1874

Town of Farmington Annual Report of the Selectmen, and of the Supervisor of Schools of the Town of Farmington for the Year Ending February 22d, 1874

Farmington (Me.).

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TOWN OF FARMINGTON.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SELECTMEN,
AND OF THE
SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOLS
OF THE
TOWN OF FARMINGTON,
FOR THE YEAR ENDING
February 22d, 1874.

FARMINGTON:
PRINTED AT NOVELTY JOB PRESS.
1874.
Your Selectmen would respectfully submit the following Report in relation to the financial condition of the Town, together with the amount of receipts and expenditures from February 22d, 1873, to February 22d, 1874.

After taking an Inventory of the real and personal estate, we found the valuation of the Town to be Nine Hundred Twenty-six Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty Dollars ($926,560.00), and the number of Polls to be Eight Hundred and Nine (809)

Upon the polls and estates we assessed the following named sums; to wit,

For State Tax, $7,251 21
   County Tax, 1,521 17
   Support of Schools, 2,610 00
   Support of the Poor, 1,500 00
   Repairs of Roads and Bridges, 6,000 00
   Contingent Fund, 1,000 00
   Defraying Town Charges, 1,500 00
   Paying Interest on Indebtedness, 700 00
   Paying for Hearse, 300 00
   Building New Road, 700 00
   Overlays or Assessments, 1,102 54

$24,184 92

On the 12th day of June, A. D. 1873, we committed lists of said assessments unto Reuben Fenderson, Collector of said Town.

We subsequently committed a supplemental assessment to said Collector amounting to the sum of Three Hundred and Eighty Two Dollars and Fifty Cents ($382 50), making the total committed to the Collector $24,567 42.
**RECEIPTS OF THE TOWN.**

By Louis Voter, Treasurer for fiscal Year ending Feb. 22, 1874.

To cash in the Treasury, as it appeared on settlement made with the Selectmen, March, 1873,

- amount due on bank check, $15.39
- interest on school fund, $2,300.00
- pension certificates, $100.00
- mill tax for 1872, $99.00
- State school fund (bank tax), 1872, $1,122.67
- mill tax for 1873, $381.59
- State school fund (bank tax), 1873, $967.95
- check on Casco National Bank, $649.68
- cash taken for sale of bank stock of S. Stanley, $29.25
- paid by town of Anson, $12.00
- L. B. Pillsbury, liquor agent, $470.93
- A. J. Wheeler for license, $10.00
- town of Dixfield, $8.50
- amount paid by Thomas Hunter, estate of, taxes 1872, $3,003.20
- A. T. Tuck, collector, 1872, $1,216.48
- Reuben Fenderson, collector, 1873, $8,344.11

Total: $20,155.75

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**LIQUOR AGENCY.**

Dr. L. B. PILLSBURY, Agent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 23, 1874.</th>
<th>Dr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To stock on hand February 22, 1873,</td>
<td>$223.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquors bought of State Agent,</td>
<td>1,810.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freight on liquors,</td>
<td>42.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent's salary,</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cash paid into the Town Treasury by Agent for year ending Feb. 22, '74,</td>
<td>470.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $2,747.59

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 23, 1874.</th>
<th>Cr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By amount of sales from Feb. 22, 1873, to Feb. 22, 1874,</td>
<td>$2,519.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales of empty casks,</td>
<td>43.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stock on hand Feb. 23, 1874,</td>
<td>184.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $2,747.59
EXPENDITURES.

