

1864

# Annual Report of the Selectmen and Superintending School Committee, of the Town of Skowhegan, For the Year Ending March 1, 1864

Skowhegan (Me.)

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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## SELECTMEN

AND

SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

OF THE

## TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN,

For the Year ending March 1, 1864.

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SKOWHEGAN :

M. LITTLEFIELD, PRINTER,

1864.



# Annual Report

OF THE

## SELECTMEN OF SKOWHEGAN.

For the Year Commencing March 1., 1863, and Ending  
March 1, 1864.

### Assessments.

State Tax,	3188,60
County "	1189,98
Schools,	2200,00
Bounties to Soldiers,	2162,00
Current Expenses,	1500,00
Bridges,	350,00
Tax on Dogs,	87,00
Overlayings on Taxes,	488,15
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	\$11,165,73

### Receipts outside of Assessments.

Liquor Agency,	120,00
Forfeited Liquors,	88,65
License to Circus,	40,00
Rents of Town Hall,	9,00
	<hr/>
	\$249,65

Assessed for State Tax,	3188,60
County Tax	1189,98
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	\$4378,58

Paid State Tax	3188,60
Paid County Tax.	1189,98
	<hr/>
	\$4378,58

### Schools.

Amount assessed for Schools,	2200,00
Bank Tax of State,	229,57
Balance due Districts last year	1178,13
	<hr/>
	\$3607,70

Paid Districts for Schools, . . . . .	2874,79
Balance due the Districts, . . . . .	1021,91
	<hr/>
	\$3896,70

### Roads and Bridges.

Assessed for Roads and Bridges, . . . . .	350,00
Balance on hand last year to build Wesserrunset road . . . . .	362,00
Deficiency, . . . . .	783,47
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	\$1495,47

Expended for road to Wesserrunsett, . . . . .	1041,25
Bridge near Tuft's, . . . . .	355,00
Repairs of same in Spring, . . . . .	11,40
Repairs of Malbon's Mills Bridge, . . . . .	50,73
Planking Lower Wesserrunsett Bridge, . . . . .	37,09
	<hr/>
	\$1495,47

### Soldier's Bounties.

Assessed to pay Soldier's Bounties, . . . . .	2162,00
Paid more than raised, . . . . .	94,60
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	\$2256,60

Paid of Principal, Soldier's Bounties, . . . . .	1759,10
Interest on whole debt, . . . . .	497,50
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	\$2256,60

### Abatements of Taxes.

On Collector's Bills of 1862, . . . . .	25,00
Same of 1863, . . . . .	30,29
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	\$55,29

### Expense of Poor.

Amount paid and due for Poor off the Farm, . . . . .	939,01
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### Farm Account.

Paid out on account of Farm for the year, . . . . .	574,32
Received from sales from Farm, . . . . .	391,31
Amount of stock and produce on Farm more than last year, . . . . .	98,75
Hay to be sold 6 tons, . . . . .	60,00
Balance against Farm, . . . . .	24,26
	<hr/>
	\$574,32

There have been supported on the Farm equal to 11 1-2 persons  
for the whole year and 13 1-2 including overseer  
and wife at a total expense of . . . . . 2426

Nett expense of poor off the Farm, . . . . . 939.01  
Nett expense of poor on the Farm, . . . . . 2426

Total expense of Poor, . . . . . 963.27

### Stock and Produce on Town Farm March 1, 1864.

#### Stock.

2 oxen,	120.00
4 Cows,	135.00
3 Yearlings,	30.00
80 Sheep,	200.00
3 Shoats,	25.00
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	855.00

#### Produce.

40 bushels Barley,	36.00
30 " Corn,	37.50
10 " Wheat,	20.00
8 " Beans,	16.00
100 " Potatoes,	32.00
600 lbs. Pork,	60.00
200 " Beef,	12.00
90 " Butter,	20.00
50 " Cheese,	5.00
50 " Dried Apple,	4.00
50 " Lard,	6.50
15 " Tallow,	1.50
125 " Flour,	6.00
2 " Barrels Cider,	5.00
6 tons Hay more than enough to winter stock,	60.00
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	832.10

