

No. 1.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,

STATE OF NEW YORK.

BOARD OF EDUCATION,

CITY OF NEW YORK, JANUARY 13, 1864.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF JAMES M. McLEAN, ESQ., PRESIDENT.

On motion of Mr FARR—

Ordered, *That the Inaugural Address of the President be entered in full on the Journal, and printed as a Document.*

THOMAS BOESE,
Clerk.



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INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT.

GENTLEMEN: It is with deep sincerity that I acknowledge the honor you have conferred upon me, in electing me to the office of President. I shall endeavor to discharge the varied and responsible duties of the office to the best of my ability, relying, however, greatly on your assistance and indulgence.

It is the custom, and no doubt the duty of the President elect, on taking the Chair, to present such facts and suggestions as he thinks best calculated to promote the interests of education, and to throw safeguards around an economical expenditure of the school moneys committed to your charge.

I will therefore present a few facts, showing the extent of popular education in this city, and offer some suggestions for your consideration.

The amount appropriated for the support of	
schools in this city during the year 1863, was.	\$1,450,000
Amount expended and liabilities.....	1,605,835
Leaving to be paid this year.....	\$155,835

The whole number of pupils taught, during 1863, in the schools under the control of the Board of Education, and in the Corporate Schools that participate in the school moneys, is as follows:

WARD SCHOOLS—

Grammar Schools for Boys.....	27,826
Grammar Schools for Girls.....	24,943
Primary Schools for Boys and Girls.....	115,548

EVENING SCHOOLS—

Male Departments.....	12,089
Female Departments.....	6,413

FREE ACADEMY.	673
COLORED SCHOOLS.	2,322
CORPORATE SCHOOLS.	11,310
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Making a grand total of.	201,124

The number of instructors employed (Corporate Schools excepted), was as follows :

	Males.	Females.
Free Academy.	35	—
Ward Schools (including teachers of special subjects)....	375	1806
Evening Schools.	103	286
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Total.	513	2092

JANITORS—

Ward Schools.	108
Evening Schools.	40

The value of property, real and personal, under the control of the Board and School Trustees exceeds three millions five hundred thousand dollars. The real estate is worth more than two thirds of that amount, the title to which is vested in the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of New York.

The estimate of the amount required to support the schools during 1864, made by the Board of Education in November last, pursuant to the requirements of sections 3, 14, 15, and 16 of the School Law, was.	\$1,787,000
Excess of 1863.	155,835
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Leaving an available balance for 1864, of.	<u>\$1,631,165</u>

The mere presentation of these facts will impress all of you with a sense of the important trusts committed to your charge, as guardians of the moral and intellectual welfare of

two hundred thousand sons and daughters of your fellow-citizens, as legislators and as custodians of the school moneys.

The system of education provided in this city is more liberal than that of any state or city in the Union, or any nation of Europe. Spacious buildings are provided, with every convenience for health and comfort. The teachers are liberally paid ; sufficiently so, at least, to secure the best of talent, and the Course of Studies provided will qualify pupils to fill any position, creditably, to which they may be called in after life ; all of which is provided absolutely free of cost to both parents and pupils. If it fails to confer inestimable good, it will be owing to culpable negligence on the part of the School Officers, or indifference on the part of the people in selecting them.

The Free Academy is at present attracting considerable attention. Complaint is made, that the Course of Studies therein pursued, is not what it should be in a "People's College," that too much attention is given to the "Classics," and too little to the "Practical Sciences,"—that the Course of Studies is so arranged as to compel the students to take the full course of four or five years, to receive any permanent benefit, and even then he is only fitted for professional pursuits. Others insist that the Course of Studies is right in all essential particulars. It might be well to refer to the report of the Committee of the Board of Education presented in 1847, which had a controlling influence in establishing the Free Academy ; which says, amongst *other things*, "that the proposed Institution, which, while it shall be in no way inferior to any of our Colleges, in the character, amount, or value of the information given the pupils, the Course of Studies to be pursued will have more especial reference to the active duties of operative life, rather than those more particularly regarded as necessary for the pulpit, bar, or the medical profession. Another important feature in the proposed plan is, that the laboring class of our fellow-citizens may have the

opportunity of giving to their children an education that will more effectually fit them for the various departments of labor and toil, by which they will earn their bread ; such an institution where Chemistry, Mechanics, Architecture, Navigation, Physical as well as Moral or Mental Science, are thoroughly and practically taught.”

It may be proper to add in this connection, that the Executive Committee on the Free Academy of 1863, adopted the following resolution at a meeting of the said Committee, held on the 14th day of December last :

“*Resolved*, That the Faculty of the Free Academy be requested to give their written opinions, individually, to the Committee, on or before the second Monday in January next, in reference to the changes necessary in the Course of Studies pursued in the Free Academy, in order that the practical scientific branches may receive the attention they demand.”

Should the measure thus inaugurated by the Committee secure the end evidently contemplated, the result must be such as to render the institution more in accordance with its original design, as indicated in the extract quoted from the report of the Committee of the Board, in 1847.

There are now in operation in this city forty-eight Evening Schools, twenty-three for males and twenty-three for females, and two Colored Schools, in which eighteen thousand five hundred and two pupils are receiving the benefits of education.

The law requires the Board of Education to conduct and manage these schools, and up to the year 1861, they were under the direction of an Executive Committee of this Board. In 1860, By-Laws were adopted, substantially putting all the Evening Schools under the control of the School Trustees in the Wards in which they were situated. It has been intimated that, in some Wards, the schools are negligently managed, and that more teachers are employed than necessary. The law fixes the sole responsibility of conducting the Evening Schools on the Board of Education.

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