

1871

Annual Report of the Financial Affairs of the Town of Oxford, for the Year Ending March 1, 1871

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

OF THE

TOWN OF OXFORD,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1871.

BY

GEORGE P. WHITNEY,

AUDITOR.

LEWISTON:

JOURNAL STEAM PRESS, LISBON STREET.

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TOWN OFFICERS, 1870.

Clerk, THOMAS BAKER.

Selectmen, Assessors and Overseers of the Poor, SEBASTIAN S. SMITH,
CHARLES F. DURELL,
ROBERT T. BOYNTON.

Treasurer, GEORGE E. HAWKES.

Agent, GEORGE P. WHITNEY.

Auditor, GEORGE P. WHITNEY.

Superintending School Committee, WM. W. THOMAS,
A. H. CHADBOURNE,
JACOB L. HERR, M. D.

Collector and Constable, SULLIVAN FULLER.

REPORT OF SELECTMEN.

VALUATION

Of the Town of Oxford, as taken by the Assessors, April 1st,
1870 :

Real estate,	\$158,654 00
Personal estate,	42,719 00

Total valuation,	\$201,373 00
Valuation in 1869,	208,825 00

Decrease,	\$7,452 00

Number of polls, 365 ; number of polls in 1869, 326. In-
crease, 39.

TAXES FOR 1870.

State tax,	\$3,315 69
County tax,	502 36
Town tax—Support of schools,	1,400 00
Support of poor, pay debts, and other expenses,	2,000 00
Overlayings,	97 42
Delinquent highway tax, 1869,	70 81
Dog tax,	80 00
Supplementary assessment,	10 49

Total amount committed for collection,	\$7,476 77

HIGHWAY TAXES FOR 1870.

Amount raised,	\$2,500 00
Overlayings,	73 41

Total assessed,	\$2,573 41

TOWN OFFICERS' BILLS.

Thomas Baker, Clerk,	\$1 87
Sebastian S. Smith, Selectman, &c., \$75 00)	
Charles F. Durell, " 57 00)	179 00
Robert T. Boynton, " 47 00)	
George E. Hawkes, Treasurer,	40 00
George P. Whitney, Agent,	61 50

George P. Whitney, Auditor,	\$15 00
Sullivan Fuller, Collector,	97 20
Sullivan Fuller, Constable,	6 00
Wm. W. Thomas, S. S. Com. (resigned), estimated,	11 00
A. H. Chadbourne, " " "	25 00
Jacob L. Horr, " " "	50 00
Wm. M. Hall, " (appointed), " "	6 00
Total Town Officers' bills,	<u>\$497 57</u>

POOR ON FARM, MARCH 1, 1871.

Abigail Leavitt, aged	80 years.
Eliza Dean, " "	40 " "
Mary Moore, " "	46 " "
Average number of paupers on farm during year, 5 2-3.	

DEATHS ON FARM DURING YEAR.

Martin Soule, aged 80	Lydia N. Sturdivant, aged 66
Susan Sheppard, aged 76	Ellen Leuro (formerly Ham), 28

TOWN FARM ACCOUNT.

Stock, hay, furniture, tools, &c.—		
2 oxen,	\$220 00	
5 cows,	205 00	
4 2-year olds,	80 00	
2 1-year olds,	16 00	
9 sheep,	27 00	
3 swine,	15 00	
Total stock,		\$563 00
9 tons first quality hay,	109 80	
Furniture,	219 87	
Tools of all kinds,	132 00	
Provisions,	255 87	
Total other personal property,		<u>717 54</u>
Total personal property,		<u>\$1,280 54</u>

OVERSEERS OF TOWN FARM.

