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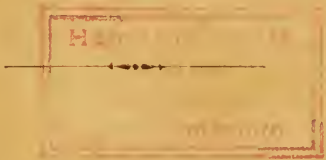
— OF THE —

SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

— OF THE —

Town of Lee, N. H.,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH, 1863.



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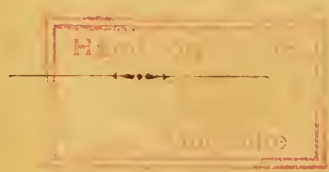
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REPORT.

The School Committee regret to say that, at the time of making up this Report, their Chairman, who last year performed the duty so acceptably and so well, has been unable to take much part in its preparation. Nor will it be necessary to repeat here what was so properly and so pointedly said in the printed Report of last year. We would commend many suggestions in that Report to a careful reperusal.

In connection with the reports of the individual districts, the Committee desire to make a few suggestions in regard to the number of school districts in town, the condition of our school houses, and the character of our schools generally. We have hesitated, however, about imposing a long sermon upon the reader's attention or a tax upon his pocket. Still, we *do* think the prosperity and success of our schools will depend much upon the interest which the citizen feels in them, and the earnestness with which he investigates and discusses their wants. It is folly to waste means in poor schools. It is folly to pay taxes and not derive the best benefit in return.

The town of Lee expends annually some seven hundred dollars for the support of schools in our seven school districts. That is, in the course of a generation, we expend a sum amounting to *twenty thousand dollars*, or upwards. Has this sum been profitably expended? Is the annual appropriation, at present, doing its best possible work in schools of marked excellence and character? Do we get what we pay for? This matter interests tax-payers, pe-

cuniarily ; and, as a matter of educational interest, it appeals to earnest and thoughtful parents with still greater force.

Estimating the good which our schools accomplish, humble as they often are, we may well say this amount of means *has* been profitably expended ; but whether most profitably, is another question, and one that can be very easily answered. From the very circumstances of the case, our schools are somewhat defective in their organization and discipline—are often under the care of incompetent teachers, and often sadly fail to accomplish the best results. The school is sometimes *no school at all*—sometimes worse than none, for bad teaching only renders crooked what the skillful hand must afterwards labor to make straight. It is not a wise parent who puts his children under the *deforming* hand of a clumsy, incompetent or soulless workman. The hand that shapes the spirit and moulds the character of the young being, even in the school room, holds a fearful office. No where, except at the home altar, is wisdom more needful. Poor “preaching” *can* be endured ; but poor “teaching” ought never to be. This is truth, though bluntly expressed.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

We are inclined to think, and we may as well say, that with a better organization of school districts, a more effective system of school management, a more lively interest on the part of parents, one half the money now expended would serve us as well as the whole does. Will it not be wise, then, to look into this matter and see if our schools cannot be made more efficient, even with our present means? We think so. And though improvement is sometimes slow in its progress, right reflection may often ripen into good action.

If our town *could* be properly districted, four or five

districts would be better than the present seven. But some families would suffer inconvenience, perhaps. We cannot *all* be accommodated, always, in these school matters. We can only accept our individual fortune in a self-sacrificing spirit and rejoice in the public good. Can we do this?

It is certainly folly to cut up a town into small districts with schools, perhaps, in some instances, of only ten or fifteen scholars. A school of some thirty or forty pupils, with a wide-awake, intelligent teacher, is a school worth having, and one that we may generally be proud of. It is folly to build seven school houses when four would be better. It is folly to board and pay *fourteen* teachers when *eight* would do the work as well. Is this subject worth thinking of?

Again, there is more spirit, more animation, more positive advance in study and intelligence in a school of forty than in a school of ten. The teacher, himself, feels the inspiring influence of such a school. He works with more zeal. Put a real, live man or woman into such a school—one that is apt to teach, quick to discern, fertile in resources, and a good disciplinarian, and you will have progress—you have a school, with competent accommodations, that is neither sleepy, nor lazy, nor indifferent; and one we need not be ashamed of.

SCHOOL HOUSES.

