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HOUSE No. 1025.

REPORT BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

ON

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY
IN MASSACHUSETTS,

In accordance with Chapter 47, Resolves of 1895.

Prepared by GEORGE A. WALTON, Agent of the Board, under the immediate direction of a Special Committee of the Board,

GEORGE I. ALDRICH, Chairman.

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HON. GEORGE V. L. MEYER, *Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

DEAR SIR:—I have the honor to transmit herewith, in accordance with a vote of the Board of Education, a report of the investigation of the subject of school attendance and truancy, which the Board was directed to make by chapter 47 of the Resolves of the year 1895.

Yours respectfully,

FRANK A. HILL,

Secretary.

[CHAPTER 47.]

RESOLVE PROVIDING FOR AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE SUBJECT OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY.

Resolved, That the State Board of Education is hereby directed to investigate the subject of school attendance and truancy in the Commonwealth, with special reference to the question whether any and if so what improvements can be made in the provisions and arrangements concerning truants and absentees from school. Said board shall be allowed for all expenses actually incurred in the performance of this duty such sum as the governor with the advice and consent of the council shall approve, which shall be paid out of the treasury of the Commonwealth; and it shall report the results of its investigations, with such recommendations as it sees fit, to the next general court. [*Approved April 4, 1895.*]

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REPORT.

[The laws relating to school attendance are appended.]

ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN OF ALL AGES.

Of the children of all ages enrolled in the public schools there is an average attendance, according to the returns of the school committees, of 92 per cent. The returns of private schools are given only in totals and not by age periods, and they cover the enrolment but not the attendance; later in this report a remedy is suggested for these defects in the returns for private schools.

Both in the number of children enrolled in the schools and in the percentage of attendance the State has a commendable pride. It is the proportionately small part of her school population concerning which she has a just and proper solicitude. And it is this part with which this investigation is to deal,—a most important part, since within it are formed those habits which threaten the peace and prosperity of the community.

PLAN OF THE INVESTIGATION.

At the outset a general canvass of limited portions of the State was attempted by submitting certain interrogatories to school committees and school superintendents. Returns from these represented that there is general compliance with the laws. Nearly all the towns, however, reported some children between eight and fourteen years of age that failed, without reasonable excuse, to attend school the required amount of time; and one small town, having 42 children between eight and fourteen years of age, reported that only 11 had attended 140 days during the year, and no reason was known why they had not attended except the neglect of their parents.

A few cases were reported where there was habitual truancy going unchecked by reason of the intimate relation existing between the children and the person whose duty it is to enforce the law, the official being both parent and member of the school committee or truant officer and member of the school committee. Even in the cases of admitted violation of the laws, there was evident reluctance to apply the penalties, and apparently no fear that they would be applied.

In certain localities there appeared to be little regard for the compulsory law and a low tone concerning the school attendance; here, for obvious reasons, there were few or no cases of absence chargeable solely to the wilfulness of the child. These reports and previous observations in the towns made it evident that a personal canvass was necessary.

The entire State could not be formally visited and critically investigated. A selection, therefore, was made in different parts of the State of towns and cities that might be presumed fairly to represent the different classes of towns in the Commonwealth, and such towns were visited by persons employed for the purpose. Among these persons were Mr. M. J. Smith of Middlefield, Mrs. O. W. Collins of Framingham, Mr. George E. Bridges of Newton, Mr. R. W. Walsh of Boston, Mrs. Lucy A. Hazen of Brockton, Rev. W. A. Start of Medford (College Hill), Miss Sarah A. Lynde of Stoneham, and the agents of the State Board of Education, who had themselves suggested representative towns to be visited in their several districts. Mr. Charles W. Birtwell, general secretary of the Children's Aid Society of Boston, was employed for the special study of the truancy problems growing out of the investigation.

In the towns generally the investigation extended to the entire school population; but in Boston it comprised only the Winthrop district, which includes the Winthrop school for girls, the Quincy and the Brimmer schools, both for boys, three parochial schools and one other private school. In Barnstable about one half the schools were reported, and in Northampton only the more densely populated portion of the city was taken, in which are enrolled about 1,200 children in public and private schools; among the latter is one parochial school. In Newton the children of the Nonantum district were taken, and in Lowell the children of Wards 1, 2 and 5.

List of Towns and Cities investigated.

	Population by Census of 1895.		Population by Census of 1895.
Abington,	4,207	Lee,	4,066
Acton,	1,978	Lowell,	28,453
Acushnet,	1,115	Lynnfield,	818
Agawam,	2,408	Merrimac,	2,301
Arlington,	6,515	Middlefield,	386
Ashfield,	1,013	Montague,	6,058
Attleborough,	8,288	Natick,	8,814
Barnstable,	2,510	Newton,	5,000*
Becket,	888	Northampton,	8,500*
Blackstone,	6,039	Orleans,	1,198
Boston,	—	Plympton,	549
Boxborough,	307	Randolph,	3,694
Bradford,	4,736	Rockland,	5,523
Cummington,	750	Sharon,	1,717
Dalton,	3,210	Stoneham,	6,284
Dracut,	2,443	Sutton,	3,420
Foxborough,	3,219	Taunton,	27,115
Framingham,	9,512	Tisbury,	1,002
Franklin,	5,136	Wayland,	2,026
Georgetown,	2,050	Westhampton,	476
Harwich,	2,532	Westport,	2,678
Hinsdale,	1,650	Wilmington,	1,420
Holliston,	2,718	Williamstown,	4,887
Huntington,	1,450	Winchendon,	4,490
Kingston,	1,746	Whately,	755

* Estimated.

In the list were 5 cities, 6 large manufacturing towns, 20 towns which may be classed as manufacturing and rural and 19 which may be classed as residential and rural, — 50 in all.

The investigation would have been further extended and some localities would have been more critically studied had the time of the agents of the Board been available; but when the duty of the investigation was devolved upon the Board, the agents were already engaged upon special work assigned for the year, and this with their other engagements largely occupied their

time. Truancy was the special subject which previously had been assigned to the writer.

The plan proposed for the investigation was to compare the children enrolled in the schools with the enumerator's report of children in the town May 1, 1894 (Public Statutes, chapter 46, sections 3, 4). The purpose of this was to obtain for special investigation the names and residences of any children of compulsory age (eight to fourteen years) not enrolled in the schools.

To ascertain the number enrolled in the schools between eight and fourteen years of age who had not attended school 140 days during the year, that is, for 30 weeks less 2 weeks (Statutes of 1894, chapter 498, section 1) since the opening of the fall term of 1894, lists of such children were made from the school registers, and against each name was placed the number of days of attendance, and, when known, the immediate cause of non-attendance.

To get the required information, the persons engaged in the investigation went first to the town clerk, enumerator or school committee, to obtain the enumerator's list of children in the town on the first of May, 1894. With this they went to the schools for the purpose of comparing the list with the school register, and to learn the cause of absences. For such absences as could not be satisfactorily accounted for by the teacher, resort was had to various other persons, including school committees, superintendents, truant officers, boards of health, and many visits were made to the parents of the children in their homes.

Non-attendance is classed as (1) excusable, or necessary, and (2) inexcusable, or such as there is no sufficient reason for.

1. The necessary causes were all embraced under the head of disability, which included physical or mental incapacity of the child to attend school, contagious diseases in the family and other justifiable hindrances.

2. The necessary causes were embraced under two heads:—

(a) *Parental neglect*, which included indifference, indolence, carelessness and cupidity on the part of the parent or guardian, visiting by the child and working during the term time of school.

(b) *Truancy*, which consisted in the child's absenting himself from school without the knowledge or consent of the parent or guardian.

The plea of poverty by the parent, that the child had not suitable clothing to wear, that the child's work was needed to support the family, that the distance from school was too great for him to attend, — each was classed under the head of disability or parental neglect, according to the circumstances of the individual case. When several different occasions were assigned for absences of the same child, and only the total amount of absence was given, it was divided among the several occasions.

SOME DIFFICULTIES MET WITH IN THE INVESTIGATION.

Enumeration. — A difficulty met with at the outset was the want in many towns of a careful census, or enumeration, of the children between eight and fourteen years of age. In several places the enumeration of the children is made by sending a blank form by the children in school to their parents, who are requested to fill the blank with the names and ages of their children, and from these blanks, with such other information as can be obtained, the enumeration is made. An obvious defect of this plan is that in large towns and cities families having no children in school may be wholly overlooked. In some towns the enumeration is made by counting the children enrolled upon the school registers. The same objection lies against this plan as against that above. In some instances only the total number of children is given by the enumerators, there being no record of the name or age of the child, no name or residence of the parent. In one instance, where there is a large private school, the enumeration took in only public school children.

In a few instances no enumeration could be found; in some it was admitted none had been made. One place selected for the investigation was abandoned for want of a proper enumeration, as others might well have been had the fact been known in time. In one or more places investigated, for the purpose of comparison a resort was had to the enumeration for 1895.

In a district of one city the number registered in the public schools, together with the number reported as attending private schools, exceeded by one thousand the number returned by the enumerators. -

In one town the enumeration for 1894 gives 575 children between eight and fourteen years of age. The school registers show that 625 between these ages attended the public schools, to say nothing of a considerable number of others within the same age limits that attended a parochial school. In another town, not, however, within the preceding list, it was found from the enrolment of children in school on the first day of May in a school population (five to fifteen) of 802, that in 1894 there were 105 and in 1895 110 more children attending school than were reported at the same date by the enumerators in the town.

Not only did these irregularities in the enumeration present difficulties to the investigation, but they constitute a punishable offence under the law.

In making comparisons difficulties arose from the child's being called by one Christian name at home and another at school; also from different ages being given by the parent and the child. With a careful enumeration in May we are not certain, even then, to obtain an exact record of the children in the schools during the succeeding year.

Changing from School to School. — The frequent changing of children from one school or town to another and the fluctuations in population presented difficulties in the way of securing exact records of school attendance. These difficulties were increased in communities having parochial schools. With the establishment of a parochial school there is usually an exodus from the public school; in time some come back to the public school; others become irregular in their attendance by going back and forth between the two schools. In his official visits, as a general practice, the truant officer is restricted to the public schools. He has no knowledge of children attending parochial or other private schools except as he meets them on the street. An instance was reported of a boy discharged from a public school to go to a parochial school, who, having passed from the jurisdiction of the truant officer, was truant for an entire year before his truancy was discovered.

Registers. — In general the public school registers were full and accurate in all particulars. Some were not filled out as they should be, while others from various causes could not be found.

While every needed aid was promptly and cheerfully ren-

dered by those in charge of some of the private schools, the defective returns obtained from others indicate that their records are not exact, or are not kept in form to be easily summarized. As a whole, the returns from the private schools were not satisfactory.

RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION.

With the difficulties incident to an investigation of this sort, and with the many occasions for error in the statistics of school attendance, only approximate numerical results can be reached. And certainly only such can be expected, where so much good judgment is required as in passing upon matters of parental neglect and truancy.

Failure from Disability, Parental Neglect and Truancy.

The following table shows the number of children between eight and fourteen years of age, with the number of non-attendants from sundry causes, in the towns and cities investigated:—

NUMBER OF CHILDREN EIGHT TO FOURTEEN YEARS OF AGE IN FIFTY TOWNS AND CITIES INVESTIGATED.	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (EIGHT TO FOURTEEN) THAT FAILED TO ATTEND SCHOOL ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY DAYS DURING THE YEAR SEPTEMBER, 1894, TO JULY, 1895, BY REASON OF:—					
	Disability.	Parental Neglect.	Truancy.	MISCELLANEOUS OCCASIONS.		
				Distance from School.	Want of Suitable Clothing.	Sundry Kinds of Work.
26,968, . . .	1,398	1,380	125	28	49	267

It is thus seen that, in a school population of 26,968 children between eight and fourteen years of age in the towns and cities investigated, there are 1,398 cases where the child has failed to attend school during the year the time required by law, on account of disability, 1,380 cases of failure on account of parental neglect, and 125 cases of failure by reason of truancy.

Parental Neglect.—If we assume 1,380 cases of parental neglect among these 26,968 children to be fairly representative, the same ratio gives for the State 13,570 who fail by reason of parental neglect to get the full amount of schooling which the law requires their parents to give them. This is over 5 per cent. of the entire school population (eight to fourteen).

Nor was the loss of time in most of these instances slight. Out of 1,069 cases individually reported, 40 lost 5 days or less of the 140 days, but this means about 45 days that each might have had of a school year of 36 weeks. The average loss for the remaining 1,029 children was above 52 days out of the 140 days. Without reckoning the additional 40 days lost by each of these children out of a school year of 36 weeks, the total time lost to the estimated 13,570 children of the same class in the State was 705,640 days. Were the laws strictly enforced, with a penalty of \$20 for each five days of this number (section 1, chapter 498, Statutes of 1894), the parents of these children would be liable to forfeit to the use of the public schools a total sum of \$2,822,560. Of course this is merely theoretical, for the imposition of a fine upon one individual in a town would have a salutary influence upon other delinquents. It is, however, not an exaggerated estimate of the importance to the State of securing to all her children the elements of a good common school education.

Failure on Account of Truancy.—Using the ratio which the school population of the State, 265,182, bears to the 26,968, which by the investigation is found to have 125 truant children, by estimate there are in the State 1,229 who need the restraining and directing influence of a good truant school.

And this record does not include all that have been truants. It includes only those who by repeated absences from truancy, with other causes, have failed to attend school 140 days during the year. Truancy of the child relates to the whole period of his school year; if school is in session 40 weeks, and parents wish the child to attend the whole time, and he goes only 38 weeks, but wilfully absents himself the other 2 weeks, his absence will be a clear case of truancy, needing treatment as such. Children have been arrested and committed to truant schools during the year for the offence of truancy which occurred within the early weeks of the school year. In other words, failure to attend school 140 days is not the sole evidence of truancy.

The 125 truants revealed by the investigation doubtless include some that can be restrained in other ways than by being sent to a truant school; but the number of such is fully offset by truant children who ought to be sent from among

those who have attended school 140 days. For, as above indicated, among those who have attended the full time required by law there are those equally liable under the law with those whose attendance is less than 140 days.

Just as was shown in the case of absences resulting from parental neglect, the loss of time from truancy also is not inconsiderable. The total loss of time within the 140 days required by law is on an average over 43 days to each truant child.

Distance from School, Want of Clothing, and Children's Work. — Among the occasions for absence which were charged to disability or to parental neglect, according to circumstances, were (1) distance from school, (2) the plea of poverty and want of suitable clothing to wear, and (3) working by the child.

Of those who failed to attend school 140 days during the year on the plea that the distance from school was too great, 28 children were reported with an average loss, inside the 140 days, of about 40 days; of those who failed on the plea of poverty and want of suitable clothing, 49 children were reported with an average loss, inside the 140 days, of about 30 days; and of those who failed on account of work of various kinds, 267 children were reported with an average loss, inside the 140 days, of about 50 days.