Amount paid John S. French,	\$13 00
" " Franklin Sargent, ending March 14, 1871,	116 34
Interest on farm at cost, stock and tools one year,	164 00
Tax on farm and stock,	30 00
To cash paid J. S. French, stove,	4 00
H. K. Pratt, labor,	14 00
Sam'l Goet, labor,	21 00

To cash paid F. Sargent, 2 cows, 1 shoat,	\$115 00	
L. Perkins, 1 pair oxen,	207 00	
Dennen & Webber, black-smithing, &c.,	20 58	
F. C. Merrill, plow points,	2 20	
“ horse rake,	40 00	
“ harrow,	12 00	
E. W. Smith, meal,	45 15	
Durell & Hawkes, store bill,	177 36	
S. E. King, “	41 29	
R. T. Boynton, “	6 80	
S. T. Holbrook, “	9 50	
H. & T. Baker, “		
(\$83 06 for meal),	139 38	
by Mrs. Sargent, for sundries,	11 89	
Stumpage for 11½ cords bark,	46 00	
		\$1,336 49

CREDIT BY AMOUNT SOLD—

By cash received for 1 pair of oxen,	\$90 00	
sundries,	210 18	
bark,	99 61	
Laborexpended on hemlock lumber on hand,	125 00	
Personal property more than last year,	69 54	
		594 33

Total cost of poor on farm, \$742 16

COST OF POOR NOT ON FARM.

John Ordway's family,	\$44 75	
Mrs. Leuro and child,	28 28	
Mrs. Chipman,	25 00	
Mrs. Noyes's children,	7 00	
George Hamblen's family,	2 60	
Total cost of poor not on farm,		\$107 63
Paid Jacob L. Horr, M. D., for medical attendance on poor in town,		35 00
Paid for support of Mrs. Martha Gammon, at Insane Hospital to Jan. 11, 1871,		159 00
Total paid for insane and paupers,		<u>\$1,043 79</u>

[NOTE.—One of the oxen on the farm at the time Mr. French left was lame, and in consequence thereof became nearly worthless, resulting in a loss to the town of \$130 00, which is charged to the indebtedness on town farm.]

RECEIPTS OUTSIDE OF TAXATION.

From State, for pensions advanced,	\$66 00	
L. T. Washburn (Liquor Agent, 1869),	43 00	
Highway taxes,	5 00	
		<u>\$114 00</u>

ANNUAL RECEIPTS FOR YEAR 1870.

Total amount assessed in Collectors' bills,		\$7,476 77
State tax,	\$3,315 69	
County tax,	502 36	
Money raised for schools,	1,400 00	
Discount on sums paid before Sept. 15, 1870,	200 89	
" " " " Jan. 1, 1871,	66 87	
Abatement on Collector's bills, 1868,	7 65	
" " " " 1869,	48 08	
" " " " 1870,	34 75	
		<u>\$5,576 29</u>
Available amount from cash taxes for town purposes, 1870,		\$1,900 48
Total receipts during year,		\$2,014 48

ANNUAL EXPENDITURES FOR YEAR 1870.

Town officers' bills,		\$497 57
Expense of poor on farm,		742 16
Expense of poor not on farm,		107 63
Expense of Mrs. Gammon at Insane Hospital,		159 00
Medicines and medical attendance for poor,		35 00
Planks for bridges and culverts,		23 40
Repairing bridge at Welchville,		228 51
" " near Rawson & Co.'s mill,		59 60
" " near I. L. Hayes's,		15 25
Cash paid for labor on highways,		44 75
" " for repairs on town farm buildings,		24 55
" " " " " town house,		73 65
Contingent bills, unsettled (estimated),		150 00
		<u>\$2,161 07</u>
Total expenditures,		\$2,161 07
Expenditures above receipts,		\$146 59

FINANCIAL STANDING OF TOWN, MARCH 1, 1870.

Outstanding notes,		\$5,265 34
" orders,		8,183 49
		<u>\$13,448 83</u>
Total notes and orders outstanding,		\$13,448 83
Interest now due on same,		500 00
Due school districts,		276 65
Town officers' bills,		497 57
Other unpaid bills (estimated),		150 00
		<u>\$14,873 05</u>
Total indebtedness,		\$14,873 05

AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO MEET SAME—

Money in town treasury,	\$1,128 38	
Due from Collector of 1868,	20 00	
“ “ “ “ 1869,	212 00	
“ “ “ “ 1870,	896 35	
“ “ State on school fund,	40 00	
“ “ Town of Gray,	6 21	
“ “ Town of Poland,	8 17	
		<u>\$2,311 11</u>
Outstanding debt not provided for,		\$12,561 94

RESOURCES OF TOWN, MARCH 1, 1871.