And now a suggestion in regard to the condition and appearance of our school-houses. It is a fact, whether the reader believes or not, that the condition, aspect and comfortable arrangement of the school room, and the school premises, have *very much* to do with the habits of scholars; and with their moral and intellectual ambition, also. If you would do something towards reforming a careless, helter-skelter, unambitious company of school

boys, put them into a wellarranged, neat, comfortable school-room. That school-room will preach a constant sermon—and impart a constant, pleasant influence. On the contrary, if you want a crop of rude school boys, without taste or refinement, hive them up in a slovenly, unsightly, ill-constructed, marred and scarred school-room, and you will probably be gratified. This experiment has been sufficiently tried, both in Lee and other towns. Now, if rudeness and the vulgar tendencies of school boys *can*, to any extent, be charmed out of them by the tidiness and good taste of the school-room, school-room arrangements and school premises, let us, by all means, help them to such a blessing. It will give them a better passport to the world than their book learning.

With two or three exceptions, the school-houses in this town are in a poor condition—some of them, in a sad condition. “What is everybody’s business is nobody’s.” And so our school-houses are often neglected. Sometimes obstinacy, selfishness or a want of taste interferes to prevent any improvement in school-houses or school premises.—These obstacles are met everywhere. But men often mistake. He who invests a dollar to make a pleasant, convenient, attractive home for school children, will not, in the thereafter, regret it. No man ever made an investment in the hearts of children who did not afterward rejoice in generous dividends.

In most cases our school-rooms are too small. There is scarcely one in town so large as it ought to be for the complete accommodation of the scholars. Some school-rooms are only *half* the size they ought to be. Health, convenience, the best interest of the school, all require ample room—ample room for school desks—ample space in the floor—convenient accommodations for the disposal of clothing—and liberal room for blackboards and recitation. In many school rooms, now, there is scarcely a

black board worth the name. Other things go to match. The writing desks are often ill-arranged—the teacher's desk is perched in some awkward and inconvenient corner—the stove is “under foot”—and with no convenient accommodations for recitation, the whole aspect within is decidedly repulsive. It ought to be the reverse. In these school-houses the teacher is cramped for space and takes things at a decided disadvantage. A very little expense would often remedy these prominent defects in our school rooms. In building new school-houses, let the dimensions be liberal. Give teacher and scholars room enough. A house of ample size costs but little more than one of cramped dimensions. We make these suggestions in regard to our school-houses, hoping they will invite thought for the hereafter.

TEXT BOOKS.

A word of text-books. We find our schools deplorably deficient in the supply of *Dictionaries*. In one school we found but one—and that was the teacher's. Some *teachers* are not always supplied with a good Dictionary. Poor compliment to a teacher! Every child that can read *well* in the Third Reader, Towne's or Sargent's, ought to be taught to use the dictionary—more or less. Let him learn to work, inquire, investigate and criticise early. Our scholars are not sufficiently taught to be exact and critical in language. And very many teachers, for lack of early discipline in this direction, often find their own ideas “lying round loose” and wanting in method, as well as in correctness and precision. No wonder their pupils are no better trained in the use of language. No teacher does his duty who does not urge a constant reference to the dictionary upon his pupils. And here we would take occasion to recommend Worcester's New Comprehensive Dictionary, as being cheap, in most

convenient form, and containing a great amount of information. No teacher, certainly, who has not an 'Unabridged' should be without it. And it should go into the hands of all our senior pupils in the Common Schools. We study Language, Literature, too little, and Arithmetic too much.

True, we have 'Grammar' taught in our schools—professedly so. But surely to little *practical* benefit. We have definitions, learned terms, in abundance, but little common sense in our grammars, to meet the *needs* of the pupil. Here and there a live thought from some live teacher, may be dropped into the heart of the pupil. But, as a general thing, *language* is miserably taught in our common schools. It *ought* to be the first, great, prominent lesson to be impressed upon the heart and taste of the pupil—for, through life, it is to be his daily need. He should learn to *read* the language well, *talk* it well, and *write* it well. Letter-writing should be thoroughly taught in school. As it is, it is scarcely attended to at all. Letter-writing is one of the practical wants of our people.