Enforcement of Penalties. — With the evidence of so much irregularity of attendance occasioned by the parents' neglect and by the child's truancy, it is a pertinent inquiry: What is the extent to which penalties for the violations of the laws are applied?

1. *Parents.* — The returns from the towns investigated show but 7 instances where parents have been brought into court on the charge of neglect to give the children the required amount of schooling during the year, and 6 of these are reported from a single town. The small expense in these cases, which was that of the costs of the court imposed upon the parents, with suspended judgment, had the desired effect. But the compulsory law, so far as its enforcement with penalties is concerned, is essentially a dead letter in the towns investigated. The law is but seldom enforced upon parents anywhere throughout the State.

2. *Children.* — The precise number of truants in private institutions or public institutions, other than truant schools, or in families under the care of public or private agencies, is not known.

The number in the county truant schools in May, 1895, including the Plummer Farm School at Salem, committed for truancy, may serve as a basis for estimating approximately the extent to which the truant law is enforced. Following is a complete list of these truant schools in the State: —

County Truant Schools of the State, including the Plummer Farm School, Salem, with Location, Superintendent, and Number of Truant Children in May, 1895; also Boston's Average for Three Years, 1891-94.

NAME OF SCHOOL.	Location.	Superintendent.	Number of Children May, 1895.
Berkshire County Truant, . . .	Becket, . . .	Robert M. Savery, ¹	3
Essex County Truant, . . .	Lawrence, . . .	H. E. Swan, . . .	29
Hampden County Truant, . . .	Springfield, . . .	F. H. King, . . .	17
Hampshire and Franklin Counties, .	Goshen, . . .	T. L. Barrus, . . .	0
Middlesex County Truant, . . .	North Chelmsford, .	M. A. Warren, . .	63
Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth Counties.	Walpole, . . .	Aaron R. Morse, ² .	37
Plummer Farm School, . . .	Salem, . . .	Chas. A. Johnson, .	4
Parental School, Boston, . . .	West Roxbury, . .	M. J. Perkins, . .	93 ³
Worcester County Truant, . . .	Oakdale, . . .	F. L. Johnson, . .	44
Total,			290 ⁴

¹ Henry A. Jennings, present principal.

² Byron P. Carter, present principal.

³ Ninety-three is given as Boston's average number for the three years from Feb. 1, 1891, to Feb. 1, 1894.

Since 1852 the truant school for Boston has been situated on Deer Island. (Report of Hon. J. D. Philbrick, Superintendent of Schools, Boston, 1861.) In 1886 the Legislature passed an act (Statutes of 1886, chapter 282) providing that: "The city of Boston shall forthwith, upon being requested thereto by the school committee of said city, establish on the main land, at some place removed from institutions occupied by criminal or other vicious persons, a parental school for the confinement, discipline and instruction of minor children committed in the county of Suffolk, under sections 10 and 12 of chapter 48 of the Public Statutes."

In December, 1894, the city council of Boston designated the new school at West Roxbury as the truant school of the city, under the title of the Parental School. It was not ready for occupancy until May or June of 1895. Therefore, at the time of this inquiry, the school contained no pupils, although there were still truants at the old truant school at Deer Island, who had been committed prior to December, 1894. The average number in the old truant school during its previous three years (1891-94) is given, therefore, as the normal number of truants in the care of the city under the old régime.

⁴ Three of the above were sent for wilfully disobeying the reasonable rules of the public schools.

It may further aid in forming a judgment of the extent to which the truant law is enforced to observe the number of children of school age for each truant in the truant schools committed from certain cities which have the best means of enforcing the truant law, namely, a number of truant officers, well paid and constantly employed, and a public sentiment which in general favors the enforcement of the law.

The following table shows the number of truant children committed by certain cities to the several truant schools of the State, and found in them in May, 1895; also the school population (eight to fourteen) represented, and the average population to one truant: —

TOWN OR CITY.	Truants in Truant Schools.	School Population (Eight to Fourteen).	Average School Population to One Truant.
Cambridge,	14	9,768 ¹	553—
Chelsea,	7	2,981	425+
Fall River,	7	9,908	1,355+
Holyoke,	18	5,293	307—
Lawrence,	9	5,399	601—
Lowell,	33	8,401	247
Lynn,	18	5,852	303—
New Bedford,	13	6,480 ¹	410+
Worcester,	23	15,278	533+
Total,	142	69,360	Av., 488

¹ (Eight to fifteen.) In Cambridge and New Bedford "opportunity is furnished, in connection with the regular work of the public schools, for gratuitous instruction in the use of tools, or in manual training, etc.;" hence the age for compulsory attendance includes the ages eight to fifteen (Statutes of 1894, chapter 498, section 1).

That the laws are very unequally applied in different localities may be inferred from the number of truants committed from different towns. For example, Fall River, with a school population (eight to fourteen) of 9,908, had but 7 children in the truant school; while New Bedford, with a school population (eight to fifteen) of 6,480, had 13 truants. With conditions in population and in schools so similar, the differences in the number sent to truant schools from different places can be accounted for only by referring them to the difference in the manner of executing the truant laws.

That the laws are not well enforced will further appear if the ratio (488) of the number of the school children to 1

truant actually sent to the truant schools from the 9 cities cited be compared with the number of truants found in the 50 places investigated. We discovered 125 truants in the investigated school population of 26,968 children. This means 1 truant to every 216 children,—a ratio in striking contrast with that of 1 to 488.

Applying the ratio deduced from the investigation, 1 to 216, to the above 9 cities, it appears that less than 45 per cent. of the truants of these cities are committed to truant schools. Even if we leave a large margin for children sent to charitable institutions and for differences in populations, it is reasonable to conclude that not one half the number of truants that ought to be committed to truant schools are so committed, even where officers are employed on full pay for full time.

The following is the estimated number that would be in truant schools according to the data above given:—

Table showing the Number of Truant Children in the Truant Schools of the State in May, 1895, with Boston's Average for Three Previous Years, and the Counties from which they were committed; also the Number that would be sent from the Several Counties on the Above Bases.

FROM THE COUNTIES OF—	Number in County Truant Schools May, 1895, with Boston's Average for Three Years, 1891-94.	NUMBER THAT WOULD BE IN COUNTY TRUANT SCHOOLS, ON THE BASIS OF ONE TO A SCHOOL POPULATION OF—	
		488. ¹	216. ²
Barnstable,	—	5.7	13.0
Berkshire,	3	20.8	49.0
Bristol,	22	49.2	111.4
Dukes and Nantucket, . . .	—	1.6	3.6
Essex,	32	66.4	150.4
Franklin and Hampshire, .	—	20.2	45.7
Hampden,	17	34.4	77.8
Middlesex,	57	104.1	235.8
Norfolk,	8	27.9	63.1
Plymouth,	5	19.7	44.6
Suffolk,	102 ³	116.4	263.6
Worcester,	44	76.8	173.4
Total,	290	543.2	1,229.4

¹ Based on number of truants actually sent to truant schools in 9 cities (see page 13).

² Based on investigation as to number of truants in 50 cities and towns (see page 5).

³ To make this number, Boston's average for the three years previous to Feb. 1, 1894, is included. Boston, as already stated (page 12, note), had no provision for her truants at this time.

It has been shown that there are almost no penalties imposed upon parents on account of the infringement of the compulsory law. However liberal we may be in our interpretation of the statistics of the investigation, whether we take as our standard of comparison the 216 children for every truant found in the 50 towns and cities investigated or the 488 children found for every truant committed to truant schools from the 9 cities cited, it appears that the law which puts a penalty upon the child, as well as that which applies the penalty to parents, is a dead letter in many parts of the State.

WHY THE COMPULSORY AND TRUANT LAWS ARE NOT ENFORCED.

Local Officers not Efficient. — One question which those engaged in making the investigation were requested to answer was: What are the difficulties in the way of enforcing the laws? The following answers, which were given from statements made and impressions received, are significant, as showing the relation of officials to non-attendants: —

- “Committees do not want to enforce the law against neighbors.”
- “Officers reluctant to enter complaints against friends and neighbors.”
- “Officers regard the feelings of their neighbors.”
- “School committee unwilling to take action.”
- “Truant officers appointed but not employed.”
- “Officers members of school committees.”
- “Neglect of officers from want of support.”
- “Foreigners fail to appreciate school privileges, — too poor to pay large fines.”
- “Parental indifference and need of children’s work.”
- “Parents are here to get the work of the children.”
- “Truant laws cannot be enforced upon poor people.”
- “Children dodge between the public and parochial schools.”
- “Truant officers are school committee and hesitate to act.”
- “Officers disinclined to put penalty on parent or child.”
- “Timidity or reluctance of officers ”
- “Local officers will not enforce the law.”
- “Truant officers do not visit the schools ”
- “More money needed in the truancy service.”
- “No system of reporting to the truant officers.”
- “The two dollars a week charged upon the town.”
- “Parents don’t know of child’s absence.”
- “Something else for her to do.” “Law not executed in good faith.”
- “General indifference of committee.”
- “School committee fear to make enemies.”
- “Six officers, of little account.”

“Truant officers are not efficient.” “No truant school to send to.”
 “The cost to the town.” “Officers not on the alert.”
 “Parents shield their children.” “Public opinion.”
 “Citizens lukewarm, and parents poor.” “Parents negligent.”
 “Twenty dollars fine too large.” “Committees lax.” “Indifferent officers.”

From these answers, representing the sentiment in a large number of towns, the inference is that local officers are too closely related to the offenders against these laws to make such officers the best persons that can be found to execute the laws.

Public Sentiment. — Is it not apparent, too, that neither the officials nor the parents have an abiding sense of the privileges afforded the children by the schools, or of the evil effects of irregular attendance upon the children? And is it not true that there is in the community a lack of intelligence concerning the duty of properly restraining children, in order that they may form habits of regularity, industry, order, patience, perseverance and self-control? These are habits which fit the child to be a good citizen. To aid in forming them is one of the great ends for which schools are maintained.

Though the laws have been so long in force, they are still in advance of the public sentiment even in some of our permanent communities. One of the returns says: “The general spirit shown by the parents in this town, when asked for the causes of absences, is expressed in the phrase, ‘It is none of your business or of the State’s.’”

We have among us large numbers of immigrants that are here simply to get a living. They covet the time given to the school because it curtails by so much their children’s hours of labor, which yields a product they can fully appreciate.

The sums paid for the truant service afford something of a clue to the relative importance attaching to the service by different committees. Taking a few of the cities and towns at random, these sums, fixed by the school committees, are as follows: —

“Per child, \$1;”	“\$7 per year;”
“Per year, \$80.50;”	“Per hour, 25 cents;”
“\$25 per year;”	“Per annum, \$150;”
“\$1,200 per annum;”	“Per child, 50 cents;”
“For year, \$12;”	“Per child, 20 cents;”
“Two officers, \$75 each;”	“Per parent or child, \$1;”
“25 cents per child;”	“Two officers, \$35.”

Generally, in the cities officers receive a salary, and in the larger cities they are kept constantly employed. In the city of Boston, with a school population (eight to fifteen) of 52,704, there is a well-organized force, consisting of a chief and 16 men; this gives an average population of 3,100 to 1 officer. In the city of Cambridge, with a school population (eight to fifteen) of 9,768, there are 4 officers, which gives an average population of 3,442 to 1 officer. In no department of these cities is any officer more steadily or more usefully employed. At least in 2 cities truant officers are provided with teams; this is the case at Lowell and at Lawrence. Almost without exception in the towns the time given and the pay received show that only a limited service is rendered or expected.

Neglect of Towns and Counties to provide for Truants.—The law requires that every town shall make “all needful provisions concerning truants and children found wandering about the streets, etc.” The question is annually submitted to school committees in blank forms for returns to the Board of Education: Has your town made such provisions? School committees from year to year have answered this question in the affirmative, even when no proper provision has been made by the towns. When it was discovered that no place was provided, and a committee man has been questioned concerning his statement, he has sometimes justified it by saying that the town has no truants, hence no provisions are all that are needful. Till the present year the county commissioners of Barnstable, under a similar assumption, failed to make provision for truants in that county. Berkshire County, so it has been stated, established her truant school upon the representation by petitioners from 7 small towns that the towns were in danger of losing their share of the income of the school fund if they did not have some place assigned for the commitment of their truants. And it seems to be generally understood that the home of Mr. Barrus, in Goshen, was assigned by Franklin and Hampshire counties as the truant school for those two counties, that there might be formal compliance with the law. There has been but one child sent there, and he left three years ago last June.

The investigation brought to my knowledge, in quite a number of towns, instances where the neglect to enforce the law while

the children were simply truants compelled their commitment later on to the reform school, for such offences as larceny and breaking and entering. Says Superintendent Seaver of Boston, in his report of March, 1895, referring to the Parental School, for whose establishment he had been a long time laboring: "Some truants have already ripened into criminals and have been sent down to the House of Reformation on criminal complaints."

Inefficiency of Truant Service.—The inefficiency of the truant service is well illustrated in the four western and three southeastern counties of the State. These counties have a school population (eight to fourteen) of 40,410. There were in May, 1895, coming from these counties 20 truant children in the truant schools; all came from 4 towns and cities, which together have a school population of 13,578. Out of 127 cities and towns in these 7 counties, all the truants committed in the last three years have come from 6 and all but 3 from 3 of these towns and cities. In the 18 towns visited in these 7 counties, the number of cases of truancy reported is 29. Some of these were certainly proper subjects for truant schools, yet from only one of these 18 towns has a truant been sent to a truant school in three years.

Girl Truants.—Included among children who "play truant" are girls as well as boys. No proper provision is made for them anywhere. The only girls committed to the truant schools are 8, 6 of whom are at the Oakdale school. This school was arranged with reference to boys only. Girls are less subject to the truancy habit than boys, but when the habit is formed they are equally troublesome. Some most surprising instances of girl truants in high schools have come to my notice; in lower grade schools they are not uncommon.

Distance of Children from School.—In one large town visited are two families living in one neighborhood each having 8 children, the younger of whom do not attend school on account of the distance they have to travel. An action was recently brought against the head of one of these families for infringing the law; a fine was imposed, and an appeal was made to a higher court. The families live over two miles from the nearest school in the town. The defence in the case is that the distance is too great for the children to walk, and that the town does not provide suitable conveyance.

In another town 5 children belonging to one family, and ranging from five to twelve years of age, are kept out of school, which is two miles distant, because the town refuses to pay the charge, \$5 apiece, for the children's schooling in an adjoining town, where they can reach school by walking one mile.

Children at Work. — A few children within school age were found at work in manufacturing establishments without their age and schooling certificates, — apparently the result of some oversight on the part of their employers.

The penalty for employing children illegally in manufacturing and mercantile pursuits has an effect in promoting regularity of school attendance which nothing else has, for the reason that the penalty, a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$100, usually \$50, falls upon the employer, and is not too severe nor yet so slight as to be to him matter of indifference.

