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ACCOUNT

OF THE

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

OF THE

TOWN OF MONT VERNON,

TOGETHER WITH THE

SCHOOL REPORT

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING MARCH 1ST, 1877.

New Hampshire
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WHITTEMORES' PRESS.

1877.

R E P O R T

OF THE

OFFICERS OF THE TOWN OF MONT VERNON.

The selectmen respectfully present to the town of Mont Vernon. their annual report of the receipts and expenditures for the year ending March 1st, 1877.

RECEIPTS,

Cash in Treasury March 1st, 1876,	\$1019 35
Amount of taxes assessed,	2770 75

Received from State :

Railroad tax,	46 34
Savings Bank tax,	521 45
Literary Fund,	44 10
	<hr/>
	\$4401 99

EXPENDITURES.

Paid State tax,	\$720 00
County tax,	408 06
	<hr/>
	\$1128 06

Town Officers' services :

James Upton, selectman,	67 00
Henry F. Dodge, "	47 25
Thomas H. McQuestion,	26 75
	<hr/>
	\$141 00

Paid William G. Bruce, collector,	40 00	
Clark Campbell, treasurer,	20 00	
John M. Fox, town clerk,	20 00	
G. W. Todd, superintending school committee,	36 00	
A. Travis, moderator and auditor,	4 50	
E. F. Trow, constable,	2 00	
	<hr/>	\$122 50

SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS.

Paid Centre district,	325 32	
South "	165 31	
East "	112 92	
North "	103 06	
West "	80 31	
Amherst "	23 82	
	<hr/>	\$810 74
		<hr/>
		\$2202 30
Paid McCollom Institute,	300 00	
	<hr/>	\$300 00

BREAKING ROADS IN 1875-76 TO MARCH 1st, 1877.

Paid District No. 2,	27 38	
" " 3,	25 72	
" " 4,	47 91	
" " 5,	85 10	
" " 6,	38 75	
" " 7,	20 95	
" " 8,	39 29	
" " 9,	21 30	
" " 10,	61 79	
" " 11,	76 60	
" " 12,	56 52	
" " 13,	98 01	
" " 14,	21 75	
" " 15,	35 89	
" " 16,	80 67	
" " 17,	50 06	
	<hr/>	\$787 19
		<hr/>
		\$3289 49

EXTRA REPAIRS ON HIGHWAYS.

Paid District No. 2,	1 85	
“ “ 3,	9 44	
“ “ 4,	5 07	
“ “ 5,	50 95	
“ “ 7,	2 25	
“ “ 8,	8 38	
“ “ 9,	10 50	
“ “ 10,	1 65	
“ “ 11,	73 06	
“ “ 12,	5 00	
“ “ 14,	45 35	
“ “ 15,	31 17	
“ “ 16,	11 30	
“ “ 17,	2 10	
	<hr/>	\$261 07

BUILDING NEW ROAD.

Paid for building new road,	132 00	
For land damage,	80 00	
For referee's services,	4 50	
For bridge plank, stringers, posts, poles and pikes,	25 28	
For building culvert and clearing out the brook near new road and surveying,	10 50	
	<hr/>	\$252 28
		<hr/>
		\$3802 84

MISCELLANEOUS.

Paid for printing town reports,	14 30
G. W. Todd, for services at Concord in regard to hotel appropriation, and attending hearing the petition of E. F. Trow and others,	12 00
J. M. Gleason, for digging graves,	26 25
G. N. Foster, for tolling bell,	4 50
M. G. Rotch, watering place,	3 00
For books, stationery, repairs, &c.,	5 38
For wood and sawing,	4 50
J. Hill, for keeping tramps,	7 50
Drs. Bunton and Hinds, for return of births and deaths,	4 00

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The Treasurer of the town of Mont Vernon submits the following report:

DR.

To cash in treasury, March, 1876,	\$378 35
Note for uncollected taxes for 1873,	41 00
" " " " " 1875,	600 00
Cash received from State on banks, railroads, &c.,	611 89
Cash received of collector for 1876,	2520 75
Note for uncollected taxes for 1876,	250 00
	\$4401 99

CR.