Paid school orders, by Amasa Corbett, Treasurer, $ 493.30

" " " Louis Voter, Treasurer, 414.26

interest on Town bonds, 538.50

for Town bonds, 150.00

Alvan T. Hardy, pension, 36.00

Henry McKeen, rent for Quinby, 9.00

Reuben Fenderson, cash and services, Farmington vs. Temple, 21.42

Amasa Corbett, services as Treasurer and surveying, 53.50

L. H. Edwards, services on roads, 5.00

Z. H. Greenwood, damages on sleigh, 6.00

George W. Davis, service as Selectman for 1872, 111.50

Francis G. Butler, for same, 156.75

George W. Cothren, for same, 104.73

estate of Thomas Hunter, Collector Taxes for the year 1870, 38.80

" " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " 1871, 178.10

" " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " 1872, 125.47

Wm. Tarbux, abatement on taxes 1870, 28.71

" " " " " " " " " 1871, 389.59

Chauncey Bangs, abatement on School District 8, 4.75

R. B. Jennings, taking charge Town House, 6.00

N. W. Backue, interest on Town order No. 264, 34.04

Jonas Burnham, for services as Supervisor 1872, 72.50

D. H. Knowlton, printing reports, book, &c., 20.41

J. A. Richards, medical attendance on Marcue, 2.50

T. B. Smith, posting warrant Town meeting, 2.00

Everett Mace, for attending Court, Town vs. Young, 2.00

F. C. Perkins, for attending Court, Farmington vs. Temple, 2.00

I. W. Merrill, for service as Town Clerk 1872, 10.00

Orison Quinby, damage of small pox, 125.50

Hiram Ramsdell & Co., for red flannel for small pox, 33.00

Robert Goodenow, services in the case of Town v. Stanley and als, 25.00

F. G. Butler, witness, 2.00

Joseph S. Craig for use of Town House, 50.00

D. H. Knowlton, blank books, &c., 13.51

John T. Parker, attending Court on the Annis Ames case, 1.00

E. Searles for supplies furnished Huff family, small pox, 20.85

I. W. Merrill, County Treasurer, for costs on location of roads, 30.89

A. T. Tuck, for bill and cost of Town of Strong v. Town of Farmington, 496.19

Samuel Belcher, for services in N. W. Young and Sylvester

Stanley cases, and cash advanced, 202.69

Mrs. James S. B. Norton, for damage received on sidewalk, 40.00

Alvan Currier, for services as witness in S. Stanley case, 5.50

W. F. Cilley, for damage on carriage, 25.00

D. C. Heath, in part pay as Supervisor for 1873, 50.00

New Vineyard, for lawsuit, New Vineyard v. Farmington, 8.86

A. S. C. Hall, for damages at bridge, 15.00

I. W. Merrill, County Treasurer, for rent of office, 40.00

Gilbert Hillman, as witness in the Crocker case, 5.00
EXPENDITURES CONTINUED.

Paid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas H. Day, damages to wagon on Falls bridge</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles F. Bump, as per previous contract</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. D. Tuck, for book</td>
<td>$1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. M. Prince for lighting Falls bridge, and lantern</td>
<td>$11.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm. Marvill, witness in case of N. W. Young v. Town</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. C. Perkins, cash for wood, &amp;c.,</td>
<td>$4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. T. Tuck, in part for collecting taxes for the year 1872</td>
<td>$165.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm. Tarbox, in full, 1870 and 1871</td>
<td>$26.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. G. Butler and others, for cash paid for paupers as per bill, 56 04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine Insane Hospital, for support of Maria Norris, Phebe Hiscock, and Martha Bailey,</td>
<td>$323.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. T. Tuck, collector, abatement on taxes for 1872, 238 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuben Fenderson, 1873, 24 91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; discount 568 57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road bills, and bridges, 8,647 93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry T. Knowlton, for balance due on pauper contract from Oct. 1, 1872 to Oct. 1, 1873, 910 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry T Knowlton, in part on contract from Oct. 1, 1873, to April 1, 1874, 278 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$19,210.45

EXPENSE FOR THE SUPPORT OF PAUPERS.

For the Pauper Year ending April 1st, 1847.

Your Overseers contracted with Henry T. Knowlton, for the support of the following named paupers, from April 1, 1873, to April 1, 1874; to wit. James Fulsom, Annie Moore, Jerusha Howes, Hannah French, James Foot and family, Philena Watson, Daniel Witham, Widow Thomas Daggett, Elias Bailey, Wm. H. Day and family, together with all other paupers that are now being helped; or have been helped the past year, or all that he has received notice from the Selectmen, together with all that may become chargeable thereafter to the Town, after notice from the Overseers of the Poor of said Town, excepting insane paupers, for the sum of one thousand one hundred dollars, to be paid by the Town semi-annually.

- Maine Insane Hospital for the support of Maria Norris, Phebe Hiscock and Martha Bailey, $323.16
- Dr. J. A. Richards for medical attendance upon French family, $2.50

$1,425.66
RESOURCES OF THE TOWN.

Amount in the hands of Reuben Fenderson, Collector for 1873, $7,450 93
" " A. T. Tuck, " " 1872, 695 33
due from other Towns, 215 18
" " Susan Dyer, 25 07
in the hands of Louis Voter, Treasurer, non resident taxes, 40 30
same, notes bearing interest, 546 46
same, cash, 945 30

$9,918 57

LIABILITIES.

Interest bearing town orders and accrued interest, $1,237 82
Bonded debt, with accrued interest, 9,126 25
Town orders awaiting payment by the Treasurer, 113 72
School orders " " " " 663 09
Amount due the several school districts, being balance undrawn, 615 33

$11,756 21

Deduct resources of the Town, 9,918 57

$1,837 64

ESTIMATES FOR THE ENSUING YEAR.

For Support of Schools, $2,610 00
" " Poor, 1,500 00
defraying Town charges, 1,500 00
paying interest on Town debt, 600 00
roads and small bridges, 6,000 00
contingent fund, 1,000 00

$13,210 00

All of which is respectfully submitted,

G. W. COTHREN,
F. C. PERKINS,
GEO. GOWER,
Selectmen of the Town of Farmington.
SCHOOL REPORT.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOLS

OF THE

TOWN OF FARMINGTON.

March 2d, 1874.

FARMINGTON:

PRINTED AT NOVELTY JOB PRESS.

1874.
CITIZENS OF FARMINGTON:

In compliance with the laws of the State, I submit the following as my first Annual Report of the condition and needs of our Public Schools.