Money in treasury,	\$1,128 38
Due from Collectors for years 1868, '69 and '70,	1,128 35
Due from State on school fund,	40 00
Due from from towns of Gray and Poland,	14 38
Stock on town farm,	563 00
Hay, furniture, tools and provisions on town farm,	717 54
Town farm,	5,000 00
Town house,	1,000 00
Reimbursement bonds, due from State,	6,475 00
Interest on said bonds to March 1, 1871,	550 37
	<u>\$16,617 02</u>

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO PAY OFF
TOWN DEBT.

Money in treasury,	\$1,128 38
Due from Collectors,	1,128 35
Due from State, and Gray and Poland,	54 38
State bonds, and interest now due,	7,025 37
Surplus of wood and timber on farm,	3,000 00
	<u>\$12,336 48</u>
Amount of indebtedness to be provided for,	\$2,536 57

REPORT OF AUDITOR.

The town valuation, compared with that of last year, shows a decrease of \$7,450 00. Whether this decrease is chargeable to property removed from town, property destroyed, or a reduction in the nominal value, does not appear. At the same time the number of polls has increased 39.

It will be seen that our State tax has been increased from \$2,139 77 in 1869, to \$3,315 69, *twelve hundred and seventy-five dollars and ninety-two cents*, and our County Tax from \$350 70 in 1869 to \$502 36, *one hundred and fifty-one dollars and sixty-six cents*. This is mainly owing to the new State valuation established by the Legislature of 1870. That a GROSS OUTRAGE was committed upon the inhabitants of this town, in establishing this valuation, no reasonable man who has looked into the facts of the case, can deny.

This valuation increases the property in Oxford 81 per cent. during the last ten years, while Norway is only increased 15 per cent. and Paris 17 per cent. What makes the case of the people of this town peculiarly hard, so far as taxation is concerned, is the fact that the Legislature of 1870, in fixing the valuation for Oxford, included "exempted" property to the amount of *one hundred thousand dollars*—nearly one-fifth of the whole valuation—the same having been fixed by them at the sum total of \$552,049.

By this action of the Legislature of 1870, the town of Oxford was compelled to assess the State and County tax upon a valuation of \$100,000 "exempted" property. This tax of \$691 52 was *not*, by the Assessors of Oxford for 1870, assessed upon the "exempted" property, but every dollar of it was assessed upon the polls and estates of the other tax-payers in town, who had no interest whatever in this exempted property. This practically obliged every property holder in town, outside of these exemptions, to pay taxes, not only on his *own* property, but a *pro rata* tax upon this exempted property.

I believe it is generally conceded that the true *intent* and meaning of the people of this town in voting to release certain property from taxation, for a term of years, was simply to leave such property out of the valuation of the town and assess upon the other property, and not that they should be compelled to pay a State and County tax upon the full valuation of property so exempted. I believe both parties so understood it at the time these several votes passed.

The Town Farm account does not make so favorable exhibit as in some previous years. This is owing in part to the severe drouth which greatly reduced the crops, especially the hay crop. Another cause was the dilapidated and worn-out condition of many of the tools, which had to be replaced by new ones; also the loss of \$130 on the oxen, one of which was lame when Mr. Sargent took the Farm. The policy heretofore recommended, of selling off a portion of the surplus wood on the Town Farm, whenever it can be sold at a fair, remunerative price, for the payment of outstanding debts, I think will commend itself to the good judgment of every citizen of the town. Could this be done and our State Bonds be converted into cash at near their par value, we should have left less than \$3000 of our town debt to be provided for.

GEORGE P. WHITNEY, AUDITOR.

TOWN AGENT'S REPORT.

THE "HARRISON ROAD" CASE.

Agreeably to instructions from the town, I petitioned the County Commissioners to discontinue that part of the "Harrison Road" which lies between the Webber Road and the highway passing by S. S. Smith's. A hearing was had before the Joint Boards of County Commissioners for Cumberland and Oxford Counties, which resulted in a decision of three for and three against a discontinuance. This is the second time that these joint Boards have been equally divided upon this question. I do not hesitate to assert, without fear of successful contradiction from any quarter, that the balance of testimony was overwhelmingly in favor of a discontinuance, at both hearings. There was no evidence put into the case to show, even the most remote prospect, that a depot would ever be established at Smith's Crossing on the G. T. R. R. But there *was* evidence which could not be controverted, put into the case to show that the Eastern and Western travel, via Paris and Lewiston, was already accommodated with good and convenient highways in good repair; that if the bridge over the Little Androscoggin was rebuilt, it would only be used by a small, local neighborhood travel which did not ask it. It also appeared in evidence, that a large portion of the public living west of us, who originally asked for this road, will be better accommodated on the Ogdensburg Railroad than on the G. T., if a depot should be built.