By paying the following:

By paying the State tax,	\$720 00
" " County tax,	408 06
" 67 orders of selectmen,	2853 39
Note for uncollected taxes for 1873,	41 00
" " " " " 1875,	30 00
" " " " " 1876,	250 00
	\$4302 45

Whole amount of receipts,	\$4401 99
Whole amount of bills paid,	4302 45
	\$99 54

CLARK CAMPBELL, *Town Treasurer.*

March 3, 1877.

Examined the above report and find the same correctly cast and properly vouched.

ALONZO TRAVIS, }
WILLIAM G. BRUCE, } *Auditors.*

SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

PREFACE.

FELLOW CITIZENS: The return of another spring calls for another report of our schools. We submit the following most cheerfully—because the facts warrant us in making a very favorable report—and because this is very likely the last report of Mont Vernon schools we shall ever make.

We have cared for the schools of the town during four years. We have performed our duties the best we could under the circumstances, and have made such reports as seemed to us to be just to all.

During the past year we have made 29 visits to the schools, looking after them with as much care, and taking as much interest in them, as we were able. We have done our duty as far as we knew, regardless alike of censure or approbation. We have tried to improve by the censure of our enemies when it was just, and not to be flattered by our friends—both of which we are glad to have.

We shall touch on several topics—use plain language—present the schools as impartially as possible—and our views on other educational matters as plainly as we can.

There may be those opposed to the plan of making anything like an extended report of the small schools in this little town.—We are of that number who believe in the power of the small towns, and in the nurture and fostering care of the small schools in the back districts on the hills, and among the valleys. We have always been an advocate of taking the best care of what we have, and of making improvements when opportunity offers.

In many respects it is an untold blessing to a young man to obtain his education in a country place, away from the more frequent temptations and allurements of cities and large towns. These little districts have sent forth some of our noblest men,—men who have risen to become national benefactors. From our own hill-top we can look down upon the little district where Horace Greeley had his birth—rising to be the proprietor of one of the most influential newspapers in the United States—and subsequent-

ly to the dignity of a Presidential candidate. Not many miles away is another little district which sent forth Franklin Pierce, the 14th President. A former teacher of his once said to your committee, "little did any body in that quiet place dream that in the still, unpretending little boy on the front seat, there was the future Executive of the greatest and grandest nation on earth."

New Hampshire is full of these little school districts, scattered among her hills and valleys—nearly 1000 of them containing each 12 pupils, or less—each of which has, no doubt, sent forth men of note. These little schools deserve the care of the State, the towns, and particularly of each patron and parent.

SCHOOLS IN TOWN.

Our schools for the past year have been a success as far as teachers could make them. We have had no disqualified teachers. We believe each one has labored with an earnest desire to do the best possible for the interest of the school. The attendance of parents and friends on examination days has been better than usual. The examinations themselves have been marked by peculiar interest. The Prudential Committees have been careful whom they employed. Four districts have retained their teacher during the year. The average attendance of all the schools is eighty-seven and one-half per cent. There have been 115 weeks of school in all the districts. These are favorable points. Over against these, there have been 250 tardy marks, and 99 cases of dismissal—53 of the latter in the Center District. These are unfavorable features. Now, how can they be improved? By the teachers?—Not much. It is not among their duties to traverse the district each morning to start the pupils off to school in season—nor can teachers very well refuse to grant dismissals when specific requests come from home. Another bad feature is this: there are only three reported cases where a father has visited a school during the year except on examination days. This does not include the minister or school committees; they are expected to go, of course. In the East, West and Center Districts no visit of a father is reported except at close of the term.

The fathers in the several districts *can* find time once in a term to spend one-half day to look after the dearest interest of their children. The voters of the town *can* cast aside their deeply rooted indifference, spend one day in their own school, to the great encouragement of your teachers and the pupils. They would then know better how the school money was spent. Besides, that one day spent in the school will contribute more to your enjoyment and advantage than you dream of. The Military Academy at West Point, in the earlier days of its history, had its bitter opponents. The bitterest enemies were appointed its examiners and visitors. The result was that its worst enemies became its warmest friends and most active supporters. If you would visit your schools a few times, no doubt you would be con-

victed of past negligence, and be converted to the practice of better ways.