The existence of certificates, however, in the hands of manufacturers, certifying that the ages of children are fourteen when they are evidently not over twelve or thirteen years old, shows, on the part of parents, lamentable ignorance and disregard for law or for parental obligation, while it reflects upon the vigilance or judgment of those who grant such certificates.

In one town investigated the age and schooling certificate is filled out by an overseer or employer in a mill and sent to a justice of the peace, who, without seeing the child, certifies as follows: —

“And I hereby certify that A B can read at sight and can write legibly simple sentences in the English language, and that A B has attended a day school according to law for 30 weeks during the year next preceding this date, and that the last 30 weeks of such attendance began,” etc. (Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, sections 17, 19).

Why such particularity in the employment ticket, which describes the height, complexion, etc., of the child, if the signature to his employment certificate can be obtained without the child's being seen?

The report from one town states that no duplicate mill certificates are kept on file by the school committee (Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, section 17).

Many children are kept out of school in violation of law to

perform various kinds of work, such as "minding the house while mother is away at work," "tending the baby," selling papers, shining boots, picking berries, etc.

Past Provisions Unsatisfactory to Magistrates.—The places hitherto provided for the control and instruction of children have been of a character to debar the courts from committing children to them. These were, but a few years ago, city almshouses, and, in some instances, "lockups." The truants' associates were imbeciles, pauper children, the insane and criminal classes. The schools were places for restraint rather than for wise direction. The playgrounds were small enclosures, surrounded by high, tight board fences; the buildings were furnished with cells for confinement. The discipline was symbolized by these things. The little good likely to result to a child committed to such places restrained the magistrates from sending children to them. It was not till the child had violated some other law and was becoming hardened in crime that the magistrate would allow him to be brought into court.

Charge of \$2 a Week upon Towns a Bar to Enforcement of Law.—The provision in the law for the payment of \$2 a week by the towns to the county for each child sent to the truant school is a hindrance to the enforcement of the law. The town officials avoid incurring this expense whenever it is possible, often to the hurt of the child and at greater cost to the State. The returns from some of the towns investigated state that this requirement prevents commitments from such towns.

The Construction and Provisions of the Compulsory and Truant Laws.—The construction of the law presents some difficulties to enforcing them in accordance with their evident intent. The law for compulsory attendance is weak, in that it has so many exceptions. The provision for a forfeiture instead of a fine has given rise to a difference of interpretation, so that it would be better if the law should indicate a fine rather than a forfeiture as the penalty (Statutes of 1894, chapters 498, 508).

Increasing the age of attendance to fifteen years where instruction is given in manual training does not tend to improve the regularity of attendance. The expediency of extending the age from fourteen to fifteen without making provision for manual training in the added year may well be questioned (Statutes of 1894, chapter 498, section 1).

“ 21. (Head of page) read: — The allowance in the law for two weeks of unexcused absences encourages a habit against which the law in its main purpose provides. Does not this allowance imply distrust of the officials, school superintendent and school committees, upon whom the law depends for its enforcement? (Statutes 1894, Chapter 498, Section 1.)

If absences are excusable, there need be little fear of their not being recognized as such by the school officials; and there is added protection in the fact that the courts must pass upon the charge of parental neglect and truancy before a parent can be fined or a child committed to a truant school.

Section 1, chapter 498, Statutes of 1894, provides for the enforcement of the law upon parents, for neglect to cause their children to attend school, by the school committee or any truant officer. Section 3 provides for its enforcement by any truant officer when so directed by the school committee. The two sections are discrepant.

Section 15, chapter 498, Statutes of 1894, provides that "whenever a truant school has been established for any county it shall be the place of confinement, discipline and instruction for all truants within the cities or towns of said county, unless said cities or towns have made other provision therefor." But section 21 would seem to indicate that no commitment can be obtained, not even to a county truant school, unless such school is named in a by-law of the town. It is not clear why a town should make a by-law to name for truants a place which is assigned by law to all towns unless they adopt some other place.

The provision made in sections 19 and 25, chapter 498, Statutes of 1894, for by-laws, has hindered the enforcement of the law in instances recently brought to notice. Towns have much difficulty in making by-laws that will receive the approval of judges having jurisdiction in the case. The by-laws generally restate laws which are binding upon the towns without by-laws, or adopt as a measure of the town what is wholly in the province of the school committee. Mere formal compliance with the law which requires towns to make by-laws seems to be the only reason in most instances for their existence.

Section 3 provides that truant officers shall, when so directed by the school committee, prosecute in the name of the city or town; but section 20 says truant officers shall, under the direction of the school committee, make complaint and carry into execution the judgment found against habitual truants and children between seven and fifteen years of age.

It is ruled that each prosecution under section 3 must be specially reported to the school committee and acted upon by them, while under section 20 authority to act appears to be vested in the truant officer by virtue of his appointment by the

school committee. Practically, under section 3 every case would, in the city of Boston, be submitted to the school committee of twenty-four persons; the Board would refer the case to a sub-committee, who would report to the Board at a subsequent meeting, when the prosecution would be ordered upon the evidence of the officer who reported the case, and he would proceed to prosecute. In the mean time, the case will be twice brought to the notice of the public. All this that the parent may have a gentle reminder, under the law, of his duty to keep his child in school. It is not strange that committees, superintendents and truant officers hesitate to subject the parent to this ordeal.

Employment Law. — Under the law regulating the employment of children to labor, the youngest child may be employed as a wage earner in any place other than a factory, workshop, mercantile establishment or playhouse between the hours of six o'clock in the morning and seven o'clock in the evening, provided he has attended school 30 weeks in the year, as provided by law; and during all these 30 weeks there seems to be nothing to prevent the employment of such child during the hours the school is not in session, — that is, from two to three hours in the morning and from three to four hours in the afternoon every day, and the entire time from six in the morning to seven in the evening during the school vacation. That this is in accordance with the spirit of the law may well be doubted (Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, section 13).

Some inconsistencies may be noted in the employment laws: In the Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, section 14, it is provided that no child under fourteen years of age shall be employed in any factory, etc., without a certificate, except during the vacation of the public schools. Section 16 provides that no child under sixteen years of age shall be so employed, vacations in this case not being excepted.

In the Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, section 14, it is provided that a child under fourteen years of age may divide the 30 weeks of annual attendance into 3 terms of 10 weeks each, thereby ignoring, verbally, at least, the provision in the Statutes of 1894, chapter 498, section 1, for the annual attendance being continuous till 30 weeks' attendance is completed.

In the Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, sections 14, 21, the fact is ignored that, in towns and cities having manual training in the schools, attendance is compulsory to the age of fifteen years (Statutes of 1894, chapter 498, section 1). The effect of this oversight in the construction of the laws is that, under the above sections, a child between fourteen and fifteen years of age is entitled to a certificate which allows employment; while under section 1, chapter 498, Statutes of 1894, the parent or guardian is required to cause his child to attend school between these ages, if provision is made for manual training.

REMEDIES SUGGESTED.

The difficulties met with in the investigation, the extreme laxity in the enforcement of the laws and the incongruities in the laws themselves, almost suggest their own remedies. Reference to some of these remedies will, however, be made.

Enumeration.—Chapter 46, section 3, of the Public Statutes requires a census of children to be taken in May of each and every year. The names and ages are to be recorded of all children between five and fifteen years belonging to the several towns. Were the law fully complied with, it would be possible to know the exact number of children in town on the first day of May, not only between five and fifteen but between eight and fourteen, or at any age period between five and fifteen.

To give greater exactness to this enumeration, blanks should be furnished to all towns by the State, with uniform requirements and with specified directions for making the enumeration. These should embrace the child's legal name in full, — as William Henry Smith, — the child's age with the date of his last birthday, his residence and the school he last attended. Against the child's name should be that of his parent or guardian. The text of the law should be given upon the blank. A house-to-house inspection will alone answer the present requirements of the law.

At the same date, May 1, the school committee should cause to be made a list of all the children belonging to all the schools in town, with age, residence and date of last birthday. These lists should include not only the children present but each child that is not formally discharged, and known to belong to some

other school or to have passed the school age. Those that have passed the age of fifteen belonging to the schools might also be included.

Such lists should be required equally of private and of public schools. To facilitate the comparison of these lists with the enumerators' lists, both the enumerators' list and the list of each school should be alphabetically arranged.

School Registers for Private Schools. — Every school, private as well as public, is required to furnish annually, in response to the call from the State Board of Education, statistics of attendance, cost of tuition, etc., upon a prescribed basis. It is the duty of the Board of Education to issue to all schools a blank form for these statistics. The blank must be sent to private schools on or before the tenth day of May, in every year (Public Statutes, chapter 41, section 14).

The Board is required to prescribe the form of registers to be kept by the public schools (Public Statutes, chapter 41, section 3). The secretary is required to send these to the clerks of the several cities and towns (section 7). On receiving the registers, the clerks of the several towns are required to deliver them to the school committee (Public Statutes, chapter 46, section 1).

A simpler way for distributing the registers would be to send them directly to the chairman or secretary of the school committee, and the law might be amended accordingly.

But, furthermore, the law should provide for the delivery of registers to private schools, for, since private schools are required to make returns to the Board of Education, they should, like the public schools, be furnished with school registers, from whose records the returns may be compiled.

And provision should be made that teachers or persons having control of private schools shall keep registers of attendance in form and manner prescribed by the State Board of Education as for the public schools, these registers to be kept at the schools, and abstracts thereof to be furnished to the Board of Education upon the request of the secretary, as a condition for the schools being recognized as complying with the laws of the State requiring parents and other persons having control of children to cause them to attend schools.

Transfer of Children. — There is no uniform method prac-

tised throughout the State for transferring school children from one town or city to another, or from school to school in the same town. In the absence of some system for effecting the transfer, children are liable to lose much time. A number of instances were reported which show the futility of the attempt to “play truant” where a transfer is regularly made.

The following is a sample of cards in use for this purpose in the city of Cambridge:—

		SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE,	189 .
aged	years,	months,	is regularly discharged from
the	grade;	last attendance	189 ; number of sessions not
in school in Cambridge since the beginning of this school year			.
Parent's or guardian's name,		; occupation,	. Has resided
at		; has removed to	.
— — —, <i>Principal.</i>			— — —, <i>Teacher.</i>

If the last attendance was during May or June, state the probability of promotion on the back of this card.

In every case of discharge, two cards must be given, one to the child and one to the truant officer.

Before the discharge card is issued to the pupil, the teacher is careful to ascertain from the child the precise location of his future residence, and this he inserts in the card. One card is given to the child and a duplicate to the truant officer. If the child is removing to another town or city, the duplicate is immediately sent to the superintendent of schools of that place; if no superintendent is employed, to the chairman of the school committee of the town or city to which the child removes. The superintendent or committee puts the card into the hands of his truant officer, whose duty it is to see that the child reaches the school with reasonable promptness. This plan is pursued between schools in many cities and towns and between some neighboring cities. A more detailed account of the method is given later in this report (pages 32–39). It should be applied throughout the State, and not alone to public schools but to private schools as well.

Under such a system, the truant officer would necessarily follow the attendance of pupils more closely, and perform a most useful service; it would be possible under it to do much to prevent truancy and help to secure to every child the proper amount of schooling.

It would be possible, moreover, by this means to know how far the names of children are duplicated upon the enrolment

sheets throughout the State, and to prevent this duplication, as is successfully done throughout the schools of a town by means of the enrolment sheet of a school register.

Many cases instanced in this report of children's continued absence from school would not have occurred under a proper system of transfer cards.

Age and Schooling Certificates. — Greater care should be exercised in certifying to the ages of children seeking employment. The last clause of section 21, chapter 508, Acts of 1894, requires that the certified age of the child shall be compared with that registered by the last school census, and "if the child plainly appears to be of materially less age than that so given, then such certificate shall not be signed until a copy of the certificate of birth or of baptism of such child, or a copy of a register of its birth with a town or city clerk, has been produced, or other satisfactory evidence is furnished that such child is of the age stated in the certificate." In some instances this occasions delay, as where it is necessary to send to a parish in Canada or in Liverpool, Eng., or to one on the continent of Europe.

A case occurred, in the investigation, of a girl employed in a mill, who was said by her elder sister to be twelve and a half years old; the father at the same time stated that her age was fourteen, and the age of the elder sister fourteen and a half! The father had certified three years previous, under oath, that the younger girl was at that time fourteen years old, and on his statement the certificate was granted. Another case came to my knowledge of application being made for a certificate for a girl who was apparently not over eleven years old, and who declared herself, through her brother, who acted as interpreter, to be thirteen and a half years old. She could not speak the English language, and, of course, did not obtain the certificate. Some means should be provided for informing those who are biased by a wrong motive to misrepresent their children's ages of the consequence of falsifying under the law (Statutes of 1894, chapter 508, section 62).

It would be well to have copies of these laws in other languages than our own freely circulated among the factory operatives of foreign nationalities.

To inspire, moreover, a wholesome respect for law, it is necessary that it shall be enforced with a penalty.

Poverty and Want of Clothing. — It is not a legal excuse for the child's absence from school that he has not suitable clothing to attend. So far as the law goes, absence on this account can be charged to parental neglect. It is not from a want of sympathy that this is said; for some most pitiable instances of the inability of parents suitably to clothe their children have come under observation.

To afford relief, much is done by teachers and through charitable organizations in providing for the necessities of such children. This service can be rendered and accepted in a way to leave no excuse for non-attendance on account of poverty. Every such case should be provided for by town authorities, in the absence of private charity.

It was found in one town investigated that the school committee, on account of the plea of poverty by the parents, granted permits for children to go to work. Except in special cases and within well-defined limits, this is in disregard of law. This is done presumably under authority of section 25, chapter 508 of the Acts of 1894.

We must note carefully the limitations of this discretionary power. It relates to "illiterate minors," so called. It does not sanction any exception within the period of compulsory attendance, — 30 weeks annually, from eight to fourteen years of age. Otherwise, the child is earning the relief that should be afforded the family, and doing so at the expense of its education and in direct violation of the intent of the compulsory education law.

Distance from School. — The great distance children sometimes live from school is made an excuse for their irregular attendance. Till some distance can be agreed upon as the limit for school children to be required to walk, towns should be liberal in providing conveyance. Appropriations for this purpose should be included in the provision made for the "support of schools," which at present includes only wages of teachers and janitors, and fuel. To have good, well-graded schools, and peace and contentment among the people, is more important than to have the cost of transportation saved in the tax rate and have disaffected people within and along the borders of the town.

Change in the Form of imposing Fines. — The law in cases of parental neglect admits of the fine being any sum not ex-

ceeding \$20. The law would, I think, be more likely to be enforced if it read as follows: Every failure for a period equivalent to 5 days on the part of any person to comply with the provisions of the law shall be an offence punishable with a fine not less than \$1 and not more than \$20.

It might also be provided that all offences concerning the same child shall be charged in separate counts, joined in one complaint; that when a complaint contains more than one count the court may give sentence on one or more counts and suspend sentence on the remaining counts; and that if, at the end of some stated time, say 20 weeks from the date of the sentence, it shall appear that the child concerned has attended school regularly during that time, then judgment on the remaining counts shall not be executed.

