

Document 3.7.4: Excerpt from article “Smith School,” *The Liberator*, August 27, 1841

The annual examination of the Smith School in Belknap street, under the direction of Mr. Abner Forbes, passed off in a manner lightly creditable to the pupils, and greatly to the satisfaction of their parents and friends who were present. Where all the performances were praiseworthy, it is difficult to make a distinction, though if it would not appear invidious, we might allude to several of the youthful performers by name, as those who were decidedly *superior*. The exercises in general and selected reading, and the correctness and ability manifested during the recital of lessons in grammar, geography, and other branches, gave evidence of close application, and was worthy of all praise. The various recitations were interspersed with a variety of singing, under the direction of Mr. Lowell Mason, the celebrated Professor of the Boston Academy. A solo was sustained by Master Robert Shephard with much taste, while the animated countenances and cheerful voices of the scholars bespoke their joy as they united with *good effect in the chorus*.

Frederick Emerson, Esq., in behalf of the Committee, in awarding premiums to Master John Rider, Charles A. Snowden, and Misses Mary R. Gray and Sarah R. Jackson, remarked that it afforded him great satisfaction in presenting the tokens of approbation to those who were entirely worthy to be held up as examples for the whole school to follow—that their fidelity to their studies, and their good deportment imparted to the teacher, the Committee and their parents, a glow of satisfaction amply repaying them for all the labor they had bestowed. He referred them to the situation of the school some six or eight years ago, presenting its then unfavorable condition, and contrasting it with the present : in view of the prospect, he felt tightly encouraged. I look forward says he, to the time when this school shall in its attainments as far excel its present state as the present is beyond that of the time referred to. He urged them to renewed exertions, and enforced upon the parents the importance of affording their children every opportunity for mental improvement, as one of the surest means of elevating them to an equality to those who at present enjoyed superior advantages. He remarked that it was evident that the colored people of Boston were improving intellectually, and that complexional differences could exert no influence over the mind to restrain its progress. He concluded by reminding them that by industrious efforts at improvement, their course would most assuredly be denied....

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