A visit on examination day is a good thing. Better then, than never. But you do not always know by that day the real merits of the school. Sometimes there is an order of exercises manufactured especially for that day. If so there is no fair criterion by which to judge. Often, too, when the teacher is perfectly honest relative to that day, some of the best pupils, confused by the strangeness of things and the sight of faces, unseen at other times, fail to gain anything like the credit due them.

Take now the 349 cases of tardiness and dismissal. No doubt a good many of them were unavoidable. But we do believe a little care and forethought would diminish the number.— If it can be done, the parents can do it, and nobody else.

We have lost 1-8 of our schooling by absence, equal to 14 weeks. Was this all a necessity? If so let us make a virtue of it. If not each individual parent knows the remedy and how to apply it.

MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS.

Only one of our teachers this year is a singer. He practised music in the East school, and now practises it daily in the Centre school. Our own observation, and the report of numerous teachers confirm us in the belief that music is a great aid in securing good order, and in allaying unpleasant feeling. People do not sing much when angry. We would not dispense with our best teachers because they are not singers, but we do deem it a very valuable qualification.

SPEAKING IN SCHOOLS.

We find but few men in town who will say they feel at home in attempting to address an audience. Not all can ever become good singers or speakers, but many more can, than do. Each of our schools has practised this more or less.

Let the boys begin early, get accustomed to reading and speaking before people, and when grown up will not be heard to exclaim, "I would give anything if I could speak. I can think of enough, but it all leaves me if I try to speak before people."

TEXT BOOKS.

A pupil who moves into this State, or from one town to another in the State, and often from one district to another in the town, is under the necessity of buying new text books. Vermont has a law forbidding any change oftener than once in five years, and then only through a State Committee. It works well. The State of New York, and some of the Western States, are now considering a similar bill in their Legislatures. It is calculated that New Hampshire loses \$20,000 annually by her present system. We think it time for reform in this direction, as well as in

the matter of Teachers' Institutes. We hope there will be members of the next Legislature possessing the requisite information, and independence enough, to bring these necessary improvements to the consideration of that body.

WEST DISTRICT—SUMMER.

Nettie M. Carson teacher. This was her first attempt. Miss Carson makes no show, but goes quietly about her daily duties.

At the beginning of the term we found all things in good order. At the close we found a good work had been done in a short time. The examination was very good.

A little blind boy had learned to read quite readily and correctly by using the kind of book expressly for the blind. This was a work of care and patience. We found the school-room beautifully adorned with wreaths of green leaves and bouquets of fresh flowers. We think this term a success—the examination creditable alike to teacher and pupil. Let Miss C. try again; she possesses the elements of a fine teacher.

We here made an appeal to the ladies present to find means to procure a Globe, and gave our reasons for the appeal. The Globe was there at the beginning of next term. Let the ladies of other districts go and do likewise.

Fall term, Miss Hattie J. Carson, a resident of the District, teacher.

With a teacher who knew the wants of the children, and who had previously taught in the district and elsewhere with marked success, we had a right to expect a good school. Such it was in every respect. The order was excellent, the progress commendable. The examination showed several who had been through Mental Arithmetic, and acquitted themselves well. The speaking was good. A little daughter of Mr. Butler, 8 years of age, recited a long and quite difficult poem in a manner that would reflect credit upon many a grown-up girl at the Institute.

We thought, what a difference it makes when there is somebody of culture at home who will take an interest and aid the teacher in her work.

The West District has no cause to complain of its schools this year.

NORTH DISTRICT.

Miss Sybil B. Marden, of New Boston, teacher during the year.