Perhaps we may startle some people by saying that full one-half the time devoted to the study of Arithmetic, in our schools, is time thrown away. It could better be given to the study of something more practically useful—something that better widens our sphere of intelligence, improves and refines the taste and disciplines the intellect. This "everlasting ciphering" in our schools is an abomination. We find scholars plodding through "Greenleaf's National," whose general taste and intelligence are woefully at fault. Their minds are as barren as Sahara. They have little stock of general information in geography, history, biography or literature generally, or in the elements, even, of science. And they are as often very deficient in language to express what they do know. Their principal god in the school-room is old "Father Greenleaf"—well enough in his place—but who sits like a very incubus

upon the spirits of our scholars. We speak earnestly in this matter because we *know* this tyranny of 'figures' is doing a sad wrong in our schools. It is time to look this matter in the face. It is time for people to know and understand that salvation does not come by 'ciphering.'—We would put the "Town Officer" into school, and the State Constitution, and the National Constitution, to be studied during a part of the time that is now devoted to Arithmetic. A boy so educated will be worth more to the town as a citizen than a mere walking Multiplication Table. And to this we are sure every sensible man will say 'Amen.'

*TEACHERS AND TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

Our limits will not allow us to say much of our teachers and their teaching. We have found much to commend, and something to regret. Our sympathies are with our young teachers. If they do their duty, their task is a laborious one—and frequently unappreciated. Let them always be treated with great charity and kindness; and where a generous word of sympathy *can* be given, let it be tendered. Visit their schools—aid them, support them, stand by them. It is an ungenerous hand that strikes at a teacher and destroys his influence—that scatters thorns in his pathway instead of flowers and blessings. It is almost an angel deed to stand by, and help on, these weary toilers who are struggling nobly to discharge a noble duty. Heaven bless them—and their labors. And for service worthily rendered, let the reward be generous and ungrudged.

An attempt was made last season to hold a series of Teachers' meetings. It was partially successful. We earnestly urge our young teachers to such meetings—meetings for interchange of thought and suggestion in respect to their duties. The teacher who is truly alive

to his or her duty—who would make himself a *character* as an intelligent, progressive, spirited worker, will not fail to be interested in teachers' meetings. If there are any that drop into our school-houses who *have* not something of this feeling, they lack the true spirit of the educator. Their place is somewhere else. "Let the dead bury their dead."

Following, we give brief notices of the individual schools. We have taken no pains to seek out faults and imperfections. Rather have we striven to commend, so far as we conscientiously could. And we have found much to commend—still hoping that in the hereafter we shall find more.

DISTRICT No. 1. TURNPIKE.

Summer Term, 10 weeks. Number of scholars, 28; tardy, 17; dismissals, 9; Miss Sarah E. Giles of Kingston, teacher. Miss Giles has had but little experience in teaching; but we have no doubt she labored conscientiously and did the best she could for the school. The discipline of the school, and the progress made by the pupils, though not marked, appeared to be respectable. More experience, and a little more energy in discipline, would contribute much to the success of Miss Giles as a teacher. She gives us no record of her experience in the school in her returned Register, as she ought to have done; but we believe the term was a pleasant one, and the scholars well-disposed and harmonious.

The *Winter Term*, under the care of Miss Lizzie M. Hodgdon of Lee, is not yet finished. The number of scholars is 40; and the school, under the efficient discipline of Miss Hodgdon, appears to be doing admirably well. But, like many others in town, the school-house in this district is a poor one—too poor to be called respectable. It is too small, in the first place—quite inconvenient in arrangement and wears a shabby aspect within.

School money, \$102,98.

SETH W. WOODMAN, *Prudential Committee.*

DISTRICT No. 2. MAST ROAD AND POND HILL.

Summer Term, 10 weeks. Number of scholars, 22; tardy, 19; dismissals, 8; Miss Annie M. Plummer of Lee, teacher. The scholars, at this term, appear to have been very punctual in their attendance; and the teacher says, in her report, "Some were industrious in their habits, while others were careless and negligent." We think Miss Plummer succeeded very well in her school, as a young teacher, and gave good satisfaction. The teacher testifies to the good accommodations afforded in the school-room, saying, in her Register, "Its style and condition are more than ordinarily good; and every thing seems subservient to the comfort of the scholars." It is pleasant to find *one* teacher who is satisfied with the 'shop' in which she works. The School Register is neatly kept, blanks well filled, and some good 'remarks'—regretting that parents neglected to visit the school as often as they ought.