### State Aid to Soldier's Families.

Paid for State aid from Jan. 1, 1863, to Jan. 1, 1864	1511.82
From Jan. 1, 1864, to Mar. 1, 1864.,	189.50
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	\$1701.32

To be reimbursed by the State

### Town Officer's Bills.

J. B. Dascomb, Selectman,	150.00
H. Eaton,	50.00

D. Snow,	"	40,00
A. Fuller, Treasurer,		20,00
J. Steward, Collector,		167,49
G. H. Eldridge, Superintendent School Committee,		35,75
C. W. Snow,	" " "	29,00
C. H. Allen,	" " "	28,00
Wm. M. E. Brown, Town Agent,		12,00
		<hr/>
		\$532,24

### Miscellaneous Bills.

Scammon Burrill damage to horse on Road,	7,25
A. N. Merrill, for same,	3,50
Moses Littlefield, Blanks and Advertising,	3,36
J. L. Patten, Advertising,	1,75
Dyer & Cushing, Books, Stationery, and School Books,	10,40
Cash expenses of Selectmen,	34,12
C. C. Whitney, School Books last year,	7,06
Wm. F. Pitts, old bill vs Town of Bloomfield,	16,00
Stamps for Town Orders,	4,65
Interest on temporary loan for Soldier's Bounties,	11,00
Postage,	2,70
Advanced to Jos. Pomalo, Town Bounty and lost,	10,00
James Bell, Agent, omitted in last year's bill,	2,00
Levi W. Weston, Surveyor, running road,	1,50
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	\$115,29

### Debt of the Town on account of Soldier's Bounties.

Total amount borrowed to pay Bounties,	16,683,23
There has been paid this year,	1759,10
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Debt now due,	\$14,924,13
Principal due this year,	3352,60
Interest on the whole debt,	895,45
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Necessary to be raised this year,	\$4748,05

### Exhibit & Trial Balance apart from the Debt due on Soldier's Bounties.

#### LIABILITIES.

Due to the several School Districts,	1021,91
" of Pauper Bills,	54,00
" State aid to Soldier's families, previous to Jan. 1, 1864,	11,50
Orders drawn and unpaid,	696,78

Costs on indictment on road . . . . .	5,00
Interest on Order, Soldier Bounty, due and uncalled for	12,00
Probable abatement Bills 1863, . . . . .	30,00
Due Borrowed money and interest, . . . . .	205,00
Balance in favor of town, . . . . .	350,31
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	\$2387,50

### Resources.

Due from James Steward, Collector, . . . . .	254,84
“ from State for State aid to Soldier's Families	
from Jan. 1, 1863, to Jan. 1, 1864, . . . . .	1511,82
From Jan. 1, 1864, to March 1, 1864. . . . .	189,50
“ from Liquor Agency, . . . . .	120,00
“ for Forfeited Liquors, . . . . .	80,65
“ Town of Madison Pauper Bill, . . . . .	35,37
“ “ Smithfield same, . . . . .	30,92
Hay to be sold from Farm. . . . .	60,00
Cash in Treasury. . . . .	103,90
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	\$2387,50



# REPORT

OF THE

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1864.

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Your Committee having impartially attended to the duties assigned them, report the following, reporting first the schools on the North side of the river :

### District No. 1, North.

During the summer term five schools were kept in this District.

The school containing the most advanced scholars, during the summer term, was under the management of *Miss E. F. Fowler*. Miss F. maintained good order, and her pupils made commendable proficiency in their studies. There were 25 pupils who attended this term, with an average number of 20.

MADISON STREET.—The summer term was taught by *Miss E. J. Whitten*, who labored diligently to have her pupils gain a thorough knowledge of the various branches pursued by them, and who was successful in her efforts. Your Committee think that the class in Geography was equal, if not superior to any class in town. The total number of scholars was 56, with an average of 32.

The Fall and Winter terms, making an aggregate of 17 1-2 weeks, by *Miss E. F. Fowler*. The Fall term numbered 67 pupils with an average of 50. The Winter term numbered 78, with an average of 54.