For these, and many other reasons (that I cannot, for want of room, incorporate into this report), I cannot recommend to the town to rebuild said bridge, or take any measures looking in that direction. It is true, that after trying at three successive terms, certain individuals who have private interests to be promoted thereby, succeeded at the last December Term of the S. J. Court, in obtaining an indictment against this road. But the town has not been summoned in, and cannot be, earlier than the next September Term. There is no public call for this piece of road, and every one who understands anything of its history, knows it. To compel the town to expend from \$1500 to \$2000 to rebuild this bridge, for the sole accommodation of a few wood speculators or a few other self-constituted public guardians — who are fighting the town to gratify their malice and revenge — would be an outrage too great to be tolerated. As there is no public necessity or call for this road, it will in the end be discontinued, and all sums expended upon it or the bridge, eventually prove a dead loss to the town.

"BRIDGTON vs. OXFORD."

This is a suit brought in the Superior Court at Portland, for supplies furnished Margaret Farris, whose legal settlement the Plaintiffs claim is in the Defendants' town. After thoroughly investigating this case, I became satisfied that the pauper, at the time of furnishing the supplies sued for, had her legal settlement in Albany, and not in Oxford. The result of the trial confirms me in this opinion, although the jury under certain instructions from the presiding Judge, found a verdict for the Plaintiffs for about two-thirds the amount claimed in their writ. A distinguished Western lawyer once remarked that the "Al-

mighty had all foreknowledge except as to what would be the verdict of a petit jury." This verdict could very properly be classed in that category. The Plaintiffs to get along with their case at all, had to ask for sundry amendments to their writ, which the presiding Judge allowed *pro forma*, all subject to the objections of the Defendants. A motion to set aside the verdict as being against the evidence, the weight of evidence, and for various other reasons, together with exceptions to the rulings of the presiding Judge on the law of the case, all go up to the full court for their determination. The counsel for the Defendants are sanguine that the decision of the full court will be favorable to the Defendant town.

REDUCTION OF STATE VALUATION.

When the report of the State Valuation Committee was made to the Legislature of 1870, just at its close, and the amount apportioned to Oxford made public, I was earnestly requested by the municipal officers of the town, to visit the capital, and if possible, get a correction in the valuation of this town. This I did. The Legislature had been in session a long time, and I found it on the eve of a final adjournment. Both Houses voted to accept the State valuation, as reported by the general committee, and refused to open it even for the correction of errors. Had the question been open, I think I could then have obtained a reduction.

After the present Legislature was in session, I was employed with John J. Perry, Esq., to proceed to Augusta, and make another attempt to get the valuation of Oxford reduced. The Legislature refused to open the general question, but finally passed a general order, allowing County Delegations to open the question in their several counties and correct errors, provided it did not reduce the aggregate valuation of the County. This being the only door left open for us to do anything, we had a petition from the Selectmen of this town referred to the Oxford County Delegation. A thorough and critical examination of the several valuation returns from Oxford County satisfied us that at least \$50,000 should be taken from the valuation of Oxford and added to Norway. We asked the County Delegation to make this change. The town of Norway, after due notice appeared and a hearing was had, both towns being represented. With \$50,000 added to Norway, that town would show an increase of one per cent. less than the average increase of the several towns in the County, and with \$50,000 taken from Oxford, it would then stand 39 per cent. *above* the average of the County. We labored under many disadvantages. A strong minority of the Delegation were opposed to opening the question at all, especially when the valuation of the town they represented stood comparatively low. Dr. Jones, the representative from this district, although the representative of Oxford, as much as Norway, was not willing to stand neutral between these two towns in his district, and let the other members of the Delegation settle the matter between them, but notified us *before he even had heard the case*, that he would fight Oxford in every way in his power, and he did so.