The *Winter Term* is still in session, with Miss Marilla M. Young of New Durham, teacher. The term will be about 17 weeks, and the number of scholars 29. Miss Young is a teacher of good qualifications and considerable experience. The discipline in her school has not been so rigid as that in No. 1—whether wisely or unwisely so, we do not pretend to affirm. Discipline in different schools is often wisely varied. The term here has been an agreeable one, thus far, and improvement in scholarship decidedly good. A few advanced scholars in mathematics, in this school, add much to its character.

Amount of school money, \$132,62.

JOSEPH JONES, *Prudential Committee*.

DISTRICT No. 3. WEDNESDAY HILL.

Summer Term, 7 weeks. Number of scholars, 11; tardy, 7; dismissals, 1; Miss Olive A. Leggett of Lee, teacher. At the first visit of the Committee to this school, we were well pleased with its appearance. Everything in connection with the management of the school seemed to tell for its advantage. But, unfortunately, during the progress of the term, some dissatisfaction arose, on the part

of some parents. The School Committee were summoned to investigate the matter, who, however, under the circumstances, concluded to let the school go on under the charge of Miss Leggett, though we fear it was not attended with very good success. Nor, on the other hand, do we think those who were most dissatisfied had sufficient cause for any serious complaint. We think the teacher, though young and inexperienced, if she had received the united support of the district, would have been comparatively successful. Register, imperfect.

Winter Term, 6 weeks. Number of scholars, 11; tardy, 41; dismissals, none; taught by Edwin J. Roberts of Barnstead. This was his first attempt at teaching, but considering the circumstances, he was tolerably successful. Good order was observed; and though the term was short, the improvement made was very creditable.—The school-house in this district is in a poor condition. Residents of No. 3! why not arouse in regard to educational matters and build a new school-house, as some other districts in town have done? We think there are bright intellects among the scholars of this district that deserve better accommodations and more thorough instruction.

Amount of school money, \$43,86.

WILLIAM A. JENKINS, *Prudential Committee*.

DISTRICT No. 4. HILL.

Summer Term, 14 weeks. Number of scholars, (not reported, but the average given is 27;) tardy, 71; dismissals, 22; Annie L. Thompson of Candia, teacher, who, we think, labored very faithfully to do her whole duty.—Her school, though made up, in part, of some noisy elements, was under good discipline; and commendable improvement was made by the pupils. The Register of this term was not fully kept; and the page appropriated for "Remarks by the Teacher," is entirely *blank*. Well, "the least said is the soonest mended;" but a very faithful report by the teacher is what the Committee expect.

The *Winter Term*, Annie M. Plummer of Lee, teacher, is not yet completed. It will be about 13 weeks; and the whole number of scholars 37. We have already spoken

creditably of the teacher in our report of the Summer term in No. 2. We think her success has been equally good here, thus far. We are not able to make a full report of the school, under the circumstances.

School money, \$96,60.

N. D. MESERVE, *Prudential Committee.*

Possibly, in another connection, we may have a remark on school-houses in general. But, in passing, let us say a word of this, in No. 4, in particular, as we do of some others. Nor shall we be thought rude in the remark that the *location* of this school-house, well as we love all the dear memories connected with it, is a most dreary and uninviting one, with no sheltering trees or scarcely a blade of grass, in the immediate vicinity, to hide the "nakedness of the land." And yet, barren as is the spot—bleak in winter and fiery in summer—the heart of him who pens this, still clings to it, even with boyhood love. For,

"Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise—
We love the play-place of our early days."

But we should have loved this spot much better, had it, in those "early days," been more tastefully fitted up with an eye to social culture and comfort—if the premises had been rendered more commodious and pleasant, with here and there a flower or tree with which to link a school-boy memory. Ah, well, there will be found 'preachers' in dear old "No. 4" who, as they read our lines, will exclaim, as he of old, "Vanity of vanities." But we tell them, nay! "Man shall not live by bread alone." Nor is it always best to school our hearts to that sad philosophy

"That loves no music but the dollar's chink."