An assistant teacher was employed in this school during these two terms, but without a recitation room except a little closet used as a place of deposit for girls outer garments, but a small part of the advantages of an assistant could possibly be secured. In view of the past history of this school, and its deficiency of accommodations, your Committee feel that too much praise cannot be awarded for what was achieved, even while they are deeply sensible that such achievements were very small in comparison with what they would be under the circumstances of rooms to accommodate such a number of pupils, and afford at least the *shadow of an opportunity* for grading the pupils.

This school has popularly been dignified with the name of "Grammar School," and an impression seems to have prevailed that it was a school of higher grade than others in the district. But it embraces the same variety of pupils and studies that the other schools do ; while the school accommodations of the district make it simply impossible to effect anything in the way of grading any one of the schools.

**PLEASANT STREET.**—The Summer and Fall terms were kept by *Miss H. F. Boardman*, who fully sustained her former reputation as a teacher of youth. The scholars were very respectful and attentive. The progress during these terms was all that could be expected. Whole number of scholars registered 50, with an average of 38.

The Winter term by *Miss S. A. Houghton*. It numbered 61 pupils with an average of 51, and continued ten weeks. Miss H., entered the school under some disadvantages, which it is not necessary here to specify. But in consequence thereof, the school, while making very good attainments in the studies pursued, was not as harmonious, nor as well disciplined as would have been advantageous. Miss H., did not, in the estimate of your Committee, meet with the success that she had formerly achieved in another district. Some difficulties appeared to be beyond the province of your Committee; and others of that nature which can be remedied only by the most cordial understanding of parents and teachers. Still, the pupils made good progress in their studies, considering the very large number dependent upon the unaided efforts of a single teacher.

**NORTH STREET.**—The Summer term of this school was taught by *Miss E. M. Spaulding*. At its beginning the school bid fair to be a profitable one. After it had been in session a few weeks, complaint was made to your Committee, in regard to the Teacher's method of settling some difficulty which arose between herself and one of the scholars. Having investigated the matter, the Committee recommended a course which proved satisfactory and from that time the school progressed pleasantly and with very good results. Whole number of scholars was sixty, with an average of fifty.

The Fall and Winter terms were kept by *Mrs. A. Longfellow*, who acquitted herself with efficiency; and achieved all that can in reason be expected of a school laboring under the disadvantages of very large numbers of every possible class and grade of pupils. The Fall term numbered 56 pupils with an average of 47. The Winter term, 55 with an average of 46. The two terms making sixteen and one half weeks of school.

**SCHOOL STREET.**—The Summer term was under the management of *Miss A. Longfellow*. The whole number of pupils in attendance was 40 with an average of 34. The school was satisfactory to your Committee, being harmonious, well governed and satisfactorily advanced.

The Fall term of this school was kept by *Miss M. R. Lancey*, with a total number of 53 pupils, and an average number of 44. The winter term, kept by the same teacher, numbered, 60 pupils with an average of forty-six.

These terms were like the summer term, satisfactory, and in the opinion of your committee all that can be expected of any school of so large a number of scholars of all the grades that attend our public schools. The three terms make a total of twenty-seven weeks.

This district, comprising the population of the village on the North side of the river, has a most imperative need of very much enlarged school accommodations. During the winter 254 pupils have been in attendance upon the four schools, making an average of 63 1-2 to each school.

This number of pupils of all ages, of all classes, and beyond all possibility of being at all graded among the schools, by reason of the size and localities of our school houses, must necessarily defy all attempts at achieving much more than the mere *form* of a school, by the most able and experienced teacher.

Under such an order of things, it is evident that the funds of the district, as invested in their schools, cannot yield more than 50 per. cent of the benefits that the pupils of our schools might receive under the conditions of increased school room of such form as should admit of a degree, at least, of grading in the schools.

The first difficulty is, there are not sufficient school accommodations in the district for the number of scholars; the 2nd is, the school houses in the district are such in form and location that it is simply impossible to grade the schools in any degree.

Therefore, in the opinion of your committee the district has an imperative need of an *additional* school house, centrally located, and of such dimensions and arrangements as to accommodate two schools, having a Recitation room connected with each school; and designed in every respect for a large school.

The idea of one house so located as to accommodate the village districts on each side of the river, is too narrow an idea; as there are scholars enough to demand a regular grammar school on each side.