Before I render you an account of my stewardship, I deem it just to myself to state that I consented to take the office for a single year, not because I coveted its meagre honors and more meagre emoluments, but because of a willingness to do anything in my power for the good of that portion of our community to whose welfare we are not only commissioned by the State to attend, but also obligated by the natural affections, and the direct commands of God. I have ever kept in view the responsibility of the position and its power for good or evil; and I feel conscious of having met that responsibility and used that power, as fairly and fully as my own weakness and other attendant circumstances would allow. With what success my efforts have been attended I leave you and the future to decide.

I would not undertake, in this report, to be wise above my years and experience, and so I lay aside, for the time, any peculiar educational theories I may have, and content myself with performing for you the duties of a photographer; who shall first remove the curtain that your school world may photograph itself, and then, acting upon the assumption that you will not be pleased with the likeness, shall suggest, as only experience and observation warrant, how you may secure a better picture at the next and every succeeding sitting.

I began the work incident to the office without any just idea of the condition of our schools, not having been familiar with them for the last ten years, and having received no records of their status from my predecessor, except an incomplete list of school registers covering a part of the last two years. I was therefore surprised when I learned the exact state of things, because I had received the impression, through various sources, that it was a part of Farmington’s creed that there are no schools like her own; and I write under the full consciousness of the fact that, in dissenting from this creed, I shall be called heretical, ignorant, and unpatriotic in the extreme.

During the year I have issued 35 teacher’s certificates and rejected six applicants for the same. Though the last action naturally caused some ill feeling, and in the case of a few schools deferred the time for commencement,
yet the result was so manifestly conducive to the interest of the schools applied for, that I recommend to my successor a more careful sifting than I have practised.

I have not once been called upon to decide questions arising between parents and teachers relative to punishment, yet in two instances have been asked to dismiss the teacher. In one case the complaint was "incompetency," in the other, "a lack of interest in the school, on the part of the teacher." After a due investigation of both cases I came to the conclusion—which the facts inevitably demanded—that, in the main, the charges were unjust, and that the good of the schools would be better subserved by the retention of the teachers, than by their dismissal, and acted accordingly. In one case, however, the school, though acknowledging the fairness of the decision, yet appealed from it to their own prejudices which suggested to them the removal of the stove from the schoolroom. This being done, the teacher, without my knowledge, concluded to vacate the field for the man whom the district had thus unfairly tried to obtain.

I have made 95 visits to the 24 different schools, and since many of them are remote from the center and from each other, it has required over 50 days' time and over 430 miles of travel. Some of these visits have extended through an entire session, while others were not more than an hour in length, yet all long enough to note the spirit of the schoolroom and the excellencies and defects of many of its exercises. These visits have usually been so timed as to insure my finding both teachers and pupils in their "every-day clothes."

As a general thing the teachers have impressed me with a strong conviction of their fidelity and zeal. Some of them have worked from early morn till late at night, and even freely expended their money for books and apparatus, that they might make their schools the best possible. Often they have shown their anxiety for their charge in promptly and frankly soliciting suggestions and criticisms on their methods; and whenever I have made these, directly or indirectly, by conducting an exercise for them, I have never had occasion to suspect that it was not well received and, in a majority of cases, acted upon: Indeed, so faithful and hardworking have they been, as a class, that I feel justified in saying that the schools of the town have never received more attention and enthusiasm. But, by the nature of the case that attention and enthusiasm were not allowed to procure their legitimate fruits; notwithstanding all this well directed effort much less has been accomplished during the entire year than might have been realized in a single month had the circumstances been different.

"But what hindrances have the existing circumstances furnished?" you ask. In reply I will first speak of the condition of the schools as regards

**TEXT BOOKS.**

Inasmuch as our schools are not over-stocked in the number of text books, I consider them exceedingly rich in the variety they furnish. I found but four series of readers in use, though the fifth would have been brought in
had I allowed it. In one school there were six classes in reading, for eleven scholars; in another, five classes for seven scholars; in another, seven classes for thirteen scholars; in another, five classes for five scholars (the scholars in that school must be gratified to know that one can make a "class," and that it is so easy a matter for them to gain the prize for "leaving off at the head the most times"), and in still another, eight classes! I should add, that the schools where one finds eight classes are just the schools where the parents demand that the teacher shall "read them round four times a-day."—If the teacher complies with this modest request, she has thirty-two exercises in reading!—to say nothing of the multiplicity of other studies usually found in such a school.

In arithmetic one school had six classes; several had seven; and one, eight classes for only ten scholars! One of the patrons of this last school intimated to me in modest terms, that I was "the meanest man that ever stepped" because I suggested a change in books.

There were but five different series of text books in this study, yet one of these series consists of six books! When asked where such a book was obtained, the reply would be: "Susie brought it home from B—," or "Mr. X sold it to me," or "It is the one we used when we lived in——."

There have been in use but five different series of books in grammar. But it seems that the schools were authorized to use three of the five; and people about to purchase a text book in this study would come to me and ask, "shall I get Kerl's, or Tower's or March's?" and one good woman after asking the question added in despair, though still maintaining her common sense, "I should think our Town needed a thorough going over in the matter of text books." I suggest that she be a member of the next school board.