And that blessed old school house on the plain—rude as it is, and rude as it was—how many a wanderer will remember it as the shrine of kind affections and early vows—as the starting goal of their intellectual journeying where, it may have been, some prophet hand first touched their young lips with a living coal; or stirred their young pulse as by a voice from Heaven.

Well—Heaven bless old "No. 4"—all the parents and all the children. For *ould lang syne* we have said what

we have ; yet praying that some blessed influence will steal into the hearts of our old friends and find its way out in that action which shall give them a better school-room and improved school premises.

DISTRICT No. 5. Hook.

There was but one term in this district—that in the Autumn, which continued, as we believe, about seventeen weeks. Number of scholars, 21 ; tardy, 37 ; dismissals, 7. This school was under the care of Miss Belinda S. Bunker of Rye, till within three weeks of its close. The term was completed by Miss Hannah E. Harvey of Nottingham. Miss Bunker is a teacher of much experience, and is an industrious and energetic worker. Her heart seemed to be in her school and her success admirable. Miss Harvey, in completing the term, acquitted herself, we have no doubt, with equal success. Owing to circumstances, the school was not visited by the Committee while the latter teacher was engaged in it. But we trust to her former reputation, as teacher. We regret, however, that both these teachers failed to give the Committee such a report of the school in their Register 'Remarks' as we desire to have. Hence we are unable to judge so fully of the character of the school, of the general deportment of the scholars and their progress in study, as we would be glad to. School money, \$76,14.

DANIEL W. BURLEIGH, *Prudential Committee.*

DISTRICT No. 6. WADLEY'S FALLS.

Summer Term, 14 weeks. Number of scholars, 31 ; tardy, 75 ; dismissals, 20. Miss Francena J. Sawyer of Lee, was the teacher, this term. Amount of school money, \$107,25. This was Miss Sawyer's first experience in teaching ; but we must say that the evidence she gave of her ability and aptness to teach, encourages us in the opinion that, with more experience, she will become an ornament to her profession. Her school was composed, principally, of small scholars, many of whom were idle and restless, and consequently requiring much patience and energy to bring them under good discipline. But under the care of

Miss Sawyer, the school made such progress as does credit to her honest and persevering efforts. She says in her Report: "The Summer has been pleasantly and, I hope, profitably spent. As this was my first attempt at teaching, and with former schoolmates for pupils, I felt somewhat embarrassed, at first, and labored under some difficulties. But my pupils have been respectful and obedient, with scarcely an exception."

The *Winter Term* was commenced by Mr. Wilbur Durell of New Market. But he remained only a few weeks in school. No Register has been returned by him. Consequently we can give no definite statement in regard to his school.

After Mr. Durell left, Miss Olevia Haley of Leé, was employed to complete the term. She reports a term of 6 weeks, and 24 scholars. Tardy, 92; dismissals, 11. In her Report she says: "I found this a pleasant school. I think more interest would be felt by both teacher and scholars, if the parents in the district were more interested and would visit their school, no one having visited it while in session this term. On account of the shortness of the term and the irregularity of attendance, no very marked improvement could have been expected."

Miss Haley appears to have borne a very kind and gentle hand toward her pupils; but we think a little more rigor in discipline would have done them good. This school requires pluck, decision and rigid discipline, and it ought to be accommodated!

B. DOW MATHES, *Prudential Committee.*

DISTRICT No. 7. LANG'S.

Summer Term, 9 weeks. Number of scholars, 20; tardy, 66; dismissals, 24; Hannah E. Harvey of Nottingham, teacher. In this neat little new school-room, with a very kind and faithful teacher, the Summer term passed very pleasantly. The pupils were gentle and courteous, and generally industrious. The instruction was faithful; and the improvement most commendable. With the effort made and the success accomplished, both teacher and employer have reason to be satisfied. We trust they are so. And the former, in bidding adieu, for the present, to "the

pedagogical fraternity" and entering upon new, and it may be, more pleasant duties, will accept the hearty congratulations of her former, but less fortunate, associates!