Such a union of interests may be demanded, when the time arrives to establish a public High school. But at present the necessity is limited to the supplying of the one district with schools which shall give to the people of the village, educational privileges approximating those enjoyed in our country districts.

**No. 2.** The Summer term of ten weeks was taught by *Miss Susan Whittier*, satisfactorily and efficiently, Whole number of scholars 25, average number 25. The winter term by the same teacher, and was all that may reasonably be demanded in the opinion of your Committee. No closing examination of the winter term was made, as the committee were not informed of the time when it was to close, until Friday P. M., of the week when it closed with the usual morning session of Saturday. The total number in attendance upon the winter term, was 31; average number 25. Length of the term, nine weeks.

**No. 3.** The Summer term of eight weeks, numbering 29 scholars with an average of 19, was taught by *Lydia A. Nason*. When visited on the 11th., of June, it presented a promising prospect. But as no notice of the time of closing was received by the Committee no closing examination was made, and no further information can be giv-

en respecting it, than the statistical information derived from the school register.

The Winter term was taught by *Mr. H. C. Lambert*, and continued ten weeks. It numbered 33 pupils, with an average of 25. *Mr. Lambert* had a happy success, and the district the benefit of one of the best schools in the town.

**No. 4.** There was no Summer term in this district. *Miss Nancy Merrill* was employed to teach the Winter term. This was a small school of only 16 scholars with an average of 10, but we believe a good one. Your Committee were particularly pleased with the appearance of the Reading classes in this school. They equal fully, we think, any class in town in this respect. Much attention was given to this too frequently neglected branch, and both teacher and scholars are worthy of commendation for the advancement made in this and the other branches taught. Length of school twelve weeks.

**No. 5.** *Miss Sarah Littlefield* had charge of the Summer term. It numbered 19 with an average of 12. This is a very backward school, and in consideration of the feeling existing in the district, and lack of proper books, it is not at all surprising. There appears to be almost a determination on the part of some members of the district to be dissatisfied, if others are satisfied. Scholars are quick, usually, to partake of the prejudices of their parents, and hence arises a feeling of dissatisfaction. *Miss L.* was qualified to instruct the school, and willing to do all in her power for their advancement. The order was not as good as it should have been, and the school failed to make the progress on the studies pursued, that we had hoped it might make. The Winter term continued ten weeks under the tuition of *Mr. S. L. Penney*, with a total number of 24, and an average of 12. The same difficulties existed at the commencement of school in regard to the want of books, that has for the past few years. At our first visit, the teacher informed us that in some cases two and even three scholars were obliged to use the same reader or speller. Soon after, your committee informed the Selectmen concerning the matter, who ordered the books most needed to be sent into the district. *Mr. P.* by his perseverance and industry made this a very profitable school to the district. The discipline of the school was good and too much praise cannot be awarded to the teacher for the extra pains he took with his pupils.

**No. 6.** In this district, there has been neither summer or winter school.

**No. 7.** There was a summer and fall term of school in this district. The summer term was under the direction of *Miss Mary E. Lane*. The fall term was taught by *Miss Susan Whittier*. Both teachers sustained the reputation already acquired in town, and gave good satisfaction to all concerned. Whole number of scholars, summer term, 32, with an average of 27. Whole number fall term, 36, with an average of 27.

The winter term of 12 weeks was taught by *Mr. Alonzo Smith*, with marked efficiency, success and harmony among all parties interested. Number of pupils 43, average number 36.

**No. 8.** The summer term of this school was taught by *Miss Alma F. Williams*. This was Miss W.'s first school. Your committee were much pleased with the appearance of the school at the first visit. The scholars were industrious, the teacher interested, and the order excellent. The school was governed, rather by kind and gentle words than the rod, and its appearance at the close equaled the promise at the beginning. Whole No. of scholars 20, average number 14. The winter term by the same teacher, with equally good success, and to the satisfaction of all concerned, we believe. There were 24 names registered, with an average number of 17 in attendance.