This was her first effort in teaching, and she did remarkably well. This school is both hard and easy—hard because there are so few pupils and so many classes—easy, because there are no wild, reckless pupils, ungoverned at home and hence ungovernable at school. Good order, one of the first requisites to success, always reigns here. This school has not had a poor teacher since I have had charge of it. The classes in Arithmetic, History, Grammar, Algebra and Reading, were very good, the Reading

especially so. Prudential Committees in this District deserve thanks for judicious selection of teachers. Miss Marden deserves thanks for fidelity and earnest work. House tastefully ornamented at summer examination. At close of autumn examination, the teacher was surprised by a pretty present from her pupils. Each pupil received back ten times the amount of subscription in good feeling and satisfaction.

EAST DISTRICT.

George W. Battles, teacher for the year. Ten not absent a day. Mr. B. is a resident of the district. A prophet sometimes has honor in his own country and among his own kin. So, too, a teacher sometimes gains honor among his neighbors in his own district. That is the case here. This school has been four terms under his care, and always does well. However much of sensitiveness there may be in the teacher's nature, there is a good deal of the you can't-do-that, and you-must-do-this, and the pupils seem to know it, and act accordingly. Pupils pretty soon learn which way the tide sets. Mr. B. governs his schools well without much apparent effort. The progress in this school has been good. During the opening prayer by the teacher, every head was bowed. The greeting song was well sung. Nearly every pupil joined. There are some sweet voices in this school.—By all means let them sing every day. The regular exercises were varied by volunteer recitations from the pupils. Among the number was one from a little daughter of Mr. Fairfield. While reciting, and just at the moment when word and act were in harmony, she modestly stepped forward and presented your Committee with a fragrant and tasty bouquet of fresh flowers. The little act will not be forgotten. May the little giver, with her sisters and all her playmates grow up as sweet and as pure as the half-blown roses in her gift. The Fall term was equally prosperous. Twelve not being absent one-half day. The examination showed a good degree of progress. Recitations good—speaking good. Walls adorned with impressive mottoes—blackboards neatly covered with mottoes, and every mark in Punctuation.—On this day the teacher was surprised by a pretty present from pupils.

SOUTH DISTRICT.

Miss Emma J. Tarbell teacher for the year. Like the East School, Miss Tarbell is a resident of the district. She has taught several terms previously in town with marked success. Kind and sympathetic in her nature, she secures the love of her pupils. With becoming grace and dignity in manner, she sets an example worthy to be followed. Prompt in the discharge of every duty herself, she desires the same of her pupils. Conscientiously obedient when a scholar, she demands the same of her pupils.—Self-reliant and industrious when a student, she desires her pu-

pils to work. She seems to say to them, I know your abilities, here is your task for the next day; in my best judgment it is a reasonable one; I will help you all I think you need, but you must have the work done at the appointed time, unless you can render a reasonable excuse for failure. Hence much work is done by the pupils, with corresponding results, while habits of industry and punctuality are formed. In this school everything moves regularly without noise or show. The school has done admirably during the entire year. The examinations were excellent. There were good examples of progress—speaking, and some of it very good. Verses from the Bible were recited by both teacher and pupils. May the thoughts *live* with the speakers. We called, as usual, for expressions of opinion. One father rose and expressed entire satisfaction. We looked on the record and found that his son, Frank Trow, had not been absent or tardy once during the whole year. Some others have a record nearly as good. Another rose and excused himself from making any speech, but publicly thanked the teacher for her faithfulness to his three children. An honest act and worthy to be imitated. We had no shadow of a doubt but that he expressed the sentiment of every parent present. We believed he felt just what he said, and we said amen. In this district is one lad, eighteen years of age, of average capacity, too backward to enter the lowest class in the Institute. The record of last year gives him credit for twelve days at school. We met him last term and inquired about the school. He said, "I don't go now, but I have been seven weeks steady." The report gives him credit for twenty and one half days. Six and one half weeks' schooling in two years. Close by a good school, nothing in particular to hinder, and only thirty-two and one half days in school during two years, and fourteen of those days either dismissed or tardy. What a preparation for the business of life! What an intelligent town-officer, voter or legislator such a youth will make! And yet whose fault is it? The teacher's? No. That of the District? No. The School Committee's? No; for he is too old for the law of compulsory education to reach him. The boy's? Then he ought to be put into a straight-jacket forthwith. Is it the father's fault? If so, we pray and beseech that he will correct it without delay. For to send forth an uneducated son into the world, when good schools are all about him, is a great wrong to the public, and a grievous sin against the boy.