The effect of imposing a small fine upon the delinquent parent would be that the school committees and truant officers would be more likely to make presentments of parents, and that the court would be less moved by personal consideration for the accused.

The payment of this small fine would not be a great hardship to the parent, and the effect of the suspended judgment in case of the additional fines would operate to increase the vigilance of the parent in keeping his child at school. It would put the responsibility upon the parent, where it really belongs. In most cases the small fine would answer all the purposes of a large one.

An Increase in the Length of School and in the Time of Required Attendance. — The law now requires all schools to be kept 24 weeks. There seems to be general agreement that they can be profitably kept at least 32 weeks. Already the law provides (Statutes of 1894, chapter 231, section 1) that schools in towns containing 4,000 inhabitants or more, according to the latest State or national census, be kept at least 8 months in the year. This indicates the minimum time for which it is deemed desirable that all schools be kept; and with the sums now provided out of the income of the school fund in aid of towns of low valuation, and with the additional sum given towards the salaries of teachers under the superintendent law (Statutes of 1893, chapter 200, section 3), it cannot be

too much to require of every town that the schools be kept this length of time.

Such amendment should be made to the law as would require that they be so kept, and that the time of required attendance be extended to 32 weeks. In any case, the minimum time the schools must be kept should equal the period of compulsory attendance.

State Wards. — In some of the towns children that are wards of the State attend the public schools. Where there are numbers of such, especially in towns of low valuation, it is deemed something of a hardship for the towns to provide the schooling free of charge. Should not such towns be reimbursed by the State, for their tuition, as they would be by parents and guardians, if, instead of being wards of the State, the children belonged in neighboring towns?

Children at Labor. — To prevent the undue employment of young children in office and other indoor work, the employment laws should be amended so as to prevent the employment for wages of any child under thirteen years of age at any indoor work during the hours of school. Excessive work outside of those hours should also be forbidden.

Truant Officers and Private Schools. — At present, as has been stated, the duties of truant officers are limited to the children in public schools. In view of the difficulties attending the enforcement of the compulsory and truant laws, especially where large private schools exist by the side of public schools, it is a question for serious consideration whether truant officers should not be required by law to exercise the same oversight and control of children attending private schools as they have over those attending public schools. The private schools established in many cities and large manufacturing towns have made attendance in them an important item in our school statistics. I am assured that such oversight would be welcomed in some of these schools, and it would seem as if it would naturally be welcomed by all, since all would prefer regular to irregular attendance on the part of their pupils.

Places should be provided in all cities and towns where the truant officer shall as early as practicable in each day receive notice of children suspected of truancy or of unnecessary

absence from school. Cards of notification are provided for this purpose in most of the cities and large towns, in form and matter somewhat resembling those used by Boston (pages 32, 33).

Many cases of suspected truancy can be most satisfactorily treated if they are brought to the knowledge of parents directly, without the intervention of the truant officer.

By-laws relating to Truancy.—Sections 19 and 20, chapter 498, Acts of 1894, require towns to make such by-laws as shall be conducive to the welfare of “habitual truants, and children between seven and fifteen years of age . . . and such children as persistently violate the reasonable rules and regulations of the public schools,” and school committees to appoint truant officers, fix their compensation and direct them in their duties. The only real prerogative, therefore, of the town is to name the place for the commitment of truants, and pay for their maintenance while in such place. The law should be so amended that no place need be named by cities or towns within counties that have a truant school. If a county has no truant school, the place should be determined by the school committee. This being done, there is no occasion for town by-laws on the subject of truancy, and all statutes requiring them should be repealed.

Truant Officers to make Presentments.—Why may not truant officers, under a general rule of the school board, on approval, say, by a sub-committee of the board, prosecute cases against parents? Chapter 384 of the Acts of 1890 did give this power; it read as follows: “Upon the complaint of the school committee or any truant officer, the parent shall forfeit,” etc. Chapter 498, section 1, of the Acts of 1894, gives similar power; but section 3 of this chapter provides that it shall be exercised only under the direction of the school committee. We have seen to what an ordeal the parent is subjected, where each case, before the question of prosecution is finally determined, is referred to the full committee in a large city and discussed in open meeting. We have seen, moreover, how seldom the law is enforced. These two facts sustain somewhat the relation of cause and effect.

The truant officer should be expected to make something more than a formal report of his doings to the school com-

mittee and the town. A proper form for the statistical part of his work should be observed. His reports should include, besides what he has done to bring children under arrest, what he has done to prevent the occasion of their arrest. The truant officer might also report at stated periods, for a certain length of time after they are discharged, in regard to children returned from the truant school.

The following illustrates the form used in one city for an annual report of the statistics of truant officers' work:—

1894.	No. of School Visits.	No. of Absences reported by Teachers.	No. of Absences without Permission of Parents.	No. of Second Offences.	No. of Third Offences.	No. of Parents or Guardians notified.	No. returned to School from the Street.	No. of Arrests.	No. of Prosecutions.	Instances of Tardiness investigated.
January, . . .	289	140	9	1	-	133	9	-	-	5
February, . . .	188	49	11	-	-	37	6	-	-	8
March, . . .	376	96	12	4	2	79	6	2	2	14
April, . . .	272	51	8	-	-	47	7	-	-	12
May, . . .	300	102	19	5	-	77	19	1	1	7
June, . . .	262	100	42	11	9	82	19	5	5	7
September, . . .	289	53	20	6	5	47	10	1	1	9
October, . . .	304	88	21	1	1	86	11	-	-	6
November, . . .	282	69	8	-	-	65	3	-	-	9
December, . . .	286	132	16	2	-	126	8	-	-	9
Total, . . .	2,848	880	166	30	17	779	98	9	9	86

Result of Prosecutions.

Placed on probation,	3
Committed to truant school,	6

ENFORCEMENT OF TRUANT LAWS.

Truants and Children absent from Parental Neglect in Cities and in Towns.—By the statistics of the truant schools it appears that nearly all the truant children placed in these schools come from the cities. Of the 180* truant children in the truant schools in the State in May, 1895, 88 per cent. (160) came from 16 cities, as follows: from Brockton, Newton, Salem, 4 each; from Lowell, 33; Worcester, 23; Cambridge, 14; Lynn, 18; New Bedford, 13; Lawrence, 9;

* Fourteen children subsequently reported are not included in this statement.

Holyoke, 9; Fall River, 7; Chelsea, 7; Springfield, 7; Pittsfield, 3; Fitchburg, 2; and Somerville, 3.

It would be a mistake to infer, from this large excess of city children in the truant schools, that the cities have so much larger percentage of truant children than the towns have. It is not possible to prove by the investigation that the number of truants is equal in equal populations in towns and cities. The investigation discovered, in the 5 cities, 1 truant to 185 children between eight and fourteen years of age; in the 6 manufacturing towns, 1 truant to 190 children; and in the remaining towns, 1 truant to 241 children. But in the cities the investigation had the benefit of experienced officers, while the towns, in general, furnished no such aid. It may well be doubted whether the actual amount of truancy in towns, population for population, is not as great as in cities.

The following account shows the systematic way in which non-attendants are followed up in some of the cities. The same degree of watchfulness extended to towns might reveal in them similar results.

The details of the following account of the manner of applying the truant and compulsory attendance laws in Boston are furnished by Mr. Alfred Bunker, master of the Quincy school, in the district which was investigated. The application is to a group of schools consisting of grammar and primary grades, where, from the character of the population, there is likely to be considerable absence and truancy. The district has a school population (eight to fourteen) of 2,156 children, and employs one truant officer. Reference is especially made to the Quincy school, a large proportion of whose teachers are women.

Immediately after the opening of the morning session each teacher in the several rooms looks over her class and finds who are absent. If she suspects any one of the absentees of being absent without his parent's consent, she fills out a "truant card" supplied for the purpose by the school committee, giving upon it the name of the pupil, his age, name of parent, residence and date or dates of suspected truancy:—

[TRUANT CARD.]					SCHOOL.
No.	Name,	age,	charge,	parent's	
name,	residence,	date,	teacher,		
Street, Room No.					

If any one who is absent is supposed to be detained or allowed to remain at home by the parent without reasonable excuse, though not a wilful truant, the teacher fills out an inquiry card, asking information as to the cause of the absence : —

[TRUANT BLANK A.]

		SCHOOL, BOSTON,	189 .
Name,	; age,	; residence,	; information
wanted,	.		
		— —,	<i>Teacher.</i>
		— —,	<i>Principal.</i>

The card in either case is then sent to the truant officer's box, located in a convenient place in one of the corridors of the main building.

When the truant officer arrives on his daily visit, he takes all the cards from this box and goes to the master's office. By one of the regulations of the school committee he is required to look up the cases of suspected truancy without further question ; but, in order that he may not be sent upon needless errands by the subordinate teachers, the regulations prescribe that the inquiry cards shall be submitted to the master for his approval and signature before any investigation is made. Frequently the truant officer can give at once the desired information as to the cause of the pupil's absence. In such cases the information is immediately sent to the teacher and the card is destroyed. The inquiry cards which are approved by the master are then signed by him, and these and the truant cards are taken by the truant officer, who then goes to the homes of the pupils to investigate concerning the cause of their absence. If he finds no one in, he calls later in the day, being sometimes obliged to call several times. If the absence is found to be unnecessary, or a truancy, he endeavors to induce the parent or guardian to take the pupil at once to school, or certainly at the following session, and he writes upon the back of the card the result of his investigation. Having looked up the cards for this school, he goes to the next school in his section of the city (each officer has two or more schools), and so on through the day, often not completing his labors until one or two hours after the schools are closed, and sometimes being obliged to make an evening call at homes where no parents could be found by day.

Upon the following morning he takes these cards back to the school, and, calling at the rooms of the teachers from whom they were received, states to each what he has found to be the reasons for the absences of the respective children, and inquires whether they have returned to school. If they have, he writes on the back of the card of each child so returned the date of the return, and then signs his name. If any truant has not yet returned to school, he keeps the card for further investigation.

When he has made the round of the various rooms and reported upon all the cards, he takes them to the master's office and gives them to him. The master examines the cards and the reports endorsed upon them, makes such further inquiries or comments as he may deem necessary, and then writes his name or initials upon the back of the cards, as a sign that he is satisfied that the truant officer has done his duty, and then hands back the cards to him, to be taken at the close of the week to the chief truant officer.

The truant officer then takes the cards of pupils who have not yet returned to school, also those for the present day's absentees which he has found in his box, and goes out, as on the preceding day, upon his tour of investigation. Occasionally he finds some truant pupil upon the street. If so, he takes him to the school and delivers him to the master, who, after administering such reproof or punishment as he deems advisable, sends him to his teacher. In cases of truancy (absence from school without permission of the parent or guardian), it may be several days before the child returns to school; but the truant officer makes a daily call at both school and home, and, when the pupil finally returns to school, he notes upon the card the number of school sessions during which he has been truant, and then delivers the card with the others to the master for his endorsement.

If upon any day a pupil is discharged from school on account of removal either to another district or to another city or town, he receives from his teacher a card stating his name, age, residence, etc. (see page 25). This card is signed by his teacher and by the master of the school, and is to be taken to his next teacher.

A duplicate card is also given to the truant officer, who calls at the home to see if the alleged removal has actually taken

place, and, if it has, he is to give this card also to the chief truant officer.

Each Saturday morning the truant officers meet at the office of the chief and give to him the completed cards of that week, together with a tabulated statement concerning them, as follows: —

CITY OF BOSTON.

To the Chief Truant Officer.

Truant officer's report from district for the week ending .

Number of cases investigated, ; number found to be truants,
; number of new pupils put into school, .

Before justices of the municipal court, or trial justices of juvenile offenders: —

Number complained of as habitual truants, ; number on probation,
; number sentenced to the Parental School, ; number
complained of as absentees, ; number on probation, ; num-
ber sentenced to the Parental School, ; number complained of as
neglected children, ; number on probation, ; number sen-
tenced to ; number complained of for other offences, ;
number on probation, ; number sentenced to the House of Ref-
ormation for Juvenile Offenders, ; number sentenced to the State
Reform School, .

Complaints.

DATE.	Names.	Age.	Complaint.	Judgment.

The truant officers also give to the chief truant officer the duplicate discharge cards just referred to. These he redistributes to the officers to whose districts the pupils have severally removed. Upon the following day the officers ascertain, by inquiry at the various schools, whether these pupils have entered their new schools. If they have, that fact and the date of the admission are noted by the master upon the back of each pupil's card, and he then signs his name or initials and hands the card back to the truant officer, to be in turn handed to the chief truant officer at the next weekly meeting. If the pupil has not yet appeared at the new school, the truant officer hunts him up and compels him to come in. If, because of an erroneous or fictitious address, the pupil cannot be found, the card is returned through the chief officer to the officer from whom it

came, who reinvestigates the case to obtain the correct address. If the removal is not to another district but to another city or town, the chief officer at his discretion mails the duplicate discharge card to the truant officer or superintendent of schools of that city or town.

In special cases, where it is desirable that the truant officer of the new school should know at once of the removal into his district of any pupil, the duplicate discharge card is immediately mailed directly to him without waiting for the weekly meeting.

In the Quincy school every truant receives some penalty for each offence, varying with the circumstances of the case. But in spite of all admonition, of reproof and punishment, both at home and at school, there are occasionally pupils who persist in being truant, and thus become what the law calls "habitual truants." These are dealt with in accordance with the law (Statutes of 1894, chapter 498, section 21), and brought by the truant officer before the court having jurisdiction in such cases, which in Boston is the municipal court. But, in order that no wrong shall be done to any truant, and that no one shall be brought into court through any personal resentment or unkindly spirit in his teacher or truant officer, the regulations of the Boston school committee require the concurrent action of at least three persons, not members of the school committee, as will be seen by what follows, before even an application for a warrant (or summons) can be made to the judge. Upon a blank prepared for that purpose the teacher must designate the dates of truancy for the preceding three months, the truant officer must state the result of his investigations at the home, and the chief truant officer must give his consent for an application to the judge for a warrant (or summons) for the boy to be brought into the court.

						No.
						18 .
	CITY OF BOSTON,		SCHOOL,			
Pupil's name,		; age,		; parent's or guardian's name,		
		; residence,		; number of instances of supposed truancy in		
the preceding three months,						
					— —, Teacher.	
What is the condition of the home?					— —, Truant Officer.	
Consent to make application for a warrant for the arrest of the above-						
named		for truancy — absence from school — is hereby given.				
Approved,		18 .				
					— — Chief Truant Officer.	

This paper so filled out is presented to the judge and examined by him, and, if he is not satisfied, he may decline to grant a warrant. If he is satisfied, the warrant (or summons) is issued, and on the day therein assigned the truant is brought by the truant officer before the judge. The parent representing the home and the teacher or master representing the school are also summoned as witnesses.