But before we enter upon the exciting subject of geography, let me subjoin a list of text books used in a school of eighteen pupils. For this list I am indebted to Mr. Craig, the teacher in No. 16:

**Readers:**—Progressive Fifth, Third, Primer; National Fourth, Third, First; Wilson's Second.

**Arithmetics:**—Greenleaf's Common School, Practical, Primary; French's Elementary.

**Geographies:**—Guyots'; Hall's (one that was brought from the village district before they were introduced into the schools of the Town); Cornell's; Colton & Fitch's; Coltons' Quarto.

**Grammar:**—Weld & Quackenbos'; Dalgleish's; Fowler's; Kerl's.

**Algebra:**—Greenleaf's.

**Spellers:**—Progressive; National.

Such a variety of text books, and so many in a series, coupled with the demand of the parents and scholars, made for one teacher thirty-seven recitations; for another thirty-eight; for another forty-two, and for another forty-six!—giving the pupil seven minutes for going to the recitation, reciting (if the class recited in concert), and returning to his seat; and not allowing any time to the teacher for the explanation of the lesson.
This brings me to the study of geography. In the different schools there were five classes for eight scholars; three for seven; five for eleven; four for ten; in two schools, four for five scholars; in another, three for three scholars, and in another, seven for fourteen! And one teacher in her confusion, or else calmly anticipating what she thought might soon be the case, reported: “No. of classes in geography, three. No. of pupils in a class, none.”

I cannot forbear mentioning also the variety of text books, by which “confusion was worse confounded.” There were Warren’s “Primary” and “Common School,” Colton and Fitch’s “Introductory” and “Modern,” Guyot’s “Common School,” Colton’s “Quarto,” Mitchell’s “Primary” and “Intermediate,” Smith’s “Primary” and “Quarto,” and Cornell’s “First Steps,” “Intermediate” and “Grammar School.” I am not sure that Smith’s and Mitchell’s were used in the schools though they were given the teacher in exchange for new books.

Ponder this list of classes and books, before we take the next step! Do you wonder that the teacher became distracted, the scholar more so, and that we sought a remedy for this state of things? Of these series, Cornell’s was the last introduced—over nine years ago!—and but few scholars could be found who had gained from it any considerable geographical knowledge during these nine years. In attempting to learn its host of unnecessary map questions they had acquired a wonderful facility at forgetting. Of its descriptive part they knew comparatively nothing. And it is not strange that it should be so, since that portion of the book is hardly more than a compilation of statistics,—and those fifteen years behind the time, and in some copies, even twenty-five years behind, thus robbing Boston of 73,000 of her population, and Portland of over 5000. On the whole, it is about as well adapted to the study of geography as “Haydn’s Dictionary of Dates” would be to the study of history, except that the latter book is correct, while the former is now incorrect. For example, it refreshes our memory of former days with the statement that “Russian America is a colonial possession of Russia,” thus depriving the United States of one of her territories. It flatters the Monarchists of France with the idea that their country is still an Empire, that they have not lost Alsace and Lorraine, and that their enemy, Germany, is nothing but a Kingdom. It regales Pius IX. with the cheering news that he is still King of the Papal States, and that Florence is still the capital of Italy. It cheats Canada out of British Columbia and Manitoba, and does not recognize Sarmiento’s Argentine Republic, which he is so carefully modeling after our own government. It sends its students to California by way of the Isthmus or by “rounding Cape Horn,” and to the East Indies by the way of Good Hope.

In the light of all of these facts I felt myself driven to the task which I
undertook. I concluded that a poor text book in reading, grammar and arithmetic could be endured better than one in geography; for different series of readers and arithmetics do not differ essentially, and grammar should be taught without a book; while a text book in geography but ten years old would be unsafe authority in these days of unparalleled progress and of governmental and territorial changes.

I saw that, at a single stroke, I might rid the schools of a poor book, furnish them with an excellent one, and secure uniformity. I decided to do so. I began the introduction in the usual way, but the resistance of a few districts obliged me to resort to "unheard of measures." With the result, most are familiar and a few indignant.

The book introduced has so widely and successfully recommended itself that I need not speak of it further than to say that I sought the book before its agent sought me. I advised with the leading instructors in the Town as to its merits, and before introducing it, I subjected it to a still better test, by putting it into two schools, and into the hands of several teachers, and carefully watching the results.

I congratulate the Town that it now has a book which gives such universal satisfaction; but I congratulate it more that it has but two classes in this study in any of its schools. (I should modify this last statement by saying that I allowed the use of Guyot's in a few schools for reasons which I will mention in another place.) In the same school where before there were seven classes there are now two classes, one numbering eleven and the other seventeen. I would that every doubter of the expediency of the change, could have heard this last class recite, and witnessed their enthusiasm.

Over two hundred (200) copies of "Our World Series" have been put into the schools, yet a few parents have saved (?) their forty-seven cents and kept the old book, expecting the next administration to allow its use. I therefore warn my successor that unless he be vigilant, and exercise his proper authority, it can be said, that "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

But the schools are still in the wilderness as regards other studies, and I shall not do my whole duty unless I suggest a way to "the light beyond."

