

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# SIXTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.

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HOUSE.

No. 105.

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The Committee to whom was referred the order directing them to ascertain whether the accommodations for the State Library, and the records of the action of the Governor and Council, and of other public documents, are adequate and safe, have attended to their duty, and beg leave to submit the following

## REPORT :

That the accommodations for the State Library are in the attic of the State House, reached by long flights of stairs extending to the extreme elevation of the dome, in apartments, one lighted only by gas, now crowded to their utmost capacity ; that the Library is so situated that in case of fire none of the forty thousand volumes could be saved, nor, if burned, could be replaced for less than sixty or seventy thousand dollars, while some valuable works could not be replaced. The Library is also exposed to damage from leakage of the roof, which careful and repeated efforts to remedy have not prevented. Only the ceaseless efforts of the Librarian save the books from damage in heavy storms and in the melting of snow.

In the office of the Secretary of State there are original engrossed Laws and Resolves, 180 volumes.

Original records of commissions, etc., 155 volumes.

Original House and Senate Journals, (written) 124 volumes.

Original Council Journals and Registers, (written) 124 volumes.

Ooriginal sundry other records, 50 volumes.

Original papers of House and Senate, laws passed, filed in boxes, 1,375 volumes.

Original papers of Governor and Council, filed in boxes, 850 volumes.

Indexes of the above, covering the time since the admission of the State, 25 volumes.

Indexes of miscellaneous documents, 4 volumes.

Miscellaneous original papers, filed, 400 volumes.

All the original papers relating to the separation of the State from Massachusetts; all original Indian Treaties, Deeds to State, Contracts, Treasurer's Bonds, original Constitution engrossed on parchment, maps, etc., complete sets of Acts and Resolves of State, and sets of Public Documents, etc., etc.

In the Land Office are about 350 volumes of records of surveys, field notes, records of all conveyances of State to settlers and proprietors; records of all matters relating in any way to the settlement of public lands, with complete records of account of all labor performed by settlers in payment of lands, with all original papers pertaining to these matters, besides a large number of original plans and maps. There is no printed copy of these documents, and if lost the originals could never be replaced.

Important rights sometimes depend upon proof of the official character of the officers, long after decease, and the proof of their commissions can only be made by reference to the original records. We cannot measure the damage and confusion that would follow the loss of all these unprinted records and documents. There are also the important documents of the other departments of the government, the loss of which would involve very serious evil.

We need not say that the State House is not fire proof. Its safes and vaults, with the exception, perhaps, of the safe in the Treasury department, are no doubt less secure than those of the City Hall in Portland, at the time when the Records of the Probate office were destroyed. Already several times has the State House been on fire, happily discovered in time to arrest the flames. Indeed, the gentleman

who is especially and intimately acquainted with its condition and its exposure, speaks of it as a "vast tinder box."

Nor are the accommodations of the State House adequate. Nearly every space in the main office of the State department is filled, and the office in the basement is crowded to its utmost capacity with cases, most of which are now full. Some of the documents are becoming injured by dampness which, if continued, will in time be destructive.

The Legislature does not need to be informed of its own want of accommodation, and of room for the discharge of its duties, especially for the use of its Committees.

Your Committee feel that the exposure of the Library and of the public archives of the State, to such serious and irreparable loss, and the wants of the Legislature, demand speedy and efficient means, both for the supply of their want, and for the accommodation of and safety of the Library and of the many and valuable documents in the different departments of the government. They therefore recommend the following

*Resolve*, That the Governor and Council be authorized and requested to consult with architects and builders as to the best methods, the cost, and the necessary time, of so adding to or enlarging the State House, as to furnish ample and convenient and fire proof apartments for the State Library, and the records and documents of the various departments of the State government, and for the use and accommodation of the Legislature and its Committees, obtaining plans and specifications of such addition or enlargement, and to report to the next Legislature, with such recommendations as they may adjudge best.

IVES, for Committee.

STATE OF MAINE.

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In HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
February 17, 1883. }

Reported from Committee on Library by Mr. IVES, and ordered  
printed on his motion.

ORAMANDAL SMITH, *Clerk.*