

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# DOCUMENTS

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1866.

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# FORTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE.

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HOUSE.

No. 48.

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## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

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The Joint Standing Committee on Education, in pursuance of a Joint Order of the Legislature of January 15th, authorizing them to visit the State Normal School at Farmington, examine the condition of the same and report thereon during the present session of the Legislature, have attended to that duty and Report—

That, having appointed Tuesday, January 30, as the day of their visit, they were in the morning of that day at nine o'clock conducted into the school by the Principal, Mr. Gage. The exercises of the day commenced by reading the Scriptures, singing and prayer. The recitations commenced in three different rooms at the same time. This made it necessary for the committee to distribute themselves so as to leave no class without a visitor. Consequently, no one of us witnessed all the exercises of the day. We found fifty-one young gentlemen and ladies in attendance with happy faces, and everything about the school appeared pleasant and agreeable. We spent a very pleasant day with the school, and were introduced to the teachers and students, among whom we found several old acquaintances, and the sons and daughters of those with whom we had formed acquaintance in different parts of the State.

In the afternoon some of the principal citizens of the place came in, thus manifesting their interest in the school.

We were pleased with the people of Farmington whom we met on the occasion, especially with the hotel keeper, whose kindness

and care could not well be exceeded. We recommend to the members of the Legislature to visit the Normal School and see for themselves whenever they have an opportunity. The railroad fare from Augusta to Farmington, ninety-five miles, is only two dollars. The stage fare across the country, forty-five miles, is the same.

The teachers all met our approbation. We found them able, experienced and skilful. We were pleased with all the exercises we witnessed, and came away with a very high opinion of the advantages and usefulness of our Normal School, and can most cheerfully commend it to general patronage.

The Chairman of your Committee directed certain inquiries to the Principal, to which the following reply was made :

(1.) Our whole number of students present this winter term is fifty-one. Seventy or more are out engaged in teaching the winter schools, and from the reports received from these I learn that they are generally giving good satisfaction. Some are achieving great success. The applications that have been made to the principal for teachers have been more numerous than he could supply.

(2.) The number of counties now represented in the school is ten.

(3.) The following are the names of the teachers, with the recitations heard by them in the order in which they occurred on the day of visitation by the committee, viz :

*Morning.*

GEORGE M. GAGE, *Principal.*

1st hour, 3d Class in Arithmetic.

3d " Senior Class in English Literature.

4th " 2d Class in English Grammar.

Also conducted an exercise for the whole school in mental arithmetical combinations.

*Afternoon.*

1st 15 minutes, conducts an exercise for the whole school in spelling, oral and phonetic.

1st hour, 3d Class in Algebra.

2d " Senior Class in Natural Philosophy.

A closing exercise for the whole school in vocal music.

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*Morning.*

MISS SARAH R. SMITH.

- 1st hour, Senior Class in Algebra.
- 2d " Class in National Arithmetic.
- 3d " 4th Class in English Grammar.
- 4th " Class in Geometry.

Also has charge of Calisthenics.

*Afternoon.*

- 1st hour, 4th Class in Arithmetic.

Also has charge of Calisthenics.

*Morning.*

MISS MARY B. SMITH.

- 1st hour, 2d Class in Algebra.
- 2d " 3d Class in English Grammar.
- 3d " \_\_\_\_\_
- 4th " 4th Class in Algebra.

*Afternoon.*

- 2d hour, 4th Class in Mental Arithmetic.

*Morning.*

MISS M. E. PACKARD.

- 1st hour, 4th Class in Geography.
- 2d " 4th Class in Reading.
- 3d " Class in Reading.

*Afternoon.*

- 1st hour, 2d Class in Physiology.
- 2d " Large Class in Geography.

Also assists in vocal music.

(4.) The number of rooms used for recitations is three. With the present number of classes it is necessary to have two recitations progressing in the same room at some hours of the day. This, it will be seen, is undesirable; and were the classes large, as some of them now are, and as will be the case always during the fall and spring sessions, this would be entirely impracticable.

(5.) The number of text-books now in the library for the use

of students is about eight hundred, and the number of books for reference is about one hundred and fifty.

(6.) No apparatus is supplied for heating any part of the building except the three rooms now in use, and the recitation rooms which have been made in the old part of the building cannot be kept comfortable in very cold weather on account of cracks about the floors, casings and windows.

(7.) The number of students for whom seats are provided in the main school-room is one hundred and fifty-six. But so many students could not at present be accommodated in respect to recitation rooms and black-boards.

(8.) It will be seen that the pressing needs of the institution are,

1st. Suitable accommodations in respect to rooms for hearing recitations ; and,

2d. Books of reference. It will be obvious, from a moment's reflection, that to no school are books for reference of more importance than to the school for teachers. Our common school teachers do not feel able, with the present meagre pay which they receive, to purchase many of the standard works which every man of liberal views should meet with and peruse. Can the State do a more honorable or a better paying thing than to provide at once the means of putting a goodly number of standard works for reference where the students in the Normal School can have the benefit of them—a benefit which they, in their labors in the school-room, will return again and again to the children whom they will instruct? How many cases of resort to brute force might be avoided if the teacher possessed the power to interest which knowledge would give him. Let him have access, while in the Normal School, to the best scientific and literary works of modern times. These books will in the meantime continue to be the property of the State subject to such disposal as the proper authorities shall determine upon.

(9.) Of course I do not need to add the necessity to which Gov. Cony has called attention in his message—that of funds for running the school.

(10.) During the time the school has been in operation, I think it may safely be said that the sanitary condition of the students connected with it has been remarkably good. There have been no contagious diseases among them, and I think the requirement

to exercise in the free air of the Sandy river region has been productive of good.

In conclusion, your Committee would merely say, that they are deeply impressed with the importance of the statements of the Principal in regard to books of reference, and therefore submit the accompanying Resolve.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

CORNELIUS STONE,  
D. T. RICHARDSON,  
GEO. W. HATHAWAY,  
E. H. SMALL,  
EBEN JORDAN, JR.,  
H. H. BURBANK,  
JOHN JOHNSON,  
ALBION DYER.

## STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE for the purchase of books of reference for the  
normal school at Farmington.

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*Resolved*, That there be paid from the state treasury,  
2 from any funds not otherwise appropriated, the sum of  
3 one hundred dollars, to be expended under the direc-  
4 tion of the superintendent of common schools and the  
5 principal of the normal school, for the purchase of books  
6 of reference, to be placed in the library of the normal  
7 school for the use of the students ; *provided* that no  
8 books for mere general reading shall be allowed either  
9 in the library or about the premises.



STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
February 12, 1866. }

Reported from the Committee on Education by Mr. JOHNSON,  
and on motion of Mr. BROWN of Hampden, laid on the table and  
ordered to be printed.

F. M. DREW, *Clerk.*