The reading books should be changed; not so much because they are unfit for the use to which they are put, as because they are becoming exceedingly distasteful to the pupils. Who enjoys reading his daily paper for the fiftieth time? Is it strange then that the school boy gets tired of his reading book and seeks the ten-cent novelette? I predict a happy time, not far distant, when all text books shall be issued for one-half their present price, and when reading books especially shall be sent forth as our periodicals are.
Why would not "The Nursery," "St. Nicholas," and "Harper's," or "Scribner's Monthly" make a good series of reading books? With these in every family a taste for the best literature would be cultivated, and the sensational books and papers now found in so many of our households supplanted. Why should not the child be gaining valuable historic and scientific information at the same time he is learning to read? My predecessor did an excellent thing for the schools when he introduced "The Child's Book of Nature." Scholars have learned more from it in a single term than they have learned from the "National Readers" in five years. But the contents of this book are no longer news to the children, and they rightfully demand something more.

If the text books are changed the *five* classes can easily be reduced to four. If they are not changed the reduction should be made by throwing out the "Third Reader," which is nearly as difficult as the "Fourth."—Much would also be gained by substituting for the "Fifth" a book in United States or English history.

The spelling book and parsing book should be banished, and the reading book made to serve in their stead.

A change should also be made in arithmetic. The Common School Arithmetic should be changed for the Practical. The primary class should be taught orally, then the Mental Arithmetic should be taken and mastered, after which written arithmetic can be finished in two years. I am strong in the belief that more can be accomplished in this study in six years than is now done in twelve. The teachers are to be blamed here. Scholars have been found "ciphering" in exchange who were not able to write a simple number no higher than millions; others working in profit and loss could not add two fractions; many classes in fractions could not recite the multiplication table; some were "beginning" the book for the eighth time; and in but few schools did the pupils understand anything of the principles underlying the rules I have yet to learn that algebra is of any practical benefit to those who do not contemplate a course in the higher mathematics. I suggest therefore that it give place to history, physiology, and book-keeping, now so much neglected. The various text books in grammar should give place to one, and that should be used rather as a book of reference than as an exercise book. It is an unfortunate thing that the people are so thoroughly indoctrinated with the idea that "parsing" makes a good grammarian.

These needed changes in books can best be brought about by adopting the plan of

**FREE TEXT BOOKS.**

The laws of the State authorize towns to "raise money to provide school books for the use of pupils in their public schools." Bath, Lisbon, Lowiston,
IV

and towns in the eastern part of the state have tried the plan and all report its favor. I copy the following from Mr. Dike's report of the schools of Bath for 1872:

"From our five years experience in Bath, we can confidently recommend this plan to all cities in the State, as the best and cheapest method of providing school books. The towns and plantations will also find it to their advantage to adopt the same plan."

I think I foresee other benefits that would be derived from this plan besides cheapness, uniformity, and the ease of changing.

If the town furnish text books, the teacher's desk will be supplied and her efficiency increased, because she will then probably look the lessons over before the scholar is called upon to recite, a thing which many of our teachers now fail to do.

But better than all, the teacher and supervisor can classify the schools. As it is, parents and scholars make out the scheme that the teacher must pursue. The consequence is most scholars take studies beyond their years and too many studies at the same time. Most of the classes in reading are one and some of them two grades too high. If the teacher attempts to put a scholar back, he puts in the plea that he has no other book and that his parents will not buy him a new one. But if the Town furnish text books, the teacher or supervisor can put into the hands of a scholar precisely the book he needs.

DRAWING.

Educators generally now concede that free-hand and mechanical drawing should be taught in our common schools, since it can be taught as easily as penmanship or arithmetic, and that too by teachers who have themselves received no instruction in the art.

It should be added to our list of studies. The farmers and mechanics of the country need this aid as much as the artisan of the city.

The scholar needs no material for this except a slate and pencil, and the teacher nothing but the hand-book of blackboard drawing, written by Mr. Walter Smith, of Boston. Furnished with this the teacher can easily unite drawing, object-teaching and recreation in the same exercise.

The laws of the State also provide that "any town may annually make provisions for giving free instruction in industrial or mechanical drawing to persons over fifteen years of age either in a day or evening school." I believe that $100 of the school money can not be better expended than in employing the drawing teachers of the Normal School to give two evening lessons a week during the winter months; and especially since we are not burdened with literary entertainments.

SCHOOL HOUSES.

There are twenty-three school houses in Town, of which five are good, ten
bad, and eight indifferent; and all of them monuments of the truth of "total depravity." Many of them were, naturally, fitting objects for the development of one's evil propensity, and after being somewhat defaced, they became standing invitations to future schools, to carve, draw and "smash."

When the boy is asked why he mutilates and marks the school building he very shrewdly, if not reasonably, replies: "The town don't care much for me or else it would furnish a better school house, and so I don't care much for the town."

No reasonable man will say that our school houses, as a class, are such as we ought to have; certainly they are not such as we should have if men went to school instead of children. The church, where we sit but an hour each week, must have a cushioned seat. But the school house seat, where more than ten years of life are spent—or should be—and at a time too when the body can not endure the hardships that it can in later life, is as uncomfortable as it could conveniently be made; and quite as antagonistic to the laws of a normal physical development.

