

REPORT

OF

Committee of Investigation,

APPOINTED BY CITIZENS OF WILTON,

TO ASCERTAIN THE CAUSE OF THE FIRE BY WHICH THE TOWN'S
MEETING-HOUSE WAS DESTROYED.

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1860.

THE Committee appointed at a meeting of citizens of Wilton, held Dec. 12, "to investigate the cause of the fire by which the Town's Meeting-house was destroyed," have attended to the duty assigned them, and ask leave to submit the following

REPORT.

ON Thursday evening, Dec. 8th, 1859, a musical entertainment was given in the old Meeting-house belonging to the town of Wilton, by the members of a Juvenile School under the instruction of Miss Thurston, assisted by several ladies of Wilton, and one or two persons from abroad. A large and interested audience had assembled, and the hours passed pleasantly by. Hundreds of hearts, if not literally "a thousand hearts, beat happily." When the exercises were closed, the audience, with hearty cheers, left the house — left it never to pass its portals again. Scarcely had the echo of the last foot-fall of the retiring congregation died away, when a mighty destroyer, like some fearful demon, entered. Throwing out from the church-tower a signal of his presence, that a few might gather round and gaze with saddened hearts upon his work of ruin, he strode on through pew and aisle, thrusting out his tongue of flame, and gathering within his devouring jaws the memorials of a past century, pregnant with a thousand reminiscences, pleasing or sad, of by-gone years. He descended into the orchestra, from which the voice of sacred song had so often ascended, and beneath his scorching breath it was blackened, charred, consumed. He leaped into