The case is heard in private, no spectators being allowed in the court room; the parent, teacher, truant officer and truant are called upon by the judge for such information relating to the case as he may desire, and, having heard all, he gives his decision and pronounces the sentence. If it seems probable that the truant will give up his truancy and thereafter attend school regularly, he puts him on probation for a few weeks, at the end of which time he is again brought before the court, and, if he has done well, discharged. If otherwise, the truant is sentenced to the truant school for a term, at the discretion of the judge, not exceeding two years, and is delivered to the truant officer to be taken by him to that school, no other officer being authorized by law to convey him thither.

Here he must remain until the expiration of his sentence, unless, after presumed reformation, the judge by whom he was committed should, at any time upon application, decide to grant a release to him. The Public Statutes, chapter 48, section 16, give to no other officer authority to order him released.

A practical illustration, incidentally, of the advantage of the exact method above described of following up non-attendants is found in the ease with which, in this investigation, accurate results were obtained in the cities in contrast with the labor required in the towns to obtain even approximate results. The following were obtained under the more favorable conditions existing in one of the cities.

Before giving the illustration, it should be stated that, to facilitate the collecting and compiling of statistics and the making of returns for this investigation, the following forms in blank were prepared. The sample which follows represents a portion of the Boston district investigated, names being withheld. The district as a whole contains about two miles of wharves and four large railroad stations. It was stated with

confidence, as the result of the investigation, that there were but 4 children in the district of school age, in condition to attend school, who had not attended during the whole or some part of the year, and 2 of these it was claimed were instructed at home.

[Sample of Blank used in the Investigation.]

Record of Children between Eight and Fourteen Years of Age (Eight and Fifteen where Provision is made for Industrial Education) who have attended School less than 140¹ Days since Sept. 1, 1894.

Town, ———; School or District, ———; Date, ———.

Number.	CASES INVESTIGATED.		Age at Last Birthday.	Date of Last Birthday.	ATTENDED SCHOOL. (HALF DAYS.)				Remarks.
	Name and Relationship of Parent or Guardian.	Name of Child.			Fall Term.	Winter Term.	Spring Term.	Total.	
1	——, father, .	——, .	12	May, 1895,	161	-	114	275	Truancy.
2	——, stepfather, .	——, .	13	Dec., 1894,	135	-	98	233	Parental neglect.
3	——, father, .	——, .	9	July, 1895,	97	-	125	222	Sickness.
4	——, father, .	——, .	11	Apr., 1895,	101	-	129	230	Contagious disease.
5	——, father, .	——, .	13	June, 1895,	151	-	121	272	Parental neglect.
6	——, father, .	——, .	12	Oct., 1894,	154	-	76	230	Contagious disease.
7	——, father, .	——, .	13	Feb., 1895,	133	-	108	241	Truancy.
8	——, father, .	——, .	13	May, 1895,	82	-	108	190	Truancy, sent to truant school.
9	——, father, .	——, .	13	Mar., 1895,	122	-	127	249	Contagious disease.
10	——, father, .	——, .	13	Nov., 1894,	132	-	82	214	Parental neglect.
11	——, mother, .	——, .	12	Jan., 1895,	49	-	76	125	Contagious disease and truancy.
12	——, uncle, .	——, .	12	Feb., 1895,	195	-	76	271	Contagious disease.
13	——, father, .	——, .	11	June, 1895,	121	-	104	225	Parental neglect.
14	——, father, .	——, .	12	Nov., 1894,	168	-	97	265	Sore eyes.

¹ If the schools are kept for 30 weeks.

With such records following a critical investigation, a summary is only a matter of careful counting and figuring. The following is the summary of the Boston district investigated: —

This sample sheet shows what exactness of data can be secured under such a system of truant service as is above detailed.

It still remains to devise a system such as prevails in the cities to give equal efficiency to the compulsory laws throughout the State.

But truancy is not the only evil to be provided for. In communities and families where a low estimate is put upon regularity of school attendance, what would otherwise lead to truancy occasions there parental neglect. If parents are sufficiently indulgent, the child never becomes a wilful truant. The guilt is simply shifted from the child to the parents. In either case the child and the community pay the penalty. If we take truancy and parental neglect together, it appears from this investigation that the cities have fewer absences from these two causes than the towns have. And if the loss of time from parental neglect is alone considered the advantage of the cities is quite manifest.

The following table shows the numbers and ratios of children in the towns and cities investigated who failed on account of parental neglect to attend school 140 days during the year, as required by law, with the classification of towns made in the early part of this report:—

CITIES AND TOWNS INVESTIGATED.		School Population, Eight to Fourteen Years.	FAILURE OF CHILDREN TO ATTEND SCHOOL 140 DAYS BECAUSE OF PARENTAL NEGLECT.	
CLASSES.	Number.		Number of Children.	Per Cent. of Children.
Cities,	5	12,789	316	2.4
Manufacturing and rural towns,	20	7,340	474	6.4
Manufacturing towns,	6	3,861	323	8.5
Residential and rural towns,	19	3,023	344	11.3

The ratio of failure of children to receive the schooling required by law, by reason of parental neglect, is thus seen to be more than four times as great in the residential and rural towns as in the cities.

School Attendance Officer.—It is a well-understood fact that in a large population, as in a city, officers, appointees of the

government, treat cases which we are considering with more independence than is likely to be exercised in smaller places, where an officer is liable to be influenced by his neighbors. Without taking from the law any of the provisions now belonging to towns and school committees concerning local truant officers, it would seem to be wise to make provision in it for one or more State school attendance officers. They should supplement the local truant officers, and be possessed of all the powers throughout the State conferred by law upon these officers, and be responsible to the State Board of Education.

In the investigation carried on in 50 towns and cities, and partially extended to many more, the remedy suggested by superintendents and committees for the neglect to enforce the laws is the appointment of a State officer, with power to make presentments of cases charging parental neglect, truancy and disobedience to the reasonable rules of the schools. Connecticut, employing such an officer, has had marked success in enforcing the compulsory laws of that State.

Results to be expected from School Attendance Officer. — With one or more officers, carefully selected, the ratio of the truants committed to the school population throughout the State would presumably somewhat exceed that in the 9 cities previously cited. Unquestionably, however, with the more efficient service that would follow the appointment of such officers the actual number of cases of truancy would decrease.

Upon the enforcement of the compulsory law on a few parents in different parts of the State, other parents would take warning, and a perceptible decrease would take place in the number of absences on account of parental indifference and neglect, and there would be a consequent improvement in the regularity of attendance.

The existence of such an officer would not lessen the responsibility of the local officers.

The illustrations of the efficiency of the truant service in some of the cities show that he would not be needed so much in the cities as in the smaller places. Where officers are employed for their full time, and liberally paid, the public sentiment demands efficient service, and it will tolerate no other. It is in towns where there is not a proper public sentiment demanding the effective enforcement of the laws that such

an officer would do his best work. He would create a public sentiment in favor of the law by the good effects which would soon be evident.

With a good knowledge of the law and his duty under it, and with courage and discretion in its enforcement, he would be a means of instruction and inspiration to committees, superintendents and local officers.

Illustration. — There was brought to my notice, while making this investigation, a case which makes quite apparent the need of a State officer. It was that of a family all born in Massachusetts, consisting of a man and his wife, a daughter eighteen years old, and two sons, one thirteen and the other eight years old. Though these children lived within one hundred yards of a schoolhouse, neither of them had been in school for three years.

With another agent of the Board, I accompanied the chairman of the school committee of the town to the residence of this family. When informed that we came to see why the children did not attend school, the mother became excited by our presence, declared that it was none of our business, and ordered us to leave the house. She wouldn't have let us in, she said, if she had known what we wanted. The father, in a less impassioned mood, said the children had no clothing to wear to school, — he should send them whenever that was provided for them. The mother declared that they never should go; she made objection to the school, charging immoral practices of the school children as her reason for not sending them. Meanwhile, her language was voluble with oaths and vulgarity. We asked to see the children, whom on our entrance she had hustled before her into an adjoining room. This she refused, and, retreating to the room where the children were, she continued to vociferate her imprecations like an insane person. It is quite possible she was insane.

We assured the father that we would not trouble the children; that we wanted to see them, and to know whether they had clothes suitable to wear to school. The father could not then induce the mother to let us see the boys. Finally, the offer by the committee man of a small sum of money to him and to each of the boys overcame her opposition, and they came out.

Here were three children, apparently of fair if not of average capacity, perhaps slightly dwarfed in body, shy and reserved, living with parents of vulgar self-assertion and conceit bred out of their shiftlessness, poverty and low ambition. The children themselves were forming idle and dissolute habits, and growing up in ignorance under the corrupting influence of their natural protectors, seemingly having no proper sense of moral distinctions, and disregarding the common decencies of life. And this is possibly not the worst feature in the case. Who can tell what streams of vice and crime may flow from a pool of animalism so corrupt and vile?

This, though an extreme, is not an exceptional, case of parental neglect. It is far from being an exceptional case of the want of efficiency in local officers to manage cases of special difficulty. It is one of many well known in the towns of the Commonwealth. Would such a case of prolonged absence from school, and of such parental neglect, be possible were a proper State officer set apart to this service, kept in the field and empowered to act? Such external aid as might be rendered in instances like the above would be a relief to the officials of the town, and would prove a blessing to the children and the community.

TRUANT SCHOOLS.

Since 1850 towns and cities have been required to make all needful provisions for the control of truant children. By an act of 1873 each town and city was required to provide a suitable place for the confinement, discipline and instruction of such children. For several years children were committed to the State Primary School at Monson.

History of County Truant Schools. — In 1873 provision was made for the establishment of truant schools in counties, on petition of three or more towns in a county, and by later legislation, in 1881, two or more counties were permitted to unite for the establishment of a union truant school.

It was made necessary in 1873 for towns to adopt by-laws concerning truants as one of the conditions of their receiving a portion of the income of the school fund. These by-laws were to be approved "by a judge of the probate court of the county, as well as in the manner provided for the approval of

other by-laws." In them the place for the instruction of the truant children must be named. This led to the naming of places wholly unfit for the purpose. To maintain a separate institution by every town was not consistent with the needs in a very large majority of them. The State Primary School had no longer room for children of this class. The Rev. Joseph Osgood of Cohasset, a member of the Legislature, proposed that the duty of providing truant schools be imposed upon the counties, and that towns accepting these schools should be deemed to have made suitable provision for their truant children. Hence the establishment of county truant schools. To these nearly all our truant children from the cities and towns outside of Boston are now committed. Boston has provided herself with a Parental School, to which her truants have been committed since September, 1895.

Hampden County was the first to establish a county truant school. This was in 1880. Petitions for the establishment of a county truant school for Essex County were presented to the county commissioners in 1886. For several years the commissioners failed to act. An effort was made each year by opponents of the measure to get the Legislature to exempt Essex County from establishing a school. In that county there were two excellent schools having charge of truants with other juvenile offenders, and towards their establishment the cities where they were respectively located had contributed. The Plummer Farm School at Salem was maintained by the bequest of Miss Caroline Plummer, for the benefit of Salem; and the Lawrence Industrial School, in charge of a board of trustees, was supported by the city of Lawrence. These cities particularly desired to be exempt from being taxed to maintain a truant school for the county. The petitioners for a truant school finally prevailed, and in July, 1891, the county commissioners purchased the school at Lawrence, since which time it has been the truant school for that county.

A union truant school for the counties of Bristol, Plymouth and Norfolk was established at Walpole in 1889. In 1888 the county of Berkshire, on petition of 7 towns, established a county truant school at Becket. Franklin and Hampshire counties united in assigning the home of Mr. T. L. Barrus of Goshen as the truant school for the two counties.

Middlesex County, following the example of Essex, resisted for a number of years the petitions from sundry towns of that county for a truant school, but finally, in 1893, the commissioners were authorized by the Legislature to borrow \$50,000 for the purpose of establishing a school for the county. Accordingly, in 1894 the county was provided with a well-equipped truant school, designed to accommodate 60 boys. Barnstable County was authorized, under an act of the Legislature of 1881, to unite with Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth counties to establish a union truant school. She was not disposed to unite with these counties, and, by an act of 1894, she was granted authority to assign any truant school within the State with which she could make arrangements as the place to which her truants should be committed. She now commits to the Essex County truant school at Lawrence.

This is in brief the history of the establishment of the county truant schools of the State. The Plummer Farm School at Salem, and the truant school for the city of Boston, situated at West Roxbury and designated the Parental School, are not county schools, though they are assigned as the truant schools of their respective cities. The Parental School received its first inmate Sept. 11, 1895.

General Character of the Truant Schools. — In buildings and appurtenances these schools range from the place designated in Goshen to the more extended and completely appointed homes and schools at North Chelmsford and at Oakdale.

With the exception of high, tight board enclosures, attached to three of the truant schools, and grated windows in a fourth, all might be taken to be private boarding schools, and the internal arrangements would suggest little else.

As an initiatory step, the schools do credit to those concerned in their establishment, and especially to Hon. John W. Dickinson, through whose persistency, while secretary of the Board of Education, they were secured in several of the counties. When compared with places previously assigned by towns to meet the requirements of the law, the present truant schools show that the public is making progress in suitably providing for the unfortunate class of truant children.

Changes needed in Truant Schools. — Still, it seems proper to suggest some desirable changes in these schools, with refer-

ence to improvements in the training of the children. These concern the character and aims of the schools and their jurisdiction.

Province of Truant Schools.—The internal organization of the truant schools, comprising the home, the school, the work and the pastime, vary with the ideals existing in the minds of the respective superintendents as to what the possibilities of the schools are and what the aims should be. These depend much upon the class of children sent to them. If children are sent there who have committed crimes which make them dangerous to society, and for which they must be deprived of their liberty and otherwise punished, the measures adopted in their management will be reformatory. If those who go there are sent because they are wayward and beyond the control of their parents, and need to form those habits of self-control and respect for others, for their persons and property, which are ordinarily formed in good homes, then the measures adopted will partake largely of the nature of discipline and instruction.

Analogy to Private Boarding School.—If the end of the school is to direct the activities of children into proper channels, and there is no further restraint than is a necessary means to this end, then the school will be like a private boarding school, to which parents entrust their children for the discipline and instruction which the children refuse to receive in the common school, which they see the children need, and which the parents feel they have not the power unaided to give them. This indicates the province of the truant school.

The analogy to the private school fails, in that it is the parent in the one case who discovers the need of his child and his own inability to supply it; in the other the public discovers the need of the child, and, seeing in that need danger to the community, takes the child into its own custody and undertakes to supply the need.

This does not assert that there are not parents who of their own motion seek the truant school for the training of their children,* nor does it imply that no child ought to be sent to a truant school who has been guilty of petty offences other than truancy. It intimates that a wise discrimination should be

* Eleven children in one of the schools previously named are simply boarding pupils, placed there by parents or their guardians.

exercised concerning the kind and degree of the criminality of those that shall be sent.