Does not this fact explain, in part, the reason why so few parents visit the school or attend its public examination? They can't endure the hard seats, and impure air, for even an hour. At the last examination of our Grammar School the few visitors would sit first in one seat, then in another, then stand awhile, and, if one was so fortunate as to get a chair, he felt like doing violence to the laws of etiquette by clinging to it. And at the close, one after another was heard to say, "I am very tired;" "I don't see how these scholars stand it."

But what method shall we pursue to better our condition in regard to school houses? For the answer, read remarks on "The Abolition of the District System."

APPARATUS.

The farmer does not expect his "hired man" to furnish his own hoe and rake, much less to work without them. Neither should he expect the teacher to furnish the apparatus which should belong to every school, or consider it economy to allow him to teach without this aid. Every study should have its material for illustration. With this material the teacher can impart much instruction without any effort on the part of the child.

Only about three square yards of so indispensable a piece of furniture as a blackboard, is allowed to most of the schools; and that is generally so glossy or rough as to be wholly unfit for use. Agents might improve many of these at an expense of fifty cents.

During the year the village schools have been supplied with maps, globes, clocks, cases, and the nucleus of a teacher's library; No. 9 has been furnished with maps; No. 20 was furnished last year with a few maps and a globe; and No. 28 has the remains of some maps that were furnished many
years since. With these exceptions not a school room in Town has the sim­plest piece of apparatus. Some of them do not even contain a chair; and in many, this article is so "under the weather" as to constantly jeopardize the dignity of its occupant.

Every school room should be furnished with a dictionary, globe, maps, charts, clock, thermometer, tape-line marked for feet and links, or better still a Gunter's chain, a foot rule, yard stick and other measures of length as well as of capacity.

The school should collect its own cabinet of minerals, soils, woods, plants, seeds of common kinds of grass, grain, and zoological specimens. And by exhibitions, or otherwise, it should furnish the walls with pictures and thus relieve them of their barnlike, dingy, cheerless aspect.

It cannot be that the people are informed as to section 39 of the school laws, and I therefore transcribe a portion of it hoping that the districts may take advantage of this permission and greatly increase the efficiency of their schools: "A district may appropriate not exceeding one-tenth of its school money for any year, to purchase a school library and apparatus for the use of the schools therein."

TEACHERS AND TEACHING.

More important than anything I have yet urged, is the employing of good teachers; and the retention of them is still more important. I am aware that our agents have a good motive in seeking for the cheap teacher. They do so that they may lengthen the school. But such a teacher is far from being the most profitable. Eight weeks of good school is worth more to the scholar than a sixteen weeks burlesque on schools. Many of those who keep school and hear lessons have not the slightest claim to the title of teacher. It is an exploded theory that teachers are born not made. Our best educators are now a unit in the belief that the teacher needs a special training as much as those, nay more than those, of any other profession. No other work compares in importance, with hers. She need not clamor for the right of suffrage, for she already has a power to mould the nation, which no right of ballot could give. Until teaching is recognized as a profession to be prepared for and followed as any other profession, our scholars will not receive the culture that they may and ought to receive. And here let me say that, in my opinion—and this opinion has been strengthened by the experience of the last year—we make a mistake in not employing more teachers who have fitted themselves for the work by a course in the Normal School. Such teachers may at first stifle their individuality in method and machinery, but after a time they will use these properly and be more efficient because of their use. Of the thirty-nine teachers employed during the year only eight were students or graduates of the Normal School. Other towns draw largely upon this school for teachers and seem to be delighted at the results. We do not succeed in keeping even our own little delegation of students who have received the benefits of this school. As soon as they graduate they go to other towns where, as they say, they get better pay, do better work, do it more easily, and get more credit for it on the part of the people.

Another mistake under which some of our good people labor, is, that inexperienced and even ignorant teachers will do well enough for a school where the scholars are small. But if such persons must sit at the teacher's desk, let it not be in the primary school, where the work is the most difficult, if properly done, and where should be the most discriminating talent, lest there be irreparable injury done. Wrong habits of mind or study acquired
in youth can never be wholly eradicated, and affect the life course of study.
In two respects more than all others do the German schools surpass our own.
With them the best teachers are put in the primary schools; and when a
teacher enters upon the business of teaching he enters upon his life work.

And this leads me to remark that such a frequent change of teachers, as
we indulge in, is a stumbling block in the way of the scholar's progress. In
only five schools have the same teachers been employed for the whole school
year; and it was very evident that those schools had gained one-third more
than those which employed a new teacher for every term. It would be an
excellent plan to hire by the year, especially where one is sure that he is
negotiating with a good teacher. I think we should find it profitable also,
everything considered, to employ more female teachers for the winter schools;
since a good female teacher costs no more than a poor male teacher. If "the
boys are so large that a female teacher cannot manage them," then they are
large enough to manage themselves. If they have not that politeness and
self-respect that will secure their obedience, it is time they were taught these
other methods than "school flogging." They should be handed over to
higher authorities and dealt with as "small men" rather than "big boys."