Winter Term, 10 weeks. Number of scholars, 28; tardy, 191; dismissals, 50; True W. Thompson of Durham, teacher. This was the first Winter term in the new school house in No. 7; and we are compelled to say that the number of scholars sadly tested the capacity of the school room. It was a "tight fit" evidently—for seldom do we meet, in any of our school-houses, so distressing a case of "the pursuit of elbow-room under difficulties." And we are inclined to add that the Prudential Committee, with a somewhat prescient eye, in selecting "a tall teacher," was happily successful in finding "the right man for the right place"—for, in the general jam, had not the latter been fortunately stretched longitudinally, instead of laterally, he would have found himself a greater sufferer than he was!

Seriously, this new school-room is about half the size it *ought* to be to accommodate, *comfortably* and properly, the scholars in this district. Its enlargement is imperatively demanded. Nor should we do our duty in this matter without calling attention to the subject.

As during the Summer term, we found the school under good discipline and working well—pupils industrious, orderly and happy. We copy the following word from the teacher's report:

"This school is a pleasant one. The scholars are kind and affectionate to each other, and treat their teacher with marked respect. The moral tone of the school is excellent. Profane language is seldom heard. Rude behavior and quarrelling are equally uncommon; and the scholars generally seem to take pride in coming to school with well-washed faces and hands, and in neat, tidy apparel. The parents and citizens of the district manifest a decided interest in the welfare of the school."

To these remarks of the teacher we need add little, except to say that a school which bears the reputation above given, deserves ample room to work in and corresponding accommodations in other respects. The teacher gives us a well-filled Register, with copious remarks. And we may

add that the scholars seem to have taken particular pains to keep their new school-room neat and unmarred. We gladly give them this credit.

Amount of school money, \$92,83.

BENJAMIN Y. PIPER, *Prudential Committee.*

We submit the foregoing Report, hoping the suggestions in it will be kindly and candidly considered by the friends of our Common Schools.

MOSES A. CARTLAND, } *Superintending*
HOSEA B. SNELL, } *School Committee.*

I have not signed this Report officially, because I was prevented by illness from reading any part of it before the annual town-meeting, when the Report was formally presented to the town. But I desire to say that I concur in most of it, except the remarks complimentary to myself.

JEREMIAH SMITH.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

District No.	Teachers.	Term.	Wages per month including board.	Money appropriated.	Weeks of school.	No. of Scholars.	Times tardy.	Dismissals.	Visits of Supt's Committee.	Citizens' visits.
1	Sarah E. Giles, Lizzie M. Hodgdon,	Summer. Winter.	\$13 00 17 00	102 98	10 28 15 40	17 9 173 20	17 9 173 20	6 41 8 30	6 41 8 30	6 41 8 30
2	Annie M. Plummer, Marilla M. Young,	Summer. Winter.	12 00 *16 00	132 62	10 22 17 32	19 8 115 57	19 8 115 57	5 37 8 20	5 37 8 20	5 37 8 20
3	Olive A. Leggett, Edwin J. Roberts,	Summer. Winter.	16 00 19 00	43 86	7 11 6 11	7 1 41	7 1 41	6 24 2 14	6 24 2 14	6 24 2 14
4	Annie L. Thompson, Annie M. Plummer,	Summer. Winter.	13 00 14 00	96 60	14 33 13 32	71 22 106 29	71 22 106 29	4 18 2 10	4 18 2 10	4 18 2 10
5	Belinda S. Bunker, } Hannah E. Harvey, }	Summer.	18 00	76 14	17 21	37 7	37 7	2 20	2 20	2 20
6	Francena J. Sawyer, Wilbur Durell, } S. Olevia Haley, }	Summer. Winter.	12 00 18 00	107 25	14 31 13 24	77 17 92 11	77 17 92 11	8 46 4 10	8 46 4 10	8 46 4 10
7	Hannah E. Harvey, True W. Thompson,	Summer. Winter.	16 00 21 00	92 83	9 20 10 28	66 24 191 50	66 24 191 50	2 21 2 34	2 21 2 34	2 21 2 34

*Estimated.