A Truant School Part of the School System. — The truant school is a school for a peculiar class of children, — that unfortunate class that come largely from poor, bad homes. The truant is often more “sinned against than sinning;” the want of a good home is the occasion for his offending; the truant school proposes to do for him what his home has failed to do. In his home he has not acquired habits of regularity even in meeting his physical wants, much less has he acquired a taste for intellectual pursuits. His aim morally is no higher than some seeming present good, something which ministers to a low and selfish desire. He chafes under restraint; he finds the discipline and duties of the school irksome, and, rather than conform to its rules and make the effort to accomplish its tasks, he keeps away, contrary to the wish of his parents, and thus becomes a truant.

The habits formed in good homes and schools are fundamental to good citizenship. If the child cannot be allured by the attractions of the school nor restrained by authority in the home, he must fail to be directed in the formation of these habits. Hence the provision for placing him in the truant school. Here, under the restraining influence of the law, directed by the superintendent and matron, — usually the superintendent's wife, — he will be led into habits of self-control, through the performance of the regular duties required in a well-ordered home and in a good school; in the various industries and occupations incident to the farm, the workshop, the playground and the reading and social hour. Here, by degrees, the child will come to esteem properly himself and to have a feeling of respect for others.

The truant school is thus seen to be an essential member of our public school system. It does all that the common school does for children subject to parental control, and adds a well-ordered family.

The garden, the farm and the workshop supplement the purely intellectual pursuits of the school, by adding the important training which comes from manual labor.

There is another class of children for whom, under the law, the truant school has to make provision. These are described

in the statute as "such children as persistently violate the reasonable rules and regulations of the public schools." These children do not run away from school, but they make trouble for the teacher, as they do for their parents at home. They need, besides a good school, the restraining influence of the family. The common school, too, where they attend needs to be rid of the annoying and demoralizing effects of such children. The use of the rod has ceased to be popular, even if it were proper or effective in such cases. A well-ordered truant school furnishes favorable conditions for the control of these mischievous and disobedient children.

The Name of Schools should be changed.—From the fact that all the children sent to these schools are not truants, and the further fact that the term truant has attached to it an odium which should be guarded against upon a child's leaving these schools, and from the still further fact that the term truant does injustice to many of those who should enter, the name truant ought to be replaced by one which will more nearly indicate their distinctive character as a part of the public school system. Parental school would be an appropriate name. This has already been applied to the school at West Roxbury. There would be no jealousy with the metropolis, if the appellation should be extended to all the schools of the class throughout the State. A personal name would be still more desirable.

Discrimination in Classes of Children sent to Truant Schools.—The tendency in all departments of instruction and in all curative institutions is to differentiate and classify. In medical practice special classes of patients are treated in special institutions. The principle is late in getting recognized in treating children who on account of their birth or environment have a tendency to truancy. Some of the children at present sent to our truant schools should be sent to other institutions. Such are the feeble-minded, and those already inured to crime; of the former class there are a few, and of the latter many, in the truant schools.

It is quite common to find officers entering complaints for truancy in cases of those guilty of graver offences. My attention was recently called to a case which occurred in one of our smaller cities where a boy was guilty of stealing a horse, with a lot of mechanic's tools. The police officer in charge wanted

the school authorities to arrest the boy as a truant. This they wisely refused to do, and the offender was duly sentenced to his proper place.

The following table shows the number of children, so far as could be ascertained from the children themselves, that had been in court previous to being committed as truants, with the crime charged and the judgment of the court in the several cases : —

	NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE TRUANT SCHOOLS.					PREVIOUSLY IN COURT ON COMPLAINT FOR —						JUDG- MENT.		NATIONALITY OF — PARENTS.					NUMBER THAT HAVE LOST PARENTS.						
	AV'GE AGE.		TERM OF SENTENCE, IN MONTHS.			During the Year.	Minority.	Breaking and En- tering.	Breaking Win- dows.	Larceny.	Trespassing.	Other Complaints.	Total previously in Court.	Fined.	Probation.	CHILDREN.		FATHER.		MOTHER.		Father.	Mother.	Both.	One or Both.
	Years.	Months.	Six or Less.	Six to Twelve.	Twelve to Twenty-four.											Native of Massa- chusetts.	Other States or Foreign.	U. S. A.	Foreign.	U. S. A.	Foreign.				
May 1, 1895.																									
Berkshire County, .	3	13	1	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	66	-	-	-	3	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Boston, . . .	-	-	-	-	117 ¹	-	-	28	23	29	-	34	34	24	33	412	5105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Essex County, .	31	-	-	29	40	-	-	12	4	10	6	15	26	6	14	27	12	4	36	7	33	8	9	5	-
Hampden County, .	17	11	6	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hampshire and Franklin Counties.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middlesex County, .	63	11	7	81	103	-	-	6	2	7	-	3	18	5	13	51	30	13	68	18	63	12	18	7	37
Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth Counties.	37	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41	-	-	-	27	14	8	22	8	27	12	8	3	23
Salem (Plummer Farm).	24	14	8	-	29	-	11	3	-	3	-	12	23	-	-	420	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Worcester, . . .	44	12	5	42	74	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	14	12	62	18	56	20	14	6	40
¹ Three months.																									
															</										

1 Three months.

2 Truants.

3 Boarders.

4 American.

5 Foreign.

6 One six times in court.

7 One for sixteen months.

8 Arrested for stealing a horse.

9 Not truants.

From the above record it is evident that the present conception of the province of the truant school by police officers and courts is quite different from that contemplated in the law. There must be much greater discrimination in the class of children sent to the schools before they will reach the ideal condition we are contemplating.

The objection to gathering large numbers of criminals in a single institution is based upon the fear that by association some will "go from bad to worse." The objection applies equally to juvenile offenders. A striking illustration of the effect, as conceived by a prison convict, of bringing together truants and other offenders, is seen in an incident related by the Rev. John Barnes, chaplain of the State Prison. One of the inmates of the prison, learning that his boy was to be sent for truancy to a certain institution, where he would be so associated, begged the chaplain to avert such a calamity, saying, "It is the road I have come, and is sure to bring him here."

Since the establishment of the excellent truant school for Middlesex County at North Chelmsford, Lowell wisely discriminates between her truant children and those of a worse criminal type, and, while sending the former to the truant school, commits the latter to her House of Employment and Reformation for Juvenile Offenders.

Somewhere, either in the court or in the truant school, the truants and children known to be guilty of more serious offences should be separated and trained in classes; at least, they should be guarded from contaminating one class the other. The ideal plan should be to have a small school for each class. If the present practice continues of committing to these schools, under the charge of truancy, children known to have committed other graver offences, and if the schools are to be large, as they will be with a faithful enforcement of the law, then the schools should be provided with separate cottages, each large enough to accommodate a family, say, of twenty-five. The true policy is to separate rather than congregate different classes of juvenile offenders. The large school with small families has the advantage of economy in all that pertains to supervision and instruction, and, with superior persons to supervise, can be made to meet all the demands of segregation.

An Indeterminate Sentence. — By the table which precedes it will be seen that the time for which children are committed to truant schools is insufficient to produce any radical change in their habits or in their ways of thinking. Besides, it is not unusual for the court to release a child before he has served out his time.

An indeterminate sentence within a limited period of time or up to a maximum age would seem to be a wise provision, leaving the child's conduct to determine the time of his continuance. As he would naturally desire to be early released, he would at once be put upon his good behavior, and find himself continually impelled, by this hope of reward, to be circumspect and watchful of his own conduct. This would tend to increase his power of self-control, and cause him sooner to experience the joy which comes from right acting. Animated by the prospect of an early release, dependent upon merit, he would reach the condition in his moral nature where he would be a safe companion and a useful citizen earlier than under the fixed sentence.

The term of sentence should at any rate be long enough to induce in the child those fixed habits of self-control and self-respect which are essential to a spirit of accommodation among men and to success in the pursuits of life. And no child should be released till these habits are formed.

Since the superintendent and the teacher, the matron and the overseers of the workshop and the farm are the persons most intimately related to the child, these persons should be consulted before a release is granted. That their judgment may be intelligently and wisely formed, careful records of each child's conduct should be made from day to day, and preserved in substantial form.

State Control of Schools. — When it was felt that it was impracticable for each town to establish a proper school for its truants, and that for the sake of economy and efficiency a larger unit than the town must be found for their maintenance, it was natural that the county should be taken, that being the next larger unit. Nor was this inconsistent with the notion which prevailed concerning truancy; the truant was an outlaw who needed to be shut up and away from kindred and friends, who was to be reformed, and, for this, punishment was the only resort. An entirely different view of the truant does, or should,

prevail; it is to form or to reform, not to punish him, that the school is established. The truant school is in the main educative, and only disciplinary in the sense of training or of culture.

But it is the province of the county to deal with material interests, with locating roadways and bridges, with caring for the county records, and so on. The county commissioners are selected with reference to their knowledge of such affairs. They may be themselves highly educated, may know something of the principles of education, but they are not selected on account of this, or as managers of educational institutions. If the truant school is viewed as an educational institution, — and as such it should be viewed, — the political unit to which its establishment, maintenance and supervision should be assigned is the State.

The State has for one of its special duties the direction and supervision of special educational institutions, as the schools for the deaf, the blind and the feeble-minded. And to the care of some bureau of the State, as the Board of Education, should be committed all the interest involved in the control and instruction of truant children.

The county commissioners by instinct felt the incongruity of committing truants to their care; hence their resistance in Essex and Middlesex counties to the petitions for the establishment of truant schools in those counties. They were right; the State should have provided for and maintained them from the first. To the State they might now be transferred, with benefit to all concerned. Certainly this would be a measure tending to make them more strictly educational.

It would have been only a little less reasonable to require each county to maintain a normal school, with the county commissioners for trustees, or to require in each county a school for the blind; for the deaf or for the feeble-minded. These are all educational institutions to which the State contributes for the support in whole or in part, and over which she exercises supervision.

Reasons for State Control. — There are many reasons why the State should have the charge of truant schools. The first is that of consistency. She requires that all children of certain ages shall be educated. Because the blind, the deaf, the feeble-minded *can not* avail themselves of the provisions in the common

schools for educating children in normal conditions, the State provides for their instruction in special schools. Because truant children *will not* avail themselves of the provisions made for educating children in normal conditions, should not the State make special provisions for them in truant schools? Does not this conclusion follow? Does the difference between *can not* and *will not* limit the claims of the town?

The State enacted a stringent compulsory law, with penalties requiring parents to cause their children to attend school; truant children were not restrained by this law. The State required towns to establish truant schools, and threatened them with large forfeiture for non-compliance; this law proved impracticable and inoperative to prevent truancy. Next the counties were forced into establishing truant schools; against their will, sometimes hotly resisting, they established the schools; still the truants are abroad.

The State makes the poorest town, equally with the wealthiest, pay the expense of board and tuition of truants in the truant schools, thus holding the town responsible for special as well as for general educational work. But when, more than fifty years ago, the State saw the necessity of providing better teachers for the public schools, she established the normal schools; these she has supported for this whole period of time free to the students from all the towns.

The responsibility of providing for truant children the State has not yet assumed; does not consistency require that she should do this?

The Truant a Dangerous Person. — The truant is not only an unfortunate child, but, if unrestrained, he is likely to become a dangerous person in the community. Ignorance, coupled with disobedience, leads to other vices, which themselves lead to crimes that endanger the peace of society. The truant school inculcates habits which prevent this tendency. When the truant child, pursuing his natural course, goes from vagrancy and vice to crime, the State meets the expense of his trial, provides for him a prison and supports him in it; this after the property or the lives of her citizens have been sacrificed. Would it not be wiser to bear the expense of preventing the child from committing crime rather than bear that of punishing him as a criminal? Would it not be a beneficence which the

State from self-interest may claim the privilege of bestowing? It is certainly a beneficence for which in after years the beneficiary will hold the State in grateful remembrance.

Removal of Charge of \$2 a Week upon Towns.—With the charge of \$2 a week now put upon a town towards maintaining a truant in the truant school, removed, as it probably would be under State support, there would be less reason left in the towns for not enforcing the law. Whatever political unit establishes and maintains the truant school, the tax for the support of the truant child, as a matter of policy, should no longer be imposed upon the towns. The schools are solely in charge of the commissioners of the county; the means for their support come from taxes levied upon the people of the county, and from the money paid by towns sending to them. The work of the inmates, especially that done in the garden and upon the farm, contributes towards paying the balance of expenses.

The following table gives approximately the value of the property investment in the several truant schools, with the current net expenditure above the income, and the cost per pupil by the week:—

SCHOOLS FOR —	BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.					Estimated Value of Plant.	Net Current Ex- pende for the Year.	Estimated Average Cost a Week per Child, aside from Plant.
	Dormitories.	Workshops.	Barns.	Other Build- ings.	Acres of Land.			
Boston,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$3 50, full.
Berkshire County, . .	1	-	1	2	40	\$2,000 00	\$1,621 09	125 00
Essex County, . . .	1	-	-	-	32	30,000 00	4,631 14	2 69, net.
Hampden County, . .	1	-	-	-	10	16,000 00	4,297 00	No data.
Hampshire and Frank- lin counties.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middlesex County, . .	2	1	1	1	18	60,000 00	2130 00	2 50, full.
Norfolk, Bristol and Plymouth counties.	1	1	1	1	35	30,000 00	8,007 84	4 06, full.
Salem Plummer Farm, .	1	-	-	-	-	-	5,339 02	2 27, full.
Worcester County, . .	1	³ -	1	-	36	75,000 00	3,337 43	1 60, net.

¹ With one child.

² Per capita.

³ In house.

Berkshire, as will be seen by the above table, is subjected to a tax of \$1,500 per year on account of the running of the school. This is the net cost without an inmate. She has had

but 30 inmates since the school was established, in January, 1888. The school has existed for eight years; at the rate of \$1,500 a year, her expenditures have been \$12,000. Berkshire has a valuation of \$46,507,821. Barnstable in the same period, with a valuation of \$20,947,788, has expended not one dollar. These are the extremes; between them lie the other counties of the State. The interest involved affects every part of the State. Should not the tax for the schools bear equally upon the taxable property of the State? Upon what economic principle can a tax of \$400 to \$500 per year for the support of a child in the Berkshire school be justified, when in the Middlesex school the same result can be secured for \$130?

Both economy and utility would be conserved by having the location of the truant schools under State control. A single school for the four western counties would meet all the wants of that section of the State.

Girls' School needed.—There is a manifest impropriety in committing girls to the same school with boys. On leaving the school, moreover, any stigma which may attach to the girls on account of being sent to the school will leave an impression upon the minds of the boys with whom the girls are associated while there, and this possibly to their hurt.

The number of girls that are truants as compared with that of boys is small. There are some, and they should be provided for in separate schools. This provision would be better and more economically made by the State than by the counties. One or two girls' schools could be so located as to meet the wants of the whole State.