But we cannot expect to retain good teachers for the pay we give. The
average wages paid female teachers is $5.06 per week including board, or
$3.30 per week excluding board—about one-third as much as a woman may get
in a woolen mill. The average length of our schools is eighteen weeks;
hence the yearly wages of the teacher is $91.08—a less sum than we pay for
the support of a town pauper. It is true we can find teachers enough for the
wages we now pay, and in the case of many of them the pay should not be
increased till their efficiency is increased. But we want the best teachers;
and we ought to pay them such a salary as to retain them through the year.
Remember that some teachers are cheap at any price, and others dear if
they cost us nothing.

Finally, the examination and proof of fitness should precede, not follow, the
selecting of a teacher. And he person who is delegated to find out her fitness
and superintend her work, is the one to whom the selecting should be given.

ABOLITION OF THE DISTRICT SYSTEM.

In attempting to prescribe remedies for the defects in our school manage­
ment, I have thus far written under the supposition that the old district
system is to remain in force. And while I have suggested changes that can
and should be made under such a system, yet I can hardly believe that they
will be made so long as that system remains, since it stands in the way of
every other needed reform.

To rid ourselves of this barrier to our progress, is our plain and immedi­
date duty; and having rid ourselves of it, we should substitute for it the so-
called "town plan."

Under this plan the town takes possession of all the school property, after
it has been appraised, and a tax equal to the amount of appraisement, has
been levied and remitted to the tax-payers of the several districts. The
Town is then to control the schools through its supervisor or committee,
who is to discharge the duties of both agent and inspector.

The advantages of this system are numerous. We mention a few of the
most patent:

1st. It is less expensive. By consulting the annexed table of statistics it
will be seen that the average number of pupils in a school is eighteen. This
number could be doubled, or even tripled, and then give only a fair sized
school for one teacher, provided the school was well classified. By doubling
the number of scholars in a school, we reduce our twenty-four schools to
twelve; and lessen the expenses in the same ratio, provided we pay no more
for teachers than we do now. There have been in attendance upon the pub­
lic schools during the last year 244 scholars under 11 years of age. This
number could easily be put into eight primary schools. The number between
11 and 15 years of age, is 185. These could be put into four grammar
schools. The remaining 143—the number over 15 years of age—could be
distributed between the grammar schools and the high school. This reduces
our twenty-four schools to thirteen. The expense of fuel, insurance, repairs,
and supervision would also be reduced. But a saving of only one-fourth of the
present expense, is a saving of nearly $1000; and this would more than pay
the expense of transporting scholars to the central school.

I think we must conclude, when we compare the return we now get with
that which we should undoubtedly get under the proposed system, that quite
one-half of our school expenditure is wasted. It costs us as much to furn­
ish the same degree and kind of education to our smallest school (six
pupils) as to our largest school (fifty-two pupils). Is this shrewd management?
No sagacious business man would tolerate such a waste for a moment.
Again, in a small or ungraded school the teacher loses enthusiasm, the
scholar loses the spirit of emulation and "gets but three-fourths of the time
which the teacher could devote to him if in a graded school. Small and
ungraded schools cost enormously. We cannot afford them.

2d. It is not so unjust. Referring again to our table of statistics we find
that one district had thirty-one weeks' schooling while another had but eight
weeks! Have we a right to take funds from the common treasury to give
one child nearly four times as much schooling as we give another? And
have we a right to intensify this injustice by giving the former child a teacher
costing $15 per week, and the latter one costing only $5.00 per week? If
one man pay the same tax as another he should have the same return for it.

On the other hand, that is not a judicious, if fair arrangement by which a
man in No. 5 pays but 27 cents per week for the education of his own child;
while he pays $1.40 per week, or over five times as much, for the education
of his neighbor's child, in No. 21.
The tax-payer in the small district should oppose our present system be­
cause it is exceedingly unjust to him. The tax-payer in the large district
should likewise oppose it because it is very expensive to him.

3d. It gives us better school-houses. Many districts are so small as to be
unable to build such school-houses as the laws of health and propriety de­
mand. But the Town can build such houses as shall bring honor to itself,
blessings to its children, and a fair pecuniary return in the increased value of
its farms.

4th. It will give us longer schools. Under the town system we could give
every child thirty weeks school for the same money we now pay for eighteen
weeks—the average length of our schools.

5th. It will give us better teachers, because we can afford to pay more for
them; and paying more for them, we can hope to retain them.

6th. It will secure for us the intended benefit of the Supervisor's office, since
he will hire the workmen whom he superintends, and carefully lay out the
work they are to do.

7th. It will prevent all local jealousies, and secure an impartial adminis­
tration; besides practically settling all district feuds which now exist and all
discussions as to district boundaries.
The only objection which can, with any show of reason, be urged against this change, is, that it will remove the school too far from some. But which do you prefer, eight weeks of poor school one mile distant, or thirty weeks of good school two miles distant? Besides, we can petition the legislature to allow us to raise money to provide for the conveyance of pupils to and from school, raise such money, expend it, and then run our schools with but a slight increase of expense.

Is our town sparsely settled? Not more so than are some towns in Massachusetts which voluntarily abolished the district system; and certainly not more so than the many other towns for whom the State abolished it—and that too by an almost unanimous vote, there being but nine dissenting votes in the House, and none in the Senate. And those towns are now "regretting that the change had not been made sooner."