CENTER SCHOOL.

The Spring, Fall, and eight weeks of Winter term was taught by Miss M. R. Wilder, of Peterboro. Miss W. is a fine scholar, fully qualified to teach any branch, or any pupil in the school. She is a lady of culture, of refined and sensitive feeling. We have had several consultations with her relative to pupils and measures in school. We have always found her desirous and even anxious to do the best in her power for the welfare of pupils. Believing

such to be her desire, we have always stood ready to aid. We have visited the school more than any other one in town—been present through each entire examination, although silly and groundless fabrications to the contrary have been made.

Our opportunities for observation are as good as those of any other one. We have seen the actions of some pupils, heard their profanity and obscenity, and sometimes been the object of their pointed insults. We have seen several lads come to the door and call for water, and, while being waited on, the rest of the company slip through the gate and make way with what fruit they could. Boys who do such things are not very likely to make the teacher's task any lighter, and we do not think they have done so, particularly during the winter term. We have heard some of these lads recite several times when we did not think much attention had been paid to the lesson. We recently heard the first class read. We inquired the meaning of several common words, the answer being, "I don't know" each time. We asked, has any one of you looked for the meaning of a single word in this lesson. The answer from each one was in the negative.

Webster's Dictionary, the property of the District, is always on the table. We know that several of the larger pupils have made a practice of eating apples in school. We have seen many of them whispering when the teacher's back was turned. Some will say it is the teacher's business to see all these things. Well, perhaps so, but we think it the business of the scholar not to do them. This District has the best school-room in town. The room is supplied with the best of desks and chairs, dictionary and clock, with a nice wall-map and Globe obtained by a former teacher. It ought to be a model school; the scholars ought to be model scholars. It is no use disguising the fact that the Center school is a hard school to teach, and it has been growing harder every term the past year. Some pupils in this school have learned finely. With no shadow of reflection on any other teacher, we say there is not a better qualified teacher in town.—There is no reason why every pupil may not progress well, if every one will try to behave well and to learn. Miss Wilder resigned at the end of eight weeks because of her mother's sickness. George W. Battles is now in charge of the school. We hope he will move the waters and cause some to step down into them that they may be cured.

THE INSTITUTE.

The action of the town a few years since made this practically one of the schools of the town, and as such the town is interested in it. The winter term has just closed—a more profitable one, we venture to say, has not been enjoyed by students for many years.

Hard times has been the cry far and wide, and they have affected this school in common with others of a like kind. Compared

with the winter of 1875-6, there has been a decrease of 16 per cent. ; 10 per cent. in the number out of town, and 27 per cent. in the number in town. We notice the town warrant contains an article to take the sense of the town relative to continuing the gratuity to the Institute. We hope the sum will be voted—not for ourselves, but for the interest of the town.

Though we have labored persistently and incessantly, in season and out of season, for years to lift up the school, and give it a good name at home and abroad—and have succeeded beyond your expectations—yet we are ready at a term's notice to step down and out, and give place to any one more acceptable to the Trustees and the town. The vital question is this: Is it for the interest of the town to have the Institute kept up as a first class classical school? We refer you to arguments in our report of last year.

