porting; and unless some unforeseen calamity takes place, it will eventually provide for the payment of its debt.

During the past year there has been paid

City bonds,	$14,000.00
Interest on city debt,	6,270.00
Precinct bonds, state-house loan,	3,000.00
Interest on same loan,	2,250.00

It is desirable to lessen the tax-rate and lighten the burdens of all as much as possible, yet we must provide for the payment of the city's obligations as they become due, and also the necessary amounts for running expenses. Appropriations should be made for the payment of

City bonds, becoming due in 1888,	$13,500.00
Interest on city debt, due in 1888,	5,280.00
State-house loan bonds, due in 1888,	3,500.00
Interest on state-house loan,	2,070.00

HIGHWAYS.

Amount appropriated,	$19,000.00	
Received from other sources,	976.71	
		$19,976.71
Expended,		19,062.84
Surplus,		$913.87
Appropriations for sidewalks and crossings,	$2,000.00	
Received from other sources,	923.69	
	$2,923.69	
Expended,	2,135.93	
		$787.76
Surplus,		$1,701.63

Our highways need constant care and attention to keep them in a comparatively safe condition. The heavy showers during the past season have occasioned a large outlay

of money upon the roads out of town; but they are in a very good condition, and better, I believe, than many of our streets in the city. The money appropriated for this purpose has been judiciously expended. The calls for repairs, improvements, and laying out of new streets, during the year, are constant, and often perplexing to the commissioner. To know just how much can be expended in any particular locality, and what repairs to make without exceeding the appropriation, requires excellent judgment. To please all is an impossibility, yet I believe care has been taken, and an earnest endeavor made, to give satisfaction.

Your attention is called to the report of the commissioner and the recommendations made by him. That portion of Main street from Bridge to Centre should be paved the present season.

The question of raising the grade of the road from the foot of "Gully hill" to the bridge is also a matter for your consideration. If this is contemplated, it would seem that it should be done at the time of paving Main street, on account of obtaining the hardening for the top of the grade, which would lessen the expense quite materially. One obstacle presents itself to this improvement, that is, by raising the grade of the road upon the east side of the bridge, would it not cause the water, during freshets, to flow back and find an outlet upon the west side? It might occasion the necessity for raising the grade on the west side from the bridge to a point near the shoe factory. This would be an improvement appreciated by the public generally. Main street, from Court to Fisk street, requires attention; and it is suggested that improvements be commenced, and that a portion if not all the street within those limits be Macadamized the present season. If it is deemed advisable to make any of the proposed improve-

ments, the appropriations should be made sufficiently large to cover the expense.

STREET SPRINKLING.

Considerable dissatisfaction has been expressed by some of our citizens in regard to the sprinkling of streets; and in this connection I would like to call the attention of the council to the following extract from the report of the commissioner of highways:

"The 'sprinkling' account includes the amount paid for one extra team, in addition to the three sprinklers operated by the men and teams from the Central Fire Station. All four of the sprinklers owned by the city have been kept in operation during the dry weather, but it has been impossible to sprinkle so large a territory as to satisfy the citizens of all sections. Many persons have expressed a willingness to contribute for the services of one or more additional sprinklers; but from the limited amounts at command their wishes could not be complied with, as the additional expense, outside of the services of the present city teams, is out of all proportion to the amounts which could reasonably be collected. The estimated expense for each new sprinkler put in service, besides its first cost, is about $400 per annum, while the contributions during the present season have averaged less than $230 for each sprinkler. If it were possible to include the compact part of the city in a 'sprinkling precinct,' with enough sprinklers to properly supply every portion, the expense to be covered in the regular tax-list, it would probably give better satisfaction and a more equitable distribution of the expense than can be obtained in any other way."

FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Appropriations, ...	$11,000.00	
New Hose, ...	1,600.00	
Other resources, ...	423.08	
		$13,023.08

Expense,	$11,321.22	
New hose,	1,600.00	
		$12,921.22
Surplus,		$101.86

That we have a good and efficient service is conceded by all. The officers and members are all men of intelligence and experience, and have demonstrated that they are ready and willing at all times to perform their duty fearlessly and faithfully. The apparatus pertaining to the department is in excellent order, and will not require any extra expense during the coming year. The buildings are in good repair, with the exception of the house at Penacook, which should be repainted. A petition has been presented for a new engine-house at West Concord. The building now used for that purpose, and for a ward room, has been built a long time, and is not large enough to accommodate the present wants of the community. Should you decide to grant the prayer of the petitioners, an amount sufficient for the purpose should be appropriated. Although we have an excellent service and fire alarm, I think the city is deficient in alarm bells. The bell at the north end, being cracked, is practically of but little use. If no arrangement can be made to have it replaced, a new one should be located in that neighborhood. A bell is also needed near the central part of the business portion of Main street. At present it is very difficult to distinguish the number of the alarm in that vicinity, through the noise of traffic, and also when heavy winds prevail.

POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Appropriations,	$6,000.00	
Police court,	1,216.00	
J. Ahern, fees,	35.76	
		$7,251.76
Expenses,		6,474.73
Surplus,		$777.03

During the past year the force has been increased by the addition of one day police, at an expense of $800 per year; and I believe this action upon the part of the city council has received the approbation of the entire community. Good and efficient work has been done by this officer. Nearly $265 has been expended for purchasing uniforms for the officers, and other supplies which the department required. These articles have been charged to the city marshal, and are by him charged to the officers receiving them.

Your attention is again called to the "lobby" on Warren street. This building was erected merely for temporary use some years ago, and in its present condition is not a suitable place in which to confine human beings. If it is deemed inexpedient to take further action in regard to a new city building, I would again recommend that a structure of moderate cost be built on the lot on Warren street, that would provide better accommodations for a lobby, the city marshal's office, police court-rooms, etc.

SCHOOLS.

The expense for the support of the schools for the past year has been $40,838.68. The management of this important department, in which we are all so deeply interested, lies not with us, but with an independent board of education, elected by the people. Our duty is to provide such means as are required by law, while such additional amounts as are deemed necessary are raised by vote of districts. We can cheerfully commend the interests of our children to the care of our committee, knowing that their fidelity to the trusts imposed upon them cannot fail of producing beneficial results, and that the money so willingly appropriated will be judiciously expended.

PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The annual appropriation of $2,200 for the Public Library is money worthily bestowed, and could not be expended for a better purpose. From the reports of the trustees and librarian, it will be seen that the care and business connected with it are constantly increasing. Its importance is appreciated more and more each year. It may not be wrong to anticipate coming events, and refer with gratitude to the time when better accommodations will be obtained.

CITY HOSPITAL.

The City Hospital is an institution in which our citizens have a deep interest. I think our recent visit to that place convinced us all that we were justified in increasing the annual appropriation to $1,200.

LIGHTING STREETS.

The appropriation for this purpose in 1887 was for

Gas lights,	$3,500.00
Electric lights,	1,500.00
	$5,000.00
Amount expended,	4,686.47
Surplus,	$313.53

To this department your special attention is called. It is necessary that our streets should be well lighted. This is an expense we cannot avoid. During the past year two electric lights have been added, so that now we have seventeen. There are petitions for three more awaiting your action, and I understand that requests for others are to be made. The demand for these lights is increasing; but it must be remembered that they are an expensive luxury, and it is a

matter for your consideration as to what extent you are willing to increase the expense in this direction. The contract with the Gas Co. has continued for a long time; and I think it would be advisable that a new one should be made, and the time for burning the gas-lights be extended an hour longer than at present.

CEMETERIES.

The appropriation of $3,000 for Blossom Hill has been paid over to the treasurer of the special committee appointed to make the proposed improvements. No work has yet been done, owing to the delay in perfecting plans; but contracts have been awarded, and operations will be commenced early in the season. In order to carry out the improvements suggested, it will be necessary to appropriate the same amount the present year.

SEWERS AND DRAINS.

The expenditures have been $2,236.54, and 3,089 feet of new sewer pipe has been laid. There are several matters in connection with this department that will require attention the coming year, and an additional amount for the appropriation will be required. Your attention is called to the forthcoming report of the committee, and to the recommendations made by them.

BOARD OF HEALTH.

Under the ordinance passed by the City Council in March last, a new Board of Health was organized, enlarging their powers and duties, and an appropriation of $500 made for their use. Of this amount there has been expended $479.80. This amount does not include the total expense of the board, as the item of office rent of $50, and a portion of the

expense of printing, are included in the items of general expenses. The action of the council in establishing this Board of Health has met with public favor; and the results of their labor, if continued, must be beneficial both to the health and the cleanliness of our city. There are many valuable suggestions contained in their report, which should receive your consideration.

OUR POOR.

The appropriation for the support of the poor in 1887 was $2,000, and the expense has been $3,112.76—an excess of $1,112.76. That this department is well managed, the wants of the unfortunates humanely considered, and the efficiency of the officers unquestionable, there can be no doubt. It is our duty to provide for the poor; and an examination will satisfy you that the cares and expenses in this direction are increasing yearly.

I have endeavored to lay before you briefly the expenditures and necessities of the more important departments. In looking back, it seems at a first glance that our city expenses have been large, but as we reflect a moment, we can see how, as improvements are made, more money must be used; and we cannot, surely, with all due regard to economy, allow our city to fall behind in the progress of the day. I have no doubt that your discretion and sound judgment will dictate such action as will promote the best interests of all.

JOHN E. ROBERTSON.

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