We finally succeeded by a bare majority in obtaining a report from the County Delegation, taking \$18,000 from the valuation of Oxford, and adding the same to Norway. This will reduce our State and County taxes something over one hundred dollars per year. But this comes far short of doing justice to Oxford. At least seventy-five thousand dollars should be taken from the valuation of this town, and then it would stand comparatively above the towns in the County.

GEORGE P. WHITNEY, AGENT.

Oxford, Feb. 23d, 1871.

SCHOOL REPORT.

The Superintending School Committee submit the following Report:

The whole number of scholars in town, according to the last returns, is 541.

Money raised for the schools by the town,	\$1,400 00
Money received from the State,	41 00
	<hr/>
	\$1,441 00

DISTRICT No. 1. AUGUSTUS DUNN, Agent.

Money, \$51 96. Scholars, 24. Attendance, 17. Average, 15. Length, 33 days. Instances of tardiness, 3; of dismissal, 1; not absent one half day, 6; number of visits by citizens, 9.

Teacher, Miss LIZZIE S. BURNS. Miss Burns sadly failed both in discipline and instruction—was not qualified to teach.

The Winter Term was taught by Miss JENNIE L. KING, of South Paris. Length of school, 60½ days. Wages of teacher, \$4 00 per week. I was able to make but one visit to this school. The indications then were that Miss King would go through the term with an ordinary degree of success. Dr. Horr visited the school near its close, and was of the opinion that it might be classed among the middling or ordinary kind of schools.

DISTRICT No. 2. HARRISON GAMMON, Agent.

Money, \$76 66. Summer Term, 33 days. Winter Term, 37 days. Miss A. E. LEONARD, of Monmouth, taught both terms. Whole number of scholars in District, 25. Number attending school in summer, 15; average, 13. Instances of tardiness, 27; of dismissal, 16; not absent one half day, 3. Wages, \$3 per week. Winter term, number scholars registered, 17; average, 17.

Miss Leonard is an earnest and faithful teacher in the school room, and succeeded so well in her summer school as to be employed for the winter term. During the winter term, as during the previous one taught by her, we have to say a commendable improvement was made—except in Arithmetic, the recitations in which were not so good as we could wish.

DISTRICT No. 3. JAMES L. HOLDEN, Agent.

Grammar School.—Summer Term, Miss JOSIE L. BOYNTON, Teacher. Wages, \$5 50 per week. Length of school, 55 days. Scholars, 45; average attendance, 37.

Fall Term, Miss IZAH HOWE, Teacher. Length, 46 days. Whole number registered, 42; average, 32. Wages, \$5 50 per week.

Winter Term, taught by Miss BOYNTON. Whole number, 51; average, 40. Length, 47 days. Wages, \$7 50 per week.

Primary School.—Summer Term, Miss FANNIE EVANS, Teacher. Length, 55 days. Wages, \$4 00 per week. Whole number, 41; average, 29.

Fall Term, taught by Miss SARA C. THAYER. Wages, \$5 00 per week. Length, 55 days. Whole number 45; average 32.

Winter Term, Miss THAYER, Teacher. Wages, \$5 50 per week. Length, 44 days. Whole number 41; average, 32.

The success attending the labors of these teachers has been with some exceptions highly gratifying. They have worked under the disadvantages of poor accommodations in a poor school house. Another drawback is too little interest manifested by many parents to see that their children are regular and punctual in attendance. Hence is explained the reason of so many instances of absence and tardiness.

Miss Boynton has sustained well the reputation she had borne as a teacher. We regret our loss while she labors in another field. She is a thorough, energetic teacher, and scholars who would learn made good improvement under her instruction. Miss Howe is a superior teacher, and gave us good satisfaction. Miss Evans labored faithfully, and a portion of her scholars made good improvement, but we think she is better fitted to teach older scholars. It requires much patience and tact to teach a primary school. Miss Thayer has had charge of the primary department for the last two terms, and we will say it will be for the interest of the district to secure her services again if possible. She is the right person in the right place.

DISTRICT No. 4. CALEB RUSSELL, Agent.

Scholars returned, 42. Money, \$117 56.

Summer Term, 44 days. Miss ELLA F. CHADBOURNE, Teacher. Scholars registered, 22; average, 20. Instances of tardiness, 47; of dismissal, 10; not absent one half day, none. Number of visits by citizens, 16. Wages of teacher, \$3 00 per week. This was Miss Chadbourne's first school, yet she proved herself a successful teacher.