But please to consider the one term just closed. It averaged 80 pupils. The board at \$3.50 per week would be \$3,360—tuition \$480. Add to these items room rents, increased trade in stores and shops, something of a home market, full tenements, the enhanced value of Real Estate, the benefit of \$2.85 to each of 36 students, and it seems to me the question is answered.—The amount is so small that nobody will feel it. The tax to be paid by the citizens is *less than one dollar* on each *one thousand dollars of valuation*. The man whose invoice is \$5,000, pays less than \$5 tax. If that man sends a pupil two terms, he gets his tax back and more. If these considerations are not enough, please compare the standing of your students with what it must have been if the Institute had been shut up the past five years and nothing but the District schools to aid. Look at the class of your own young men who have attended that school the past term. In the East District take your McQuestion, Battles, Brown, and the Kendalls,—in the North, your Barney, Trow and Lamson,—in the Center, your Bruce, Jenkins, and the Wymans. Several young ladies are not one whit behind in point of scholarship. Another class from various parts of the town is coming on to fill up the places made vacant by graduation—and with equal promise. Are you not proud of such students? their standing, their rank in punctuality, deportment, and scholarship?—their manhood and womanhood? I am. Fellow citizens: If you could take the advantages of this school for the past five years away from the young people of this town, and receive back the paltry amount of your taxes, would you do it? We see no reason why the benefits may not be as great for the five years to come, as in the five years now just closing. Let us all, then, be wise in time.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

AUTHORITY OF TEACHER.

Many of our young people, and older ones, too, entertain such

a mistaken view relative to a teacher's authority, and most of the teachers themselves have such an uncertain understanding concerning their rights, that we deem it proper to say a few words under this head.

Judge Aldis of Vermont says "the supervision and control of the master over a scholar extends from the time he leaves home to go to school till he returns."

The case of Lander vs. Seaver in 32 Vermont Reports is leading authority. In this case the pupil, several hours after school and while in his father's employ, used insulting language to the teacher in presence of other pupils. On the trial the court charged the jury that the teacher may punish for misbehavior out of school hours, "which has a direct and immediate tendency to injure the school and subvert the master's authority." The jury found the misconduct in that case was of this character.

In Roxbury, Mass., a boy going home from school threw stones at teams passing along. On the trial the jury rendered a verdict of "not guilty," without leaving their seats. In this case Judge Lord charged the jury as follows: "The relation between teacher and scholar is a peculiar one. It partakes, while the pupil is in school, of a parental character, and is absolute and without appeal from any quarter when exercised within its proper limits.—Between the school and home the jurisdiction of parent and teacher is concurrent. If the teacher sees or knows a boy to violate the laws; if he finds him acquiring habits of a dangerous character; if he sees him becoming vicious, and his example injurious to others, or calculated to affect his own standing at school or at home, it is his duty to interfere to restrain and reform. For this purpose it is his duty to punish him to a reasonable extent, if no other method will avail." This in substance is the law in New Hampshire to-day.

We think if a few of our lads in the district schools understood the law, they would not put on such lofty airs and say, "my father will fix you if you lay a finger on me."

DISTRICT.		Summer, Fall and Winter terms.	No. of weeks.	Wages per month.	No. of scholars.	Average.	Times tardy.	Reading.	Spelling.	Arithmetic.	Geography.	Grammar.	Femanship.
Center, }	S.	10	\$30.00	28	24	24	28	28	28	22	14	4	20
	F.	12	\$30.00	31	25	16	31	31	31	27	15	3	20
	W.	14	\$30.00	27	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	35	27	27	27	26	12	6	21
South, }	S.	12	\$21.00	10	8 4-5	21	10	10	10	5	5	2	7
	F.	12	\$29.00	17	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	36	17	17	17	15	9	4	12
West, }	S.	7	\$16.00	7	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	24	7	7	7	5	1	1	3
	F.	10	\$20.00	16	12 $\frac{3}{4}$	53	16	16	16	13	7	2	6
East, }	S.	8	\$25.00	24	22	8	24	24	24	15	10	4	17
	F.	10	\$32.00	25	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	16	24	24	25	15	7	3	18
North, }	S.	10	\$20.00	9	8	9	9	9	9	5	1	3	6
	F.	10	\$21.00	9	7 9-10	8	9	9	9	6	1	3	4

Amount of money raised by town, including				
Literary Fund,				\$745 92
Amount allotted Center District,				\$325 32
“ “ East	“			112 92
“ “ South	“			165 31
“ “ West	“			80 31
“ “ North	“			103 06
“ “ 8th	“	Amherst,		23 82

GEO. W. TODD,
Superintending School Committee.



