condition of the Public Schools, for the year ending March, 1863, is respectfully submitted by the Superintending Committee:

DISTRICT NO. 1.

PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Any remarks we may make concerning this school, will convey a very imperfect idea of its superior management and appearance.

The smiling faces which always greeted our entrance, the cheerful obedience to the requirements of the teacher, and the quiet (so unusual in schools of this grade) which pervaded the room, not only assured us that the teacher was by no means a stranger to the art of winning the affections of her pupils, but that the gentleness, kindness, and patience, which characterised her arduous labors, exerted far greater influence in controlling the waywardness of youth, than the stern, dignified, unamiable dispositions, so frequently displayed in the school room.

We know that this school has enjoyed the confidence of the community, and we are highly gratified to express our unequalled appreciation of the valuable services rendered.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL.

This school has been under the management of the same teacher as last year, the assistant having been transferred to the Grammar School, for the reason that some of the pupils became unmanageable, or nearly so, and required the supervision of a male teacher. Judging from the character of the school, we think the change was a decided improvement. It should be added, that the success of this school, was in no degree attributable to the co-operation of the parents, (with a few honorable exceptions,) but, rather in spite of the animosity, and prejudice, engendered by last year's labors, which plainly strove to thwart the efforts of the teacher. A few pupils were removed from school by their parents, for wrongs real, or imaginary, sustained by them, at the hands of the teacher. In justice to the teacher, we simply state the fact in relation to those pupils, that, upon an impartial investigation of the complaints, we have yet to learn the instance, where there was not either a direct violation of the "Rules and Orders," or some misunderstanding on the part of the parents, growing out of misrepresentations of the pupils. We regret to say that this school has not fully sustained its former reputation for good discipline, and we are confident, that the failure is traceable, mainly, to a disposition on the part of the teacher, to sacrifice her own convictions of duty, to the caprice of a fault-finding few. With this single exception the school appeared to good advantage, and its progress was very commendable.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

The permanency of the Principal has contributed much to the efficiency and success of this school. We can hardly be expected to say much in addition to what has already been said, in former reports, concerning the correctness of the principles upon which this school has been conducted.

At the commencement of the year it was deemed advisable to remove the assistants from the Intermediate to this school, consequently the number of the pupils was somewhat increased, and the government of them rendered more difficult; yet we believe the reputation for good order did not suffer thereby.

The examinations at the close of the several terms gave striking evidence of constant, careful and thorough drill, and if any pupils have failed to learn as much as they ought to have learned, we believe the responsibility rests on their own heads. Exercises in singing formed a part of their every day duties, and the drawing of maps, practised to a considerable extent by the pupils, elicited many praiseworthy remarks from occasional visitors.

We hope the uniform success which has attended the efforts put forth during the year, will stimulate all connected with this department to increased energy during the coming year.

HIGH SCHOOL.

(SO CALLED.)

Lest any one be misled, by the name affixed to this school, into the belief that it is in reality what its name implies, we must remark that this title is a decided misnomer; there being no such qualifications required for admission as are usually demanded at a genuine High School; but, rather such a number of the oldest, or perhaps more advanced pupils of a lower grade, is sent to this school as will equalize the amount of labor necessary to be performed by the teachers in District No. 1. Hence it is not at all surprising that there have been during former years, as well as during the year just closed, many branches taught here which strictly belong to a lower grade; and, furthermore, we regret to say, that some pupils are catalogued as belonging to the High School, who are not worthy, in point of attainments, to hold more than a middle rank in a well graded Grammar School.

None of those unfortunate complications (vide Report for 1862,) which distracted the labors of last year, have occurred to mar the harmony which has prevailed throughout the year. The strict discipline, the systematic arrangement of the tasks to be performed, and the clear and concise method of instruction adopted, all bespeak a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed," while the thorough examinations, not mere show performances, gave abundant proof of diligence, earnestness, and ability, among the pupils.