**No. 9.** The summer term was taught by *Miss Ellen Rowell*, for five weeks and a fraction, when it closed without the knowledge of your committee, and prematurely, as they understand. Not being informed of any difficulties we had no opportunity to make any efforts in behalf of the school, and deemed it unavailing to institute any investigation after it was closed. Number of pupils 27, average, 20. The winter term was taught by *Mr. H. Smiley*. Of this we are compelled to report—No Register returned, though we suppose the teacher received his wages despite the law enacted for the regulation of such matters.

**No. 10.** This school is under the charge of Canaan.

**No. 11.** *Miss E. J. Witherell* was engaged to instruct this school in the summer. We think Miss W., was one of our most energetic teachers. She gave evidence at the first visit of your committee that she intended to be *mistress* as well as *instructress* and fully sustained herself in that respect. The advancement made was very good. No. of scholars 27, with an average number of 19.

The winter term by *Mr. Wm. T. Symons*, with a total number of 22 pupils, and an average of 16. Your committee think the agent very fortunate in securing the services of a teacher so well adapted to fulfil the duties of his vocation. Considering the shortness of the school the pupils made extra progress in their studies. Your committee do not hesitate in pronouncing this a very profitable school for the District.

**No. 12.** The summer term of this school was under the tuition of *Miss Fannie Dorman*. This was the 2nd term that Miss D. has had charge of the school. She fully sustained, we think, the reputation she acquired during her first term of service, of being a hard-working and *zealous instructress*. She spared no pains on her part to make her school profitable, and succeeded in a very good degree. Number of scholars attending school was 25, with an average number of 20.

The winter term numbering 31, with an average of 25, was under the management of a former instructor, *Mr. Theodore Ames*. This was an industrious school. The co-operation of parents and scholars.

with the teacher, resulted in a profitable term to all concerned.

### District No, 1, South.

**GRAMMAR SCHOOL.**—The summer and fall terms were taught by *Miss M. Pollard*. School quiet, but rather listless, showing no particular indications of thoroughness or energy. Considering the class of pupils in this school, which was rather an advanced class, the committee were rather disappointed in their expectations on examination day. Whole number of pupils was 25 with an average of 20.

The winter term of 9 1-2 weeks was taught by *Mr. G. S. Scammon* and was entirely satisfactory. In justice, however, to any comparisons which may be drawn, it should be stated that Mr. S., had a superior class of pupils. As a whole the ages and qualifications approached more nearly those of the pupils of a regular Grammar school, than the pupils of any school in town. And we think the term demonstrated well the improvement that would be wrought by grading our village schools on both sides of the river. Number of scholars 42, average 36.

**MAINE STREET.**—The summer, fall, and winter terms were under the management of *Miss R. E. Fowler*. The summer term numbered 52 with an average of 46, the fall term 59, with an average of 48, and the winter term 62, with an average of 49.

Miss F., during these terms, has labored diligently for the benefit of her pupils, and with marked success. In the opinion of your committee she is a good teacher and correct disciplinarian.

**MECHANIC STREET.**—The summer and fall terms were taught by *Miss S. A. Houghton*, and evinced a degree of thoroughness, interest and ardor seldom surpassed in a school of primary grade, which this very nearly approaches. Summer term numbered 52, with an average of 41. The winter term by *Mrs. Lorn*, we are able to report as—No Register Returned.

Of this district, (No. 1, South,) your committee have to say as of No. 1, North. It needs enlarged school accommodations. In proof of this, the Mechanic street school during the winter term, registered 76 scholars, with an attendance of 70, on some days. The house has 23 desks, which should accommodate but two scholars each. What can be done in such a case, more than to observe a few of the ferns of a school? A temporary relief might be obtained in this district, by finishing off a Recitation room in the Grammar school house, placing an assistant teacher in the school, and transferring some of the older and more advanced pupils to it. But temporary expedients are generally poor policy in our school system. The best possible course for the district to pursue is to face the necessity bravely, and erect a school house which shall be a model for other districts, and stir them with an ambition to emulate so laudable and praiseworthy an example.

**No. 2.** Summer term of 10 weeks, whole number of scholars 8. with an average of the same number was kept by *Miss Sarah Currier*.

and was satisfactory to your committee in conduct, diligence and effort. Miss Currier devoted herself to her little school, with a commendable degree of patient perseverance, and with good success.

