

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE,

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1834.

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE.

NO. 13.

SENATE.

STATE OF MAINE.

In Senate, January 30, 1834.

The Committee to whom was referred an Order on the subject of referring to the people the question of altering the Constitution, as to the time of the meeting of the Legislature, have maturely considered the same—that as the subject was agitated at the last session of the Legislature, and in all probability will continue to be agitated, until settled by that power which alone has the right to settle it—and in different quarters of the State there seem to be strong indications of a desire that such reference should be made, in order to ascertain the sense of the people upon the expediency of the change—under these considerations, your Committee see much propriety in recommending the reference, believing that the people themselves are the best judges of their own wishes on this question, and that after they have manifested a general desire to be permitted to act, we might be considered as wanting in

respect for them to withhold the opportunity. Your Committee are further of opinion, that a change such as is suggested, would prove of general advantage sufficient to justify its adoption.

It would probably shorten the sessions of the Legislature near three weeks; and it will be perceived that, according to the present rate of expense, as estimated by your Committee, at about five hundred dollars per day, including fuel, lights, attendance, &c.; which constitute a very considerable item of charge in a winter session, in a climate like ours, that there would be a saving to the State of at least ten thousand dollars per year, by calling the Legislature together at a season so much more convenient than the present, for the transaction of business, and when a much greater amount could be performed daily; it would, also, be a much more convenient and comfortable season for the transaction of business; the Committees that have to mature a large share of the business, preparatory to the action of the Legislature, could meet in the morning and prepare their reports for the day; so that the delay necessarily occasioned under the present arrangement, would be avoided.

It is unnecessary to remind any one who has served on Committees in one of our winter sessions, of the pressure of time, and the inconvenience in attending to their duties they now so fully experience: the change proposed in this report would produce a great saving of time, and would add much to

the comfort of the members of the Legislature. In addition to these considerations, the expenses of members would be somewhat diminished, as board could be afforded at a reduced price, when the charge for fuel, and other items, rendered necessary in the winter sessions, would not come into consideration. From the last of August to the first or middle of October, the weather in our climate is probably as pleasant and uniform as in any portion of the season; the extremes of heat and cold are alike avoided; the days are of good length in the first part of the term, and when the committees would be employed; and it is a time of the year, when the members would come together with habits of industry, and a feeling that this is not a season in which to indulge in indolence.

Although we would not Legislate for any particular class of men in community, however respectable and numerous, against the general good,—yet it is worthy of consideration, that the season proposed is one of comparative leisure to the Farmer, as much of his harvesting will be done, hay and grain will be secured, and the labor remaining to be done is such as can as well be entrusted to others, and will demand no greater discretion than does the care of his stock in winter. It would also be necessary to change the time of holding the annual meeting for the choice of State and County officers; and the Committee, in fixing upon the third Wednesday in August for the meeting of the Legislature,

and also the second Monday in June for the annual meetings for the choice of State and County officers, have been influenced by the consideration, that this would be a season or time of comparative leisure to the yeomanry in this State.

There are many other reasons which might be offered in favor of the proposed measure; but considering it to be the duty of the Legislature, at all times, and on all occasions, to reflect public opinion, your Committee cannot doubt, that the proposed change will meet your entire approbation, as well as that of the people of this State, on whose wisdom, intelligence and refined judgment they most implicitly rely.

Your Committee therefore have directed me to make this Report, with a Resolve, which is herewith submitted.

JABEZ BRADBURY, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

A RESOLVE to amend the Constitution relative to the time of the annual session of the Legislature, and the time of holding the Annual State elections.*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled, That the first section of the third part, of the fourth article of the Constitution, which provides, "that the Legislature shall convene on the first Wednesday of January annually, shall be so altered and amended, that the future sessions of the Legislature shall be held on the third Wednesday of August annually, from and after the third Wednesday of August in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty six; And that the fourth section of the second Article of the Constitution, which provides that "the election of Governor, Senators and Representatives "shall be on the second Monday of September annually forever," shall be so altered and

amended that said election shall be held on the second Monday of June annually, from and after the first Monday of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six. *Provided*, that a majority of the inhabitants of this State who are constitutionally qualified to vote for State officers, shall at the next annual meeting, on the second Monday of September next, decide in favor of such amendments.

Resolved, That it shall be the duty of the Selectmen of the several towns and the assessors of the several plantations in this State, to insert an article in their warrants respectively, in which the annual meetings in September next, shall be notified and called, to require the inhabitants constitutionally qualified to vote as aforesaid, to give in their votes, on the question, whether the proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be made. And it shall be the duty of said Selectmen and Assessors to receive the votes of said inhabitants in such manner as a majority thereof shall decide; and it shall be the duty of the clerks of the towns and plantations respectively to make a true record of the votes so received and counted, and to make a fair copy of the same, which shall be duly attested by the said Se-

lectmen and Clerks of towns and the Assessors and Clerks of plantations, and sealed up in open town meeting, and the town and plantation Clerks respectively shall cause the same to be delivered into the Secretary of State's office, twenty days at least before the first Wednesday of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five, for the purpose of being laid before the Legislature; and if it shall be found that a majority of the votes so returned shall be in favor of the amendments proposed as aforesaid, said amendments shall be considered as adopted, and shall form a part of the constitution of the State.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, January 30, 1834.

ORDERED, That the Secretary cause three hundred copies of the foregoing Report and Resolve to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

[Extract from the Journal.]

Attest,

WILLIAM TRAFTON, *Secretary.*