Supervision of Truant Schools.—Through the State Board of Education or a special bureau made up of experts in child study, there could be provided for the schools supervision and direction which they now lack and of which they are in special need, and which, I am sure, would be welcomed by their superintendents.

Whatever body is in control, these schools should be objects of interest to public-spirited citizens; they should be visited at opportune times by such persons living in their vicinity, and the inmates should be encouraged to look forward to, and helped to find, useful occupations in life.

Increase in Numbers with Better Knowledge.—Taken together, the schools have accommodations for more children than they now contain. With a right conception of the province of the schools, however, with provisions in accordance with their proper aims, with a more careful scrutiny into the attendance and truancy in the towns hitherto wholly unrepresented in them, which would result from the appointment of a State school attendance officer, and with the removal of the charge now put upon towns sending truants to the schools, the numbers that would be committed to them would exceed their present limits.

Middlesex County formerly had provisions in Lowell, Cambridge and Lawrence for 60 to 70 truants. In former estimates I have placed the number Middlesex would have, if a suitable school or schools were provided, at about 120. With the present satisfactory arrangements making and in contemplation, and with her added accommodations, she will reach my calculations. She built her school to accommodate 60 boys; at the time of writing she has 81, with a considerable waiting list; while Lowell at the same time is sending part of hers to her House of Employment and Reformation.

With the establishment of her Parental School, Boston was provided with a suitable place for truants to the number of 50. On the 11th of September, 1895, the school received its first inmate; up to the 11th of December, 117 had been sent there from her several courts. These facts indicate what had been assumed, — that the magistrates will freely commit truants to appropriate schools.

Another thing which is shown by the recent large number of commitments to the Boston Parental School is that the neglect to enforce the law tends to increase the number of cases of truancy. Having abolished her truant school at Deer Island a year ago, the city did not commit truants for the year. This fact undoubtedly had the effect to increase the number of habitual truants among children who are inclined to truancy habits.

A Single Court at Boston to have Charge of Juvenile Offenders.—But there is another fact which deserves attention. Boston has a half dozen courts that may commit for truancy. Apparently all these have been making commitments without full concert of action. What Boston should have, coupled with

her efficient truant system, is a single court with jurisdiction in all cases of truants and juvenile delinquents, and of parents offending against the law for compulsory attendance.

RECAPITULATION.

In summarizing the report upon the investigation, attention is invited to the following statements and suggestions for consideration : —

I.

There is a considerable number of children in the Commonwealth — above 5 per cent., by estimate — that fail, from parental neglect and truancy, to obtain the amount of schooling required by law.

II.

The legal means for enforcing the laws in regard to compulsory attendance and truancy are inadequate or inoperative in small towns, largely because they depend for their enforcement upon local officers.

III.

Further provision should be made for : —

1. A more careful enumeration, under the direction of the school committee, of children of all ages between five and fifteen years, inclusive; and coincident in time with this enumeration, for purposes of comparison, lists should be made of the names of all children in the town or city belonging either to public or private schools.

2. Registers of a prescribed form to be furnished to all private as well as to public schools. These registers to be kept at the schools, and abstracts thereof to be furnished to the Board of Education upon the request of the secretary, as a condition for the attendance of children upon such schools being recognized as compliance with the provisions of the State requiring parents and other persons having control of children to cause them to attend school.

3. The use of discharge and transfer cards, to be given to children, with a duplicate to the truant officer, in every instance of a child's discharge from one school to go to another in the

same town, or to another town, the provision to extend to children attending private as well as public schools.

4. A careful scrutiny into the age of children applying for age and schooling certificates, with reference to obtaining employment, and full compliance with the requirements of the law regarding such certificates.

5. Securing from appropriate sources the necessary clothing to attend school for all children in need of such provision.

6. Provision for including the conveyance of children to public schools at public expense, in appropriations made for the "support of schools."

7. A change in form of fines to be imposed upon parents who from neglect fail to cause their children to attend school for the time required by law, so as to give the parent an added motive for causing his child to attend school.

8. An extension of the time schools must be kept from 24 to 32 weeks, and of the time of compulsory attendance to coincide with the time schools are required to be kept.

9. Amendment to the compulsory law, by striking out the provision in section 1, chapter 498, Acts of 1894, for an "allowance of two weeks' time for absences not excused by the superintendent of schools or the school committee."

10. Payment of tuition by the State for State wards, in towns giving schooling to non-resident pupils, such towns having a valuation less than \$3,000,000.

11. Amendment of employment laws, to prevent the employment for wages of any child under thirteen years of age at any kind of work during school hours (chapter 508, Acts of 1894).

12. Amendment to the laws so as not to require towns to make by-laws concerning truants and the place of commitment.

13. Presentments by truant officers of parents for non-compliance with the compulsory law under a general rule or vote of the School Board of the town.

14. One or more State school attendance officers, to be employed as agents of the Board of Education in securing attendance of children upon the schools, and having all the powers throughout the State, to be exercised in emergencies now conferred or hereafter to be conferred by law upon local truant officers.

15. A change of the name truant school to the name parental school, for all truant schools.

16. Separating truants from children known to be guilty of graver offences, and generally for the separation of children in truant schools into small families.

17. Indeterminate sentences.

18. Assigning to the Board of Education, or to a special bureau, the conduct and supervision of truant schools, with State support.

19. The removal of the direct tax of \$2 per week upon towns for the support of children while attending a truant school.

20. A truant school or schools for girls separate from the schools for boys.

21. Some minor changes in wording are needed to make more intelligible to school officers the meaning of the laws; for example, the last paragraph of section 17, chapter 508, Acts of 1894, needs recasting, unless it is intended to accept for illiterate minors 20 weeks' attendance upon an evening school in place of 30 weeks in day schools.

IV.

The report now presented covers, so far as was practicable up to date, the subjects which the Board was directed to investigate, namely: "School attendance and truancy in the Commonwealth, with special reference to the question whether any, and, if so, what, improvements can be made in the provisions and arrangements concerning truants and absentees from school." It represents the existing conditions of attendance and truancy, and proposes certain necessary changes in the methods and means of dealing with these subjects. How these changes are to be effected remains for further consideration. In this further consideration are involved: —

1. The definite working out of the means already suggested for preventing non-attendance.

2. Modifications in the present system of truant schools, with their partial or entire transfer to the State for support and direction.

2. Provision for the employment by the State Board of Education of one or more State school attendance officers, to

be charged with the duty, in conjunction with local officers, of securing full attendance of children during the compulsory period.

4. A reconstruction of the laws relating to school attendance and truant schools.

For the adequate study and treatment, therefore, of the subjects to which our investigation has brought us, especially of the important problems which relate to the truant schools and the necessary means for enforcing the laws, further time is required.

Boston, March 1, 1896.

COMPULSORY AND EMPLOYMENT LAWS.

[CHAPTER 498, ACTS OF 1894.]

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN IN
THE SCHOOLS.

Persons having
control of cer-
tain children to
cause their at-
tendance at
school, etc.

SECTION 1. Every person having under his control a child between the ages of eight and fourteen years, and in every city and town where opportunity is furnished, in connection with the regular work of the public schools, for gratuitous instruction in the use of tools or in manual training, or for industrial education in any form, a child between the ages of eight and fifteen years, shall annually cause such child to attend some public day school in the city or town in which he resides, and such attendance shall continue for at least thirty weeks of the school year, if the schools are kept open for that length of time, with an allowance of two weeks' time for absences not excused by the superintendent of schools or the school committee. Such period of attendance shall begin within the first month of the fall term of school, and for each five days' absence of any such child thereafter, in excess of the above allowance, before the completion of the required annual attendance of thirty weeks, the person having such child under his control shall, upon the complaint of the school committee or any truant officer, forfeit to the use of the public schools of such city or town a sum not exceeding twenty dollars, but if such child has attended for a like period of time a private day school approved by the school committee of such city or town, or if such child has been otherwise instructed for a like period of time in the branches of learning required by law to be taught in the public schools, or has already acquired the branches of learning required by law to be taught in the public schools, or if his physical or mental condition is such as to render such attendance inexpedient or impracticable, such penalties shall not be incurred.

Penalty.

SECT. 2. For the purposes of the preceding section school committees shall approve a private school only when the teaching in all the studies required by law is in the English language, and when they are satisfied that such teaching equals in thoroughness and efficiency the teaching in the public schools in the same locality, and that equal progress is made by the pupils therein, in the studies required by law, with that made during the same time in the public schools; but they shall not refuse to approve a private school on account of the religious teaching therein.

School committees to approve certain private schools.

SECT. 3. The truant officers and the school committee of the several cities and towns shall vigilantly inquire into all cases of neglect of the duty prescribed in section one, and ascertain the reasons, if any, therefor; and such truant officers or any of them, shall, when so directed by the school committee, prosecute in the name of the city or town any person liable to the penalty provided for in said section. Police, district and municipal courts, trial justices and judges of the probate court, shall have jurisdiction within their respective counties of the offences described in section one.

Truant officers, etc., to inquire into cases of neglect, etc.

Jurisdiction of offences.

SECT. 4. All children within the Commonwealth may attend the public schools in the place in which they have their legal residence, subject to the regulations prescribed by law.

Children may attend where they reside.

SECT. 5. The school committee shall determine the number and qualifications of the scholars to be admitted to the high school.

Admission to high school.

SECT. 6. Children living remote from any public school in the town in which they reside may be allowed to attend the public schools in any adjoining town under such regulations and on such terms as the school committee of the said towns agree upon and prescribe; and the school committee of the town in which such children reside shall pay the sum agreed upon out of the appropriations of money raised in said towns for the support of schools.

Children may attend public school in adjoining towns under certain conditions.

SECT. 7. Any minor under guardianship, whose father has died, may attend the public schools of the city or town of which his guardian is an inhabitant.

Minor under guardianship.

SECT. 8. Children may, with the consent of the school committee first obtained, attend schools in cities and

Attendance at school in cities and towns other

than where
parents or guar-
dians reside.

towns other than those in which their parents or guardians reside; but when a child resides in a city or town different from that of the residence of the parent or guardian, for the sole purpose of attending school there, the parent or guardian of such child shall be liable to pay such city or town for tuition, a sum equal to the average expense per scholar for the period during which the child so attends.

Children to be
vaccinated.

SECT. 9. The school committee shall not allow a child who has not been duly vaccinated to be admitted to or connected with the public schools.

Contagious
disease in house-
hold to which
pupil belongs.

SECT. 10. The school committees shall not allow any pupil to attend the public schools while any member of the household to which such pupil belongs is sick of small-pox, diphtheria or scarlet fever, or during a period of two weeks after the death, recovery or removal of such sick person; and any pupil coming from such household shall be required to present, to the teacher of the school the pupil desires to attend, a certificate, from the attending physician or board of health, of the facts necessary to entitle him to admission in accordance with the above regulation.

Color, etc., not
to exclude.

SECT. 11. No person shall be excluded from a public school on account of the race, color, or religious opinion of the applicant or scholar.

Grounds, etc.,
of exclusion to
be stated.

SECT. 12. Every member of the school committee under whose direction a child is excluded from the public school, and every teacher of such school from which a child is excluded, shall, on application by the parent or guardian of such child, state in writing the grounds and reason of the exclusion.

Damages for
unlawful ex-
clusion.

SECT. 13. A child unlawfully excluded from a public school may recover damages therefor in an action of tort, to be brought in the name of such child by his guardian or next friend, against the city or town by which such school is supported.

Interrogatories
to committee,
etc.

SECT. 14. The plaintiff in such action may, by filing interrogatories for discovery, examine any member of the school committee, or any other officer of the defendant city or town, as if he were a party to the suit.

SECT. 15. Whenever a truant school has been established for any county it shall be the place of confinement, discipline and instruction for all truants within the cities or towns of said county, unless said cities or towns have made other provision therefor; and police, district or municipal courts, trial justices and probate courts, shall have jurisdiction within their respective counties of the offences described in sections nineteen and twenty-one of this act; and may commit truants to such truant school or union truant school as may be established for their respective counties under the provisions of this act.

County truant schools, etc.

SECT. 16. If three or more towns in any county so require, the county commissioners shall establish at the expense of the county, at a convenient place therein, other than the jail or house of correction, a truant school for the confinement, discipline and instruction of minor children convicted under the provisions of sections nineteen and twenty-one of this act and all acts in amendment thereof and in addition thereto; and shall make suitable provisions for the government and control, and for the appointment of proper teachers and officers thereof. But the county commissioners of two, three or four contiguous counties may, and if three or more cities or towns in each of such counties require, shall, at the expense of said counties, establish for said counties at a convenient place therein a union truant school, to be organized and controlled by the chairman of the county commissioners of said counties, in the manner provided for the government and control of county truant schools by county commissioners; and any county so uniting with another county or counties in the support of a union truant school shall not be required to support a truant school of its own.

Truant schools for three or more towns.

Union truant school may be established in certain cases.

SECT. 17. A town may assign any such truant school, or, with the assent of the state board of lunacy and charity, the state primary school, as the place of confinement, discipline and instruction of children so convicted; and shall pay for their support such sum, not exceeding two dollars a week for each child, as the county commissioners or the trustees of the state primary and reform schools respectively shall determine.

Assignment of places of confinement, discipline, etc., of truants.

Children committed may be discharged.

SECT. 18. Children so committed may, upon satisfactory proof of amendment or other sufficient cause, be discharged from the state primary school by said state board, and from other places of confinement by the judge or justice who committed them.

Towns to make provisions and arrangements concerning habitual truants, etc., children between seven and fifteen years of age, and incorrigible children.

SECT. 19. Each town shall make all needful provisions and arrangements concerning habitual truants, and children between seven and fifteen years of age who may be found wandering about in the streets or public places therein, having no lawful occupation or business, not attending school and growing up in ignorance, and such children as persistently violate the reasonable rules and regulations of the public schools; and shall make such by-laws as shall be most conducive to the welfare of such children, and to the good order of such town; and shall provide suitable places for the confinement, discipline and instruction of such children.

School committee to appoint persons to make complaint, etc.

SECT. 20. The school committee of each town shall appoint and fix the compensation of two or more suitable persons, to be designated truant officers, who shall, under the direction of said committee, inquire into all cases arising under such by-laws, and shall alone be authorized, in case of violation thereof, to make complaint and carry into execution the judgment thereon; and who may serve all legal processes issued by the courts in pursuance of such by-laws, or of sections fifteen to twenty-four inclusive of this act, but who shall not be entitled to receive any fees for such service.

Commitment of habitual truants, etc.

SECT. 21. Any minor convicted under a by-law made under section nineteen of this act of being an habitual truant, or of wandering about in the streets and public places of a city or town, having no lawful employment or business, not attending school and growing up in ignorance, or of persistently violating the rules and regulations of the public schools, shall be committed to any institution of instruction or suitable situation provided for the purpose, under the authority of said section or by-law, for a term not exceeding two years.

Penalty for inducing children to truancy, etc.