The winter term was commenced by *Mrs Mary Teague*, who was compelled to resign by the sickness of her husband, when the school was put in the charge of *Miss Ellen Hook* who completed the term.— But as the parties concerned do not appear to have thought the school worth the returning of the Register, your committee will not appear to controvert them by any prolonged notice of the school in the absence of the statistical information of the Register

**No. 3.** On the 10th of June last, your committee found a school in session here, under the charge of *Miss—Dunbar*. Nothing farther was heard from it, and on the 30th of July, on visiting the place no school was found. The register has not yet been returned. It is to be hoped that it may be soon, so that the teacher may be entitled to receive pay for her services. Winter term of 10 weeks was kept by *Mrs. Ellen H. Smith*, numbered 18 scholars, and averaged 10. So small a school cannot so excite the mental powers as to give great energy and decision. It tends strongly to produce the listlessness of monotony. But *Mrs. S.*, in the absence of such a cause of mental excitement, together with her pupils, toiled assiduously and patiently, making progress and a good school.

**No. 4.**—No school was kept in this district during the summer months. The winter school of twelve weeks, kept by *Miss Pamela A. Titton*, numbered twelve pupils with an average of ten, and was one of the first class of the schools of the town. Should the residents of the district succeed in investing their school funds for time to come, as well as they have done the past winter, theirs will be a better fortune than school districts average.

**No. 5.**—In this district there was no school during the summer.—The winter school with a total number of 21 pupils and an average of 18, continued fourteen weeks under the charge of *Mrs Mary Pollard*. The discipline was not so good in this school as would have been desirable, still the school made fair progress.

**No. 6.**—The summer term of this school continued ten weeks under the tuition of *Miss Ariana S. Philbrick*. *Miss P.*, was well qualified and showed a willingness to do all that could be required for the good of her pupils. The opinion has prevailed in this district, among the scholars for some time, that the advancement depended wholly on the number of pages gone over, while a thorough knowledge of the same was of but little consequence, which opinion has had a tendency to very much injure the progress of the school.

The winter school of 12 weeks was taught by *C. H. Allen*. Your committee believing the school of not sufficient importance to pay for travelling the distance of a few miles, did not visit this term: which would be sufficient reason to deprive them of pay for their services

from the town. Whole number of scholars registered was 29, with an average of 25.

**No. 7.** The agent employed *Miss Ella L. Prescott* to conduct the summer school, who managed the school with propriety, and with good success. Number of pupils was 17, with an average of 15.

The winter term of 11 weeks was under the instruction of *Miss Dora S. Pollard*. Miss P. manifested a deep interest in the school, and proved herself a correct, thorough and energetic teacher. Your committee were satisfied with the advancement and management of this school, and think it compares favorably with any school in town.

**No. 8.**—The summer term was kept by *Mrs. Ellen H. Smith*. We have no register of the school, and therefore forbear all comments.

The winter term, taught by *Miss Elizabeth S. Jewett*, numbered 20 scholars, and averaged 18. It continued ten weeks. Your committee feel warranted in saying that the district have ample reason for feeling satisfied with what they received as a district school.

**No. 9.**—The summer term of 10 weeks, was kept by *Miss Helen A. Derrill*, with a number of 23, and an average of 17. The school seemed orderly when visited, but that thoroughness was not manifest which we would have been pleased to have seen. The winter term by *Mr. Norris Marston*. When this school was visited (soon after it commenced,) we were satisfied with its appearance; but as your committee were not aware when the school was to close, it was visited but once during the term: therefore we are unable to further report.

Generally speaking, the districts have been favored with able and efficient teachers during the past year. But an able teacher is but one among many elements of good and efficient schools. A more general, genuine and cordial co-operation of parents with teachers is, in the strictest sense essential to the elevation and increased efficiency of our public schools. Would it not be good economy of parents to bestow a tithe of the attention and oversight upon the schools where their children are forming their habits and characters, that they would bestow upon the work of a man, whom they hire to work upon their farm. A more thorough supervision of our schools, also, would be profitable. The visits of the committee, if more frequent, would do much to promote harmony, and might often prevent little matters from ripening into discords, which break up the term of a school, and leave a most deplorable influence to act for years against the interests of the scholars. But if parents would visit the school where their children attend as often as once in two weeks, we think they would realize a more precious benefit for their time, than they would by employing that time in any other manner. Therefore, we would earnestly recommend the parents of the several districts in this town to take a deeper interest in their schools than they have for the past few years. Another reform demanded by our educational interests is, touching the payment of teacher's wages before their Registers are filled up and deposited according