Winter Term, 12 weeks. AUGUSTA S. CHASE, of South Paris, Teacher. Scholars registered, 30; average, 28. Instances of tardiness, 10; of dismissal, none; not absent one half day, 1. Wages of teacher, \$4 00 per week. The school was a perfect success. The school was orderly and the scholars studious. The teacher did a good and faithful work, and the school made decided improvement.

DISTRICT No. 5. T. J. FROST, Agent.

Summer Term, taught by Miss ROSE BURNS. Length of school, 33 days. Whole number, 22; average 18. Wages of teacher, \$3 50 per week.

Winter Term, Miss LOTTIE E. HALL, Teacher. Length of school, 44 days. Number of scholars, 26; average number 21. Wages, \$5 00 per week.

Miss Burns is well known in town as one of our best teachers. This school under her instruction made good progress. We were unable to make but one visit to this school during the winter term, but what we saw at that time satisfied us that Miss Hall is a live teacher, and that both herself and scholars believe that those who win must work.

DISTRICT No. 6. SULLIVAN FULLER, Agent.

Summer Term, length 40 days. Whole number attending school, 9; average 7. Instances of tardiness, 10; of dismissal, 4; not absent one half day, 2.

Wages of teacher, \$2 00 per week. Money appropriated, \$79 16. Winter Term, no register returned. Teacher of both terms, DELIA DOWNING.

Miss Downing has sustained the interests of this school during the two terms with very commendable success. The scholars are all young and backward, and there is not, therefore, so much to interest a teacher, or to make an interesting school, as in most school districts.

DISTRICT No. 7. HORATIO K. PRATT, Agent.

Money appropriated, \$142 26.

Summer Term, length, 48 days. Scholars, 55; number registered, 23; average, 16. Instances of tardiness, 100; of dismissal, 8; not absent one half day, none. Wages of teacher, \$4 00 per week. Miss SARAH C. THAYER, Teacher. Miss Thayer was faithful in the discharge of her duties, and commendable improvement was made during the term. Miss Thayer has been a successful teacher in our schools for two years, and we think this term as creditable to her as any former term.

Winter Term, length 40 days. Whole number of scholars, 28; average, 25. Instances of tardiness, none; of dismissal, none; not absent one half day, none. Number of visits by citizens, 11. Wages, \$30 per month. Mr. C. F. HALL, Teacher. Mr. Hall is a teacher of superior abilities, and has been of very valuable service to the district. Mr. Hall exhibited good qualifications as a teacher, such as will enable him to attain eminence in the profession in a higher and wider sphere, should he continue in it. We commend the skillful method of the teacher in imparting instruction orally to a young class in grammar, who had not used a text-book. Mr. Hall is preparing for college under the tuition of Mr. Irish, of Limerick Academy, Me.

DISTRICT No. 8. N. THOMAS, Agent.

Miss ABBIE W. CUSHMAN taught both summer and winter terms. This is a small school with small scholars, but we were well pleased with improvement made. Miss Cushman labored faithfully, and the scholars show that she did not expect because her school was small there was nothing to do. Another pleasing feature of this school is, the parents are interested there and know what their scholars are doing.

DISTRICT No. 10. W. S. DODGE, Agent.

Money appropriated \$186 84. Summer term, Miss ELLA C. DEAN, Teacher. Miss Dean is an experienced and successful teacher. The school was well managed and the scholars made good improvement. Her school was continued by private subscriptions. No Register returned.

Winter term. Length 24½ days. Scholars 74. Number registered 33. Average, 25. Instances of tardiness, 90; of dismissal, 10. Not absent one-half day, 1; number visits by citizens, 4. Wages of teacher \$30 per month. Mr. ALBERT L. PIKE, Teacher. This school was not a success. The reputation of this school has not been of an enviable character. A strong disposition on the part of some turbulent and unruly scholars to take the reins of government into their own hands, has for several years seriously affected the interests of all connected with this school. This school was brought to a premature close by the expulsion of three boys and the resignation of the teacher. Had it been the

purpose of all in the district at the commencement of the term to have a good school, we think the success of the teacher would have been good. The school was put under the charge of Miss ANNIE HOLMES, an experienced and well qualified teacher. One of the best now employed.