During the fall term an assistant was employed, in order that by a division of the labors more time might be allotted to each recitation. The unusual interest, and the rapid mental improvement manifested by the different classes, convinced all who were present at the close of the term, that the increased expenditure had been judicious; and many were the regrets expressed, both by parents and pupils, that the valuable services of the assistant were not secured for the remainder of the year.

The weekly exercises in composition and declamation constituted quite an interesting feature, and classes in Reading, Analysis, and Spelling, deserve special commendation. The brilliant success which has attended this school, in connection with the zealous, untiring efforts which have been put forth to *establish* and *maintain* a high standard of excellence, command our highest praise, and we trust that as a district, having experienced the advantages of a systematic course of instruction, we hold fast to that which is good in the future.

DISTRICT NO. 2.

PINE HILL.

Agreeably to a vote of the district, a short term of eight weeks was kept during the summer, for the accommodation of the small children who might not be able to attend school during the inclemency of winter.

The general average of attendance was small; yet there was no lack of interest manifested by the teacher in the dis-

charge of her duties. The method of teaching was decidedly original, and the commendable degree of progress, furnished evidence of care, diligence, and faithful instruction.

During the winter term the number of pupils was considerably increased, the range of studies liberal, and the instruction thorough. The want of experience on the part of the teacher was more than compensated for by the earnest, energetic, conscientious endeavors to sustain the reputation and advance the interests of the school. In order to guard against difficulties growing out of a want of consultation of the Prudential Committee, in relation to the employment of teachers, we suggest that this committee consist of but one member.

DISTRICT NO. 3.

FOUR CORNERS.

The usual reputation of this school for good order has been fully sustained. The general management during both terms was very satisfactory indeed, and the recitations gave proof of diligent application on the part of the pupils.

Both teachers resorted to all the expedients which their limited experience in "school-keeping" afforded to make their instructions practical, and we doubt not rendered an equivalent for the compensation received, judging from the result of their labors at the close of the terms.

We are compelled to say that this district possesses the poorest apology for a school house that it has been our fortune to enter during the year. We hope that, if for no other consideration than for the sake of appearances, some appropriations will be made for the erection of a school house, which shall be an ornament to the district rather than a by-word and a reproach.

DISTRICT NO. 4.**G R A N T .**

The first work done in this district by the Prudential Committee was to search for a teacher who possessed backbone enough to quell the insubordination of the pupils, which had rendered the expenditures of last year worse than useless, and to establish a wholesome reverence for law and order. We were convinced from the appearance of the school, that there had been more than one "screw loose" in the discipline of former teachers; and that more than one term of rigid training would be required to bring the pupils into good working order. We are gratified to give honor to whom honor is due; and when we say that all has been accomplished during this term which could reasonably be expected of any teacher we think we do not exaggerate.

The hearty co-operation which the parents have rendered, has made the services of the teacher far more efficient than they otherwise could have been; and while we congratulate them upon having wiped out the blame, which last year's report attached to the district, we invite their attention to the importance of promptly providing for the *necessary* wants of their children, which have heretofore been sadly neglected.

DISTRICT NO. 5.**P L A I N S .**

The Prudential Committee of this district was fortunate in securing the services of an experienced teacher, during both terms of the school.

At its commencement there was a decided tendency to disorder and confusion, doubtless relics of the last year; but the mild, yet decided discipline, soon brought "order out of chaos." A very marked improvement in all the departments of study was apparent, and the promptness and accuracy of recitation, displayed by some of the pupils, compared very favorably with the recitations of even more advanced pupils of

other districts. We are inclined to the belief that the course of instruction pursued has been highly satisfactory, from the remarkable fact that we have not been annoyed by petty complaints from any member of the district. Would that other districts might profit by the example.

G E N E R A L R E M A R K S .

It affords us pleasure to report that our system of instruction has been as prosperous and successful during the last year as at any previous period in its history, yet it is very far from being what it is our privilege to enjoy. It needs no very elaborate arguments to convince any one, at all acquainted with the system of grading in District No. 1, that a radical change is imperatively demanded, in order that the annual expenditures may secure to the pupils the full benefit of a thorough course of instruction.