to law. The law is definite upon this point. No teacher is entitled to receive pay for his services until his register is duly filled, signed and deposited with the proper authorities. Upon such a disposal of the registers, the returns of our schools depend. And upon the returns so made, depends the reception of our share of the Public School Fund. This practice opens the way for gross impositions upon the public, and may at any time cause the forfeiture of our town's share of the school funds. Your committee therefore, respectfully suggest that no bill for teacher's wages be paid by the town unless it is accompanied by a certificate showing that the register of the school is duly disposed of.

Another very serious and growing evil in our schools calls for the immediate and prompt action of parents and guardians. It is the evil of Tardiness and Dismissions from school during the hours of school sessions. In some of our schools the pupils are not usually assembled until three quarters of an hour after the time for the school to commence. During this time there is a dropping in of one after another of the pupils; and about the time that this ceases, many of those who have recited begin to make applications to be dismissed upon various pretexts. Except a reform is effected in this, some of our schools must become no more than an empty name and hollow form. School hours should be devoted to study, when recitations are completed for the session. And hopes of progress are a miserable delusion, when the pupil is allowed to entertain the opinion that his work in the school room is ended for the session, when he has recited his lessons for the day. Every pupil who is advanced beyond the primer class should devote school hours to his books, and must do so to achieve any progress. If this evil cannot be checked, some of our schools may nearly or quite as well be dispensed with, and the expense saved for other purposes.

Your committee are aware that it is the perogative and duty of Supt. Committee and teachers to make all necessary rules respecting this evils. They are also made aware that rules framed and adopted by committees and teachers are entirely unavailing respecting this particular evil, unless parents and guardians will earnestly endorse and second the efforts so made. But feeling that this evil is of such magnitude, as to seriously impair the efficiency of schools in which it prevails, your committee, from a sense of duty and right, are compelled to enter upon rigid and determined efforts to suppress it; and in behalf of the interests involved, they respectfully and earnestly solicit the co-operation of parents and guardians.

Let it be understood that scholars will not be dismissed during school hours except in cases of absolute necessity, and that if not present within five or ten minutes of the time appointed for school exercises to commence, they will not be admitted for that session, or, half-day without presenting a satisfactory excuse for the tardiness, in writing from the parents or guardian, and in a little time one of the worst evils

which can beset our schools will cease. Let it be remembered that it is reprehensible unfaithfulness on the part of a teacher to dismiss scholars during school hours, except in cases of necessity, and teachers will be more cautious about getting rid of their pupils before the proper time upon frivolous pretexts, or no pretexts at all.

A case of outside interference which has come to the ears of your committee, cannot be passed in silence. In one of our schools a boy, while under discipline, escaped from the room and ran into the street.

The teacher sent other boys to return him to the school room, and while they were attempting to do so, a young man who was passing, took him away from them and carried him away, with the remark that "the teacher did not rule in the street." It may safely be inferred that the young man is neither a Lawyer nor even a Law Student.— But it should be understood by all parties that such an act of interference is as culpable in law, as to enter the school room and remove a scholar in defiance of the teacher.

Your committee cite this case, as an admonition to any who may suppose there is no breach of the Law respecting schools so long as they do not enter a school house nor assault it. Our laws rigidly guard that Palladium of New England's true grandeur, her Common School System; and make an act of outside interference, like the one spoken of a grave offence. Many other points touching our public schools, are suggested to your committee. But as all cannot be presented in detail, they forbear, with a repetition of the wish that our educational interests may receive from the people increased attention, and an appreciation commensurate with the relations of our Public schools to all that constitutes the prosperity and true dignity of a people. All of is respectfully submitted

C. H. ALLEN,  
C. W. SNOW,

*Superintending School Committee of Skowhegan.*  
Skowhegan March, 7 1864.