DISTRICT No. 11.

Summer Term, length, 39 days. Money \$82 97. Whole number scholars in district, 31. Number in attendance, 20; average, 16. Instances of tardiness, 14; of dismissal, 8; not absent one-half day, none; number visits by citizens, 7. Wages of the teacher, \$3 00 per week. Miss ANGIE L. WASHBURN, Teacher. We have rarely visited a school where the kindly feelings of both teacher and scholars, were more strongly marked, or where the recitations were more interesting. The classes in Arithmetic made good improvement, and in reading, excellent. Miss Washburn is one of our best readers.

Winter Term. Length 22 days. Scholars, 31. Attendance, 22; average, 21. Instances of tardiness, none; of dismissal, none; not absent one-half day, 8. Wages of teacher, \$28 00. C. R. ELDER, Teacher. By his active energy, this teacher awakened an interest in the exercises of the school, that was well sustained. There was evidence in the examination, of thorough instruction. He kept an excellent school. Mr. Elder is a pupil of the Oxford Institute, So. Paris, where Mr. Swasey, the Principal, turns out excellent teachers, and we hope that he will be well patronized.

DISTRICT No. 12. SAMUEL KEEN, Agent.

MISS CLARA E. DENNEN, Teacher summer term. No register returned yet.

Winter Term, MISS HATTIE C. RAY, Teacher. Length of school, 46 days. Whole number scholars, 14; average attendance, 11. Wages, \$4.00 per week. This school was Miss Dennen's first experience in teaching. She was interested in her work and met with fair success for a young teacher. We were disappointed in not being able to visit but once during the winter term of this school, but we know from what we heard that day and by what we have learned from other sources, that Miss Ray is a good teacher, and that the school made commendable progress.

Whole number of scholars connected with the schools during the year, 330; average, 232. One hundred and ten are reported by the teachers as not absent one-half day during the year. This truly, is a very creditable record for one-third of the whole number of scholars. The instances of tardiness, five hundred and two, demand the attention of parents. They are charged principally to a few districts. What merchant or farmer would be satisfied with such a want of punctuality? In a few schools dismissals seem to have become the rule, and attention through the whole session an exception. We think the dismissal should be the exception. Your committee, not from any love of change, have recommended a change of Geographies and Grammars used in the schools. Brown's Grammar and Colton and Fitch's Geographies have been used for a longer course of years than usual, and a desire for a change has often been intimated as essential to the best interests of the schools. Kerl's Grammar and Guyot's Geographies have been introduced, and by the aid of teachers, almost an entire change has been made throughout the schools. The new books have been received with favor and have, we trust, awakened some new interest in the studies of Grammar and Geography.

The terms of the schools have been a little shorter than for several years past, on account of the town's raising less money than usual for the support of

schools. The teachers employed have discharged their duty, generally, with a good deal of fidelity. We have had some excellent schools. In others we have had some partial interruptions, and the results were not quite satisfactory. But we do not think that teachers ought to be held responsible for all the defects of the schools. A work so full of interest often involves difficulties, to which a load of oppression may be added, by a want of the co-operation of parents. Only a partial interruption may make the teacher's work a discouraging task and cause the exercises of the school to drag on heavily. It occasions a wicked waste, for which somebody is held accountable. Parents leave the education of their children too much with the teacher. You appear to think that providing your children with food and clothing, is all that is required of you. The education, the formation of character, you say, belongs to the teacher. This cannot be so. You should, instead of trusting all to the teacher, co-operate with him, unite your labors with his and ascertain, by visiting the school often, the influence of the teacher and the influence of the school upon your children. Do not speak unfavorably of the teacher before your children, but teach them to love the teacher and the school room, and at all times to be obedient. If your children are under good government at home, it will greatly aid the teacher in managing them at school, but if the government at home is bad, it will be difficult for the teacher to control their conduct, or establish any government over them during the hours of school. You often complain of the defective government of the teacher, yet do not perceive that the children are under no restraint at home. Do not find fault with the teacher until you have examined your own government and ascertain how far you have fitted them for obeying or disobeying others.

If parents or committees would give higher compensation it would encourage young men to qualify themselves for instructing. Parents have it in their own power to raise the character and qualifications of teachers. Parents pay more money for the education of their children by employing incompetent teachers than they would by employing competent.