We believe that much *can* and ought to be done to elevate the grade of our schools. How can this be accomplished? We suggest that the time usually spent in acquiring a common school education, be divided into four periods, or grades, corresponding to the present divisions; that the text books best adapted for each grade be definitely determined, and the proficiency of the pupils in the same ascertained by public examination be the only passport to a higher grade, regardless of the length of time any pupil may require, to prepare for such examination, be it one year or ten; and any pupil not attending regularly shall be assigned such rank in any grade as the teacher upon examination shall determine. In this way, and in this way only, can the evils be remedied which have frustrated for years the labors of our teachers.

Another fertile source of detriment is irregularity of attendance. We believe this evil is suffered to exist, because parents do not comprehend the extent of the injury sustained, not only by the absentees but by whole classes, to which they belong. We have not space to enumerate these evils — their name is legion — but will prescribe a remedy. Let the district come

fairly up to the work, and decide that any pupil receiving more than a specified number of "checks" for absence, shall forfeit his or her connection with the school for the remainder of the term, unless it can be shown that the absences were unavoidable; as dispensations of Providence, &c. Anything that is worth doing is worth doing well, especially acquiring an education. Unconditional submission to the established governments should be the terms of admission to any school, and any one refusing to yield it, should, if too old to be punished, be expelled.

The idea that teachers must tamely submit to the epithets and the dictates of every malcontent, couched in no very courteous terms, in relation to the government of their schools, is a relic of barbarism, from which we are sorry to say our schools are not entirely free.

A proper regard for the health of the inmates demands that a more effectual and safer method of ventilation be devised, for our school rooms, than the constant resort to open windows and doors, regardless of the weather. Some must be directly exposed to currents of cold air, at the imminent risk of health.

A merciful man regardeth the life of his *beast*; shall he not care for that of his child also?

Owing to the inconvenience of keeping a full supply of soothing syrups, cordials, and the various et ceteras pertaining to the nursery, constantly on hand in the school room, we suggest the propriety of prohibiting the admission to our Primary Schools of all children under five years of age.

Some objections have been raised during the year to exercises in vocal music constituting a part of the regular duties of the children. To such objections we reply, that—

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils."

It may be considered impossible, or impracticable to introduce into our school system the changes we have ventured to suggest; but, having called the attention of the district to the

subject, we leave it, asking for it the serious consideration of every member, in view of the future introduction of some plan to remedy the existing defects.

The highly prosperous condition of our schools is largely attributable to the faithful discharge of the duties devolving upon the Prudential Committees, and the zeal and ability displayed by the teachers in the performance of their arduous labors.

The hearty co-operation of the several committees, and the cordial reception everywhere given us by teacher and pupil, have afforded much encouragement and support in the difficult and delicate service we were so unexpectedly called upon to render, and while we return our sincerest thanks for the many kindnesses bestowed, we humbly ask that the mantle of charity which covereth a multitude of sins may envelop us within its ample folds.

J. LOW ELKINS,
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

MARCH, 1863.

NAMES OF SCHOOLS.

	HIGH.	GRAMMAR.	INTERMEDIATE.	PRIMARY.	PINE HILL.	FOUR CORNERS.	GRANT.	PLAINS.
Length of School in weeks,	32	32	32	32	21	23	17 3-5	23 3-5
Wages of Teachers per month,								
{ Male, \$42		38			25	19	21	23
{ Female, \$18		14	18	18	14	14		17
Number different Scholars,	67	84	44	78	23	27	18	29
Average Attendance,	42	56	36	45	20	19	12	22
Number instances of Tardiness,	152	165	71	158	151	119	184	73
Number visits of Supt. Committees,	20	30	19	10	8	8	5	8
Number visits of Prud. Committees,	1	0	0	0	0	2	10	2
Number visits by citizens and others,	75	115	73	43	37	33	8	47