SECT. 22. Whoever, after notice from a truant officer to refrain from so doing, offers a reward for services to any child, in consequence of which reward such child is

induced unlawfully to absent himself from school, or whoever, after notice as aforesaid, in any manner entices or induces any child to truancy, or whoever knowingly employs or harbors any truant or unlawful absentee from school, shall forfeit not less than twenty nor more than fifty dollars to the use of the public schools of the city or town in which said offence occurs, to be recovered by complaint.

SECT. 23. Truant officers in cities and towns are hereby authorized, under the direction of the school committees of their respective cities and towns, to apprehend and to take to school without warrant all truants found wandering about in the streets or public places.

Truants may be taken to school without warrant.

SECT. 24. The school committee of any city or town in any county or counties where a union or county truant school has been or shall hereafter be established may, with the approval of the court making the original commitment and with the consent of the county commissioners of the county in which such truant school is established, cause all persons confined in the truant or farm school in such city or town, when such farm school is a truant school, to be removed to such union or county truant school to complete the term for which they were originally committed, subject however to the provisions of law as to release before the expiration of such term.

Persons may be removed to union or county truant schools in certain cases.

SECT. 25. The school committees of the several towns shall annually report to the secretary of the board of education whether their respective towns have made the provisions required by law relating to truants and absentees from school.

School committees to report annually to secretary of board of education.

SECT. 26. Each town may, and every town containing five thousand or more inhabitants shall, make all needful provisions and arrangements concerning children under sixteen years of age who by reason of orphanage or of neglect, crime, drunkenness or other vice of parents are suffered to grow up without salutary parental control and education, or in circumstances exposing them to lead idle and dissolute lives; and may also make all such by-laws respecting such children as shall be deemed most conducive to their welfare and to the good order of the town.

Provisions for care, etc., of neglected children.

Appointment of persons to make complaint, etc.

SECT. 27. The selectmen of towns containing five thousand or more inhabitants, and of other towns accepting the provisions of sections twenty-five to twenty-eight, inclusive, of this act, shall appoint suitable persons to make complaints of violations of by-laws adopted under the preceding section; and the person so appointed, and the officers and duly appointed agents of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, shall alone be authorized to make such complaints and to carry into execution the judgments thereon; and the persons so appointed shall alone be authorized to make complaints under the following section.

Certain children may be committed to institutions, etc.

SECT. 28. A judge of the superior court, or of a police, district or municipal court, or a trial justice, upon proof that any child under sixteen years of age, by reason of orphanage or of the neglect, crime, drunkenness or other vice of parents, is growing up without salutary parental control and education, or in circumstances exposing such child to lead an idle and dissolute life, may order such child to such institution of instruction or other place assigned for the purpose as may be provided under section nineteen of this act by the town in which such child resides, to be there kept, educated and cared for for a term not extending beyond the age of twenty-one years for boys, or eighteen years for girls.

Children may be discharged under certain conditions.

SECT. 29. When the parents of a child committed under the preceding section have reformed and are leading orderly and industrious lives, and are in a condition to exercise salutary parental control over such child, and to provide him with proper education and employment, or when, said parents being dead, any person offers to make such suitable provision for the care, nurture and education of such child as will conduce to the public welfare, and will give security for the performance of the same satisfactory to the directors, trustees, overseers, or other board having charge of the institution to which such child is committed, they may discharge him to the parents or to such other person.

Repeal.

SECT. 30. Chapter forty-seven, and sections eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty and twenty-one of chapter

forty-eight of the Public Statutes; chapter two hundred and forty-five of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-three; chapters seventy-one and one hundred and ninety-eight of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-five; chapters two hundred and forty-nine, four hundred and twenty-two and four hundred and sixty-four of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and eighty-nine; chapters three hundred and nine and three hundred and eighty-four of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety; chapters three hundred and sixty-one and four hundred and twenty-six of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-one, and chapter sixty-two of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-two; and chapter one hundred and eighty-eight of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-four, and all acts and parts of acts inconsistent herewith, are hereby repealed. [*Approved June 21, 1894.*]

[CHAPTER 508, ACTS OF 1894.]

AN ACT REGULATING THE EMPLOYMENT OF LABOR.

SECT. 13. No child under thirteen years of age shall be employed at any time in any factory, workshop or mercantile establishment. No such child shall be employed in any in-door work performed for wages or other compensation, to whomsoever payable, during the hours when the public schools of the city or town in which he resides are in session, or shall be employed in any manner during such hours unless during the year next preceding such employment he has attended school for at least thirty weeks as required by law.

Employment of children under thirteen years of age regulated.

SECT. 14. No child under fourteen years of age shall be employed in any manner before the hour of six o'clock in the morning or after the hour of seven o'clock in the evening. No such child shall be employed in any factory, workshop or mercantile establishment, except during the vacation of the public schools in the city or town in which he resides, unless the person or corporation employing him procures and keeps on file a certificate and employment ticket for such child, as prescribed by section seventeen of this act; and no such child shall be employed in

Employment of children under fourteen years of age regulated.

any in-door work performed for wages or other compensation, to whomsoever payable, during the hours when the public schools of such city or town are in session, unless as aforesaid, or shall be employed in any manner during such hours unless during the year next preceding such employment he attended school for at least thirty weeks as required by law: *provided*, the public schools are in session that number of weeks, which time may be divided, so far as the arrangements of school terms will allow, into three terms of ten consecutive weeks each; and such employment shall not continue in any case beyond the time when such certificate expires.

Proviso.

When children under sixteen years of age may be employed.

SECT. 16. No child under sixteen years of age shall be employed in any factory, workshop or mercantile establishment unless the person or corporation employing him procures and keeps on file the certificate required in the case of such child by the following section, and also keeps on file a full and complete list of such children employed therein.

Certificate of a child under fourteen years of age not to be signed until employment ticket is presented.

SECT. 17. The certificate of a child under fourteen years of age shall not be signed until he presents to the person authorized to sign the same an employment ticket as hereinafter prescribed, duly filled out and signed. The certificate and the employment ticket shall be separately printed, and shall be in the following forms respectively, and the blanks therein shall be filled out and signed as indicated by the words in brackets: —

EMPLOYMENT TICKET, LAWS OF 1894.

Employment ticket.

When [name of child], height [feet and inches], complexion [fair or dark], hair [color], presents a certificate duly signed, I intend to employ [him or her].

[Signature of intending employer or agent.]

[Town or city and date.]

AGE AND SCHOOLING CERTIFICATE, LAWS OF 1894.

Age and schooling certificate.

This certifies that I am the [father, mother or guardian] of [name of child], and that [he or she] was born at [name of town or city], in the county of [name of county, if known], and state [or country] of [name], on the [day and year of birth], and is now [number of years and months] old.

[Signature of father, mother or guardian.]

[Town or city and date.]

Then personally appeared before me the above named [name of person signing] and made oath that the foregoing certificate by [him or her] signed is true to the best of [his or her] knowledge and belief. I hereby approve the foregoing certificate of [name of child], height [feet and inches], complexion [fair or dark], hair [color], having no sufficient reason to doubt that [he or she] is of the age therein certified.

[Signature of person authorized to sign, with official character or authority.]

[Town or city and date]

In case the age of the child is under fourteen the certificate shall continue as follows, after the word “certified:” —

And I hereby certify that [he or she] can read at sight and can write legibly simple sentences in the English language, and that [he or she] has attended the [name] public [or private] day school according to law for [number of weeks, which must be at least thirty] weeks during the year next preceding this date, and that the last thirty weeks of such attendance began [date]. This certificate expires [date one year later than the above date].

[Signature of the person authorized to sign, with official character or authority.]

If the attendance has been at a private school, there must be added also the signature of a teacher of such school, followed by words certifying to school attendance. [Town or city and date.]

In case a child cannot read and write, as above stated, the following may be substituted for the clause beginning “and I hereby certify” through to and including the word “language”: “and I hereby certify that [he or she] is a regular attendant at the [name] public evening school”; but in such case the certificate shall only continue in force for as long a time as attendance of such child at such evening school is endorsed weekly during the session of such evening school, not exceeding the length of the public school year minus twenty weeks, in place of attendance at day school as now provided by law, with a statement from a teacher thereof certifying that his attendance continues regular. If attendance has been at a half-time school, forty weeks of such attendance must be certified to instead of thirty. The foregoing certificate must be

Certificate to be filled out in duplicate.

filled out in duplicate and one copy thereof shall be kept on file by the school committee. Any explanatory matter may be printed with such certificate in the discretion of the school committee or superintendent of schools.

Age and schooling certificate to contain certain words.

SECT. 18. The following words shall appear on all age and schooling certificates after the name of the town or city and date : — This certificate belongs to the person in whose behalf it is drawn, and it shall be surrendered to [him or her] whenever [he or she] leaves the service of the corporation or employer holding the same.

Persons authorized to sign certificate.

SECT. 19. In cities and towns having a superintendent of schools, said certificate shall be signed only by such superintendent or by some person authorized by him in writing ; in other cities and towns it shall be signed by some member or members of the school committee authorized by vote thereof : *provided, however*, that no member of a school committee, or other person authorized as afore-said, shall have authority to sign such certificate for any child then in or about to enter his own employment, or the employment of a firm of which he is a member, or of a corporation of which he is an officer or employee. The person signing the certificate shall have authority to administer the oath provided for therein, but no fee shall be charged therefor ; such oath may also be administered by any justice of the peace.

Proviso.

Certificate of age, etc., to be signed by father of child, etc.

SECT. 20. The certificate as to the birthplace and age of the child shall be signed by his father, if living and a resident of the same city or town ; if not, by his mother ; or if his mother is not living, or if living is not a resident of the same city or town, by his guardian ; if a child has no father, mother or guardian living in the same city or town his own signature to the certificate may be accepted by the person authorized to approve the same.

Provisions in case child has been a resident of city or town since reaching age of thirteen.

SECT. 21. No child who has been continuously a resident of a city or town since reaching the age of thirteen years shall be entitled to receive a certificate that he has reached the age of fourteen unless or until he has attended school according to law in such city or town for at least thirty weeks since reaching the age of thirteen, unless such child can read at sight and write legibly simple sentences in the English language, or is exempt by law from

such attendance. Before signing the approval of the certificate of age of a child the person authorized to sign the same shall refer to the last school census taken under the provisions of section three of chapter forty-six of the Public Statutes, and if the name of such child is found therein and there is a material difference between his age as given therein and as given by his parent or guardian in the certificate, allowing for lapse of time, or if such child plainly appears to be of materially less age than that so given, then such certificate shall not be signed until a copy of the certificate of birth or of baptism of such child, or a copy of the register of its birth with a town or city clerk, has been produced, or other satisfactory evidence furnished that such child is of the age stated in the certificate.

SECT. 22. Any corporation or employer holding any age or schooling certificate shall deliver the same to the person in whose behalf it has been drawn, when such person shall leave the employ of such corporation or employer.

Certificate to be delivered to person, when leaving employ, etc.

SECT. 23. The truant officers may, when so authorized and required by a vote of the school committee, visit the factories, workshops and mercantile establishments in their several cities and towns and ascertain whether any children under the age of fourteen are employed therein contrary to the provisions of this act, and they shall report any cases of such illegal employment to the school committee and to the chief of the district police or the inspector of factories for the district. The inspectors of factories and the truant officers, when authorized as aforesaid, may demand the names of all children under sixteen years of age employed in such factories, workshops and mercantile establishments, and may require that the certificates and lists of such children provided for in this act shall be produced for their inspection. Such truant officers shall inquire into the employment, otherwise than in such factories, workshops and mercantile establishments, of children under the age of fourteen years, during the hours when the public schools are in session, and may require that the aforesaid certificates of all children under sixteen shall be produced for their inspection, and any such officer or any inspector of factories may bring a prosecution against a person or corporation employing any such child, otherwise than as aforesaid, during the hours when

Truant officers, when authorized, may visit factories, etc.

Inspectors of factories, etc., may demand names of children under sixteen years of age, etc.

the public schools are in session, contrary to the provisions of this act, if such employment still continues for one week after written notice from such officer or inspector that such prosecution will be brought, or if more than one such written notice, whether relating to the same child or to any other child, has been given to such employer by a truant officer or inspector of factories at any time within one year.

Certain minors not to be employed.

SECT. 24. No person shall employ or permit to be employed a minor under fourteen years of age, or over, who cannot read and write in the English language, and who resides in a city or town in this Commonwealth wherein public evening schools are maintained, and is not a regular attendant of a day school, or has not attained an attendance of seventy per cent. or more of the yearly session of the evening school.

Employment of minors may be permitted in certain cases.

SECT 25. Whenever it appears that the labor of any minor who would be debarred from employment under section twenty-four of this act is necessary for the support of the family to which said minor belongs, or for his own support, the school committee of said city or town may, in the exercise of their discretion, issue a permit authorizing the employment of such minor within such time or times as they may fix: *provided*, such minor makes application to said school committee, or some person duly authorized by said committee, for such a permit before the opening of the yearly session of the evening school of said city or town; and the provisions of said section twenty-four shall not apply to such minor so long as said permit is in force; *provided, also*, that if such minor has been prevented by sickness or injury from attending said evening school, as provided in said section, the school committee shall issue to such minor the permit provided for in this section, upon the presentation of the following blank properly filled and signed: —

Provisos.

To the School Committee of the

Physician's certificate.

I hereby certify that I have attended _____ from _____ to _____; that said _____ was sick or injured with _____; and that said _____ was not in suitable physical condition to attend evening school for the term of _____ days.

(Signed)

(Dated)

The school committee of every city and town in this Commonwealth wherein public evening schools are maintained shall furnish blanks in the above form upon application.

SECT. 62. Every parent, guardian or person authorized to sign the certificates prescribed by section seventeen of this act, who certifies to any materially false statement therein, shall be punished by fine not exceeding fifty dollars or by imprisonment not exceeding thirty days, or by both.

Penalty for false statement by parent, etc.

SECT. 67. Every parent or guardian of a child under fourteen years of age who permits any employment of such child contrary to the provisions of this act, and every owner, superintendent or overseer of any factory, workshop or mercantile establishment who employs or permits to be employed therein any child contrary to the provisions of this act, and any other person who employs any child contrary to the provisions of this act, shall for every such offence forfeit not less than twenty nor more than fifty dollars for the use of the public schools of the city or town. A failure to produce to a truant officer or inspector of factories the certificate required by the provisions of this act shall be prima facie evidence of the illegal employment of the child whose certificate is not produced.

Violation of law relating to employment of children.

SECT. 69. Any corporation or employer retaining any age or schooling certificate in violation of section twenty-two of this act shall be punished by fine of ten dollars.

For retaining certificate.

SECT. 70. Any person who employs or permits to be employed a minor in violation of the provisions of section twenty-four of this act shall for each offence forfeit not less than fifty nor more than one hundred dollars for the use of the evening schools of such city or town.

Penalty for employing minors contrary to provisions of section twenty-four.



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Massachusetts. Board of
Education.Report by the State board of
education on school

DUE DATE

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