In the affairs of life parents generally perceive that the cheapest articles are commonly the dearest, and those of more reflection perceive that this is always the case in the article of teachers. Such were the teachers employed to teach the summer schools in districts number 1 and 12. A child to obtain an education with these teachers would require a lifetime, and then would only learn to unlearn again, if they ever made correct scholars. Thus if parents do give but little to the teacher, they pay dearly for their children's instruction. If they would secure the services of a qualified teacher by giving him double the price they gave these teachers, their school tax would be one-third less than it now is, because it would take their children only one-third as long to get an education. Again, the parents' interest would be promoted by saving the children's time. Scholars under a good teacher will be as far advanced at fourteen years of age as they will be at twenty under a poor teacher. Parents frequently pay cheap instructors more for teaching their children what is wrong, than would be necessary to give them a good education under a suitable teacher. Let us employ only the best teachers and pay them a corresponding compensation.

Never before have our schools performed their operations with better success. *This improved condition of the schools* is due, we think, to the new arrangement by which the power to hire teachers has been transferred from the district agents to the town committees. This, we think was a step in the right direction. By the change, better and more competent teachers have been employed, and the standard qualifications of teachers raised. The Teachers' County Institute affords an opportunity for improving good qualifications and making better teachers, and we think that it would be good policy for each district to send their teacher to a session of the County Institute at their own expense, and let the school wait for the improved qualifications with which he will direct his operations.

We would invite your attention to the dilapidated condition of many of our school houses. Some of them are unfit for the protection of horses and oxen, still you suffer your children to resort there, not to receive what is lovely and refined, but disgust for school, and an unpleasant impression with all that pertains to a common school education. Such are the school houses in numbers 3, 4 and 10.

A new school house was erected last summer in District No. 1, at a cost of \$400, which is certainly complimentary to the increasing educational interest of the District, and we hope other districts will soon follow their example and erect new and commodious houses in the districts before referred to.

To the above we wish to add a few words. In the examination of teachers and in visiting schools we have endeavored, as a Committee, to do faithfully the work assigned us. Every applicant has been thoroughly examined, and no certificate granted where in our judgment the scholarship of the applicant was inadequate. We have designed to visit every school twice, and have failed to do so in but one instance. In case of manifest failure on the part of the teacher, we have advised him to leave, and it has been done. Where we have good order, uniformly we have found progress, and *vice versa*.

One thing more to which I would call the attention of the town, and that is the refusal of the town to pay Miss Angie Washburn for teaching the Summer school in District No. 11. Miss Washburn was legally employed and legally certificated, and kept her school to the entire satisfaction of all concerned, and consequently is entitled to her pay, and it is hoped that the town will so vote to do at the ensuing annual meeting.

In conclusion we bespeak the continued support and encouragement of our fellow citizens in behalf of our Common Schools as the most important institution we possess to preserve in its purity our social and civil polity; and thanking my fellow citizens for their kind patronage, your humble and obedient servant would kindly ask to be excused from holding or continuing in office longer.

A. H. CHADBOURNE,
For the Committee.

I cannot endorse the foregoing report in all particulars, and especially in regard to the teachers for summer term in Districts No. 1 and 12. My report of No. 12 will be noticed above.

I also visited Miss Burns's school, and will add that I considered her school on an average with the others, and I know she labored earnestly for her school. I have also learned from the parents of her scholars that they were well satisfied with Miss Burns.

In justice to myself I desire to say, that if there is any legal bar in the way of Miss Washburn's receiving her pay, I am not responsible for it, as I had nothing to do with employing her, neither am I responsible for any neighborhood disturbances existing in District No. 11, before or since that school was put into operation. I considered it my duty as a member of the S. S. Committee to harmonize rather than increase difficulties in school districts.

I cannot indorse the opinion expressed in the report, that the law providing that S. S. Committees should employ teachers, has been a success, or that it would promote the general interest of our schools by the continuance of such a law upon the Statute Books as it stood, without some amendments. The result of one year's trial may not be sufficient test of utility of such a law; but we cannot believe it would be for the best interest of our schools to continue this method of employing our teachers where so much prejudice exists as there has been in some of our districts. I shall be willing to let district agents employ their own teachers.

J. L. HERR,
Member of S. S. Committee.