**FREE HIGH SCHOOL.**

I hope I may be pardoned in again bringing to your notice a subject upon which you have once formally acted, and whose merits seemed so evident to you as to be decided without discussion. I do this not merely because some seem to be uninformed on the subject, and others misinformed, or because our leading educators see the establishment of such a school to be our first duty, but rather because many of our young men and women are pleading for it. Shall we longer stand in their light?

During the year 130 new Free High Schools have been started, and have given instruction to 9000 pupils at an expense of $36,000. We must bear our burden of the resulting State tax. Shall we pay the tax still another year and receive no direct benefit therefrom? It has been said that we gain nothing by this State aid, inasmuch as the money she gives us is what she by taxation takes from us. But it has been found that "not one of the 130 towns pay to the State as their proportion of the Free High School tax, half as much as they have received from the State, and a majority of them not a quarter as much."

If I am rightly informed we pay 1-200 part of the State tax, and hence our tax for these schools will amount to $75. Had we spent $1000 in maintaining a High School our town would have received from the State over $400, or six times as much as we should have paid the State. It is plain that this ratio should be as it is, since so many cities and larger towns pay from six to twenty times as much as they receive back. Shall we not err if we do not establish a school we so much need, while we may receive the aid of the State?

Massachusetts finds it politic to compel every town having 500 families to maintain such a school for ten months in the year; and 28 towns not required to support such schools, have established them. Popular, free education is her policy and her schools bear ample testimony to the efficiency of such a policy.

But we have 750 families and 300 scholars over 15 years of age, and yet no high school!

Our private schools do not "contain all the scholars who would attend such a school." There have been 143 scholars over 15 years of age in attendance upon our public schools; these added to the 40 who have attended the private schools (many of whom would attend a public school of the character of the one I advocate) gives us 183 scholars over 15 years of age who have actually attended school during the year. But even half of this number would be more than a high school could well teach. Moreover, there are others who are not able to attend a private school, and others who refuse to attend, who would attend a first-class high school.
If our pupils over 15 years of age are "not fitted for a high school" it is a sad commentary on our system, and we may rest assured they never will be prepared so long as things remain as they are, and we have no high school to membership in which they may aspire. Before we talk of compulsory education let us put a good school before our scholars to draw them. Have our "public schools outlived their usefulness?" Then we have entered upon an age when our ignorance shall circumscribe our freedom.

Do any oppose this school because they find the private schools meeting their wants, and are able to patronize such? To say nothing of the selfishness and anti-republican tendency of such action, it is engendering a monopoly more disastrous than any other which may threaten us.

The matter of distance is often over-rated. It is a matter of fact that, in those towns in which they have established such a school, the scholars from the remote districts are most anxious to improve the superior advantages offered. They are the most prompt. They are the best scholars. And I am not prepared to say that this superiority is not due to the fact that they walk two miles to school. The more distant sections of the Town can contract with individuals to transport their scholars to the central school, at but slight expense to themselves or the Town.

One first-class school is better for all concerned than two second rate schools, even though the latter may be much more convenient than the former.

A school costing $1000 would tax us only half a mill on a dollar. Shall it be said of us that to save this amount we refused our sons and daughters the privileges of a high school education?

**GENERAL SUMMARY.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<td>Amount appropriated to the support of Public Schools</td>
<td>$2,610 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of valuation appropriated to &quot; &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratio of amount appropriated to Public Schools to whole amount raised by taxation</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of persons in town between 4 and 21 years of age</td>
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<td>No. registered in Winter Schools</td>
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<td>No. of different pupils registered during the year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average No. attending Public Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; &quot; Private &quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of attendance in Public and Private Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average No. of scholars in a School</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of scholars belonging to fractional districts and educated in other towns</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of scholars over 15 years of age attending Public Schools</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; between 11 and 15 &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; under 11 years of age &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>244</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average length of Schools in weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; cost per week of educating a scholar</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; &quot; year &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; for twelve years, or school life</td>
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<td>No. of male teachers employed</td>
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<td>&quot; female &quot;</td>
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<td>Average wages of male teachers per month, excluding board</td>
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<td>&quot; cost of board per week for male teachers</td>
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<td>&quot; wages of female teachers, excluding board</td>
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<td>&quot; cost of board per week for female teachers</td>
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<td>Amount of tuition paid Private Schools</td>
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### STATISTICAL VIEW OF THE SCHOOLS.

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<th>No. of the District</th>
<th>Average No. of scholars, attending school</th>
<th>No. of scholars between 11 and 15 years of age attending school</th>
<th>No. of scholars between 11 and 15 years of age attending school</th>
<th>Length of school in weeks</th>
<th>Portion of school money</th>
<th>Amount given to small districts</th>
<th>Total amount of school money</th>
<th>Cost per week, meeting 20 scholars</th>
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<td>1,239 70</td>
<td>$150 15</td>
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<td>30 80</td>
<td>19 20</td>
<td>50 00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YOUR PARDON GOOD SIRS, THE TABLE IS SPREAD!

D. C. HEATH,
SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOLS.

Farmington, March 2d, 1874.