

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1836.

AUGUSTA:
SMITH & ROBINSON,.....PRINTERS.

1836.

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 44.

SENATE.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 27, 1836.

The Joint Standing Committee on Literature and Literary Institutions, to whom was referred so much of the Governor's Message as relates to Literature and Literary Institutions, have had under consideration so much of it as relates to the establishment of an institution for the better qualifying primary school teachers, and ask leave to

REPORT :

That your Committee coincide with the views expressed by the Governor in his annual Messages of 1834 and 1836, as to the propriety and utility of establishing a State Seminary for the purpose of better qualifying school teachers, connected as it is

with the vital and permanent interests of the people of the State. That there are evils of magnitude attending instruction in our primary schools, is manifest to every one who has at all been connected with them, arising from incompetency or unfitness of instructors. To remedy this defect and place common schools upon the high ground to which from their great importance they are entitled, requires legislative interference.

This is a subject of the first magnitude to our State. It is one, for the success of which every good and patriotic citizen feels interested. Upon the general diffusion of intelligence and virtue mainly depends the stability and permanency of all free governments. Intelligence diffused among the people is the life of liberty. Ignorance is the passport to oppression and slavery. Despotism can be sustained in those countries only where the great mass of the people are uneducated and forced by oppression into the worst state of vassalage. A people knowing their rights will dare maintain them.— Knowledge is power. To diffuse knowledge among the people is to increase and equalize power. A monopoly of learning by one class of citizens is the most dangerous to the liberties of the people of all monopolies, because it concentrates power in the hands of a few individuals, and men thus situated will rarely fail to exercise it to their own advantage. It is the duty of all free governments to so educate the rising

generation without distinction, as to qualify them to discharge the varied duties which may devolve upon them as citizens and statesmen. The road to a good education should be open and free to all, so that the honest and industrious poor man can educate his children in such a manner as to qualify them to hold honorable stations and participate as freely in the affairs of government as those of the rich. In a good government there should be no other preferences than those which arise from honesty and ability. In America, we should know no other qualifications for public employments. These then will be the sure passports to honorable distinction.

To avail ourselves of the inestimable blessings which will flow from a right course of early education in our primary schools, we must have competent instructors. They must not only be well versed in the branches of learning which they are to teach, but they must know how to impart that knowledge to others—they must know how to illustrate principles in the most simple manner, to use language in the expression of ideas so as to present them to the mind in the most intelligible and impressive manner. They must know too that different minds are differently constituted—that there are different capacities and powers of perception; and above all they must know how to govern, for without this knowledge all else is useless. For a teacher to be well qualified to instruct youth, he must have been in-

structed in the art of teaching and governing as well as in the branches of learning to be taught. We can never have good schools till we have good instructors, nor good instructors till they are better taught; nor will they be likely to be better instructed till the government shall take the necessary measures to secure it. To what purpose can the public lands be better appropriated than for the promotion of useful learning among the people? Your Committee can conceive of none.

They therefore earnestly recommend to the Legislature the appropriation of a Township of Land for the endowment of such an institution, and for this purpose and the establishment of the same, a Bill and Resolve are herewith submitted.

T. PURRINGTON, Chairman.

STATE OF MAINE.



IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT
HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIX.

AN ACT to establish a Seminary for the purpose
of promoting useful learning, and the better qual-
ifying of Primary School Teachers.

SECT. 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and*
2 House of Representatives, in Legislature as-
3 ssembled, That there be and hereby is establish-
4 ed in this State a Seminary to be located in
5 such place as the Governor and Council shall
6 direct, the object of which shall be to promote
7 useful learning in the elementary departments of
8 education, and especially for the purpose of qual-
9 ifying persons for the employment of governing
10 and teaching Primary Schools in this State,
11 which shall be called and known by the name
12 of the Maine Teachers' Seminary, and for the
13 governing and direction of said Institution there
14 is hereby established a Board of Trustees con-
15 sisting of twenty five members, who shall be

*

16 appointed by the Governor and Council from the
17 different Counties of the State, in proportion to
18 Senatorial representation.

SECT. 2. *Be it further enacted,* That the
2 time and place of the first meeting shall be de-
3 signated and fixed by the Governor and Coun-
4 cil, after which they shall be vested with power
5 to designate their own times of meeting, and a
6 meeting may be called at any time on applica-
7 tion of three members, and seven of the number
8 shall form a quorum. They shall annually elect
9 the presiding officer of said Board by ballot.
10 They shall fill all vacancies in said Board by
11 ballot, which vacancies shall be determined by
12 death, resignation, removal from the State, or
13 absence from successive meetings.

SECT. 3. *Be it further enacted,* That each
2 Trustee shall hold his office for three years, after
3 the Institution has been in operation for that pe-
4 riod of time, and one third the number shall va-
5 cate their seats annually, and the Governor and
6 Council shall so direct in the appointment of the
7 Trustees, that the object of rotation can be ef-
8 fected.

SECT. 4. *Be it further enacted,* That the
2 said Trustees are hereby created a body politic
3 by the name of the Trustees of the Maine Teach-
4 ers Seminary, and have right to hold by gift,
5 grant or devise, any real or personal estate, which
6 shall be for the sole purpose of effecting the ob-
7 jects of this Institution; and to sell, let, or oth-
8 erwise dispose of any property belonging to the
9 said Seminary as they may deem most for the
10 interest of the same. They shall elect a Treas-
11 urer, who shall have the management of the
12 fiscal concerns of the Seminary, who shall give
13 such bonds and be subject to such by-laws as
14 they may establish. They shall also appoint
15 such instructors, with such compensation as they
16 may think fit, who shall at all times be subject
17 to be removed by the Trustees.

SECT. 5. *Be it further enacted,* That the
2 Executive Government of this Seminary be and
3 hereby is authorized to grant such written cer-
4 tificates to all persons, whom they shall on ex-
5 amination deem qualified according to the rules
6 by them established, to be instructors of schools
7 within this State, and every person proposing

8 himself for examination shall be entitled to the
9 same, although he may not have been a student
10 of said Seminary.

SECT. 6. *Be it further enacted,* That any
2 person who shall resort to this Seminary for the
3 purpose of qualifying himself to instruct Prima-
4 ry Schools in this State, shall receive his tuition
5 gratuitously.

STATE OF MAINE.



RESOLVE for the endowment of the **Maine Teachers' Seminary**.

RESOLVED, That there be and hereby is granted one **Township of Land** to be selected by the **Governor and Council and Land Agent** from any unappropriated lands belonging to this **State**, and the same to be vested in the **Trustees of the Maine Teachers' Seminary** established in this **State**, and their successors forever, for the use, benefit and purpose of supporting and endowing said **Seminary**, (subject to the reservations provided by law) to be by them holden in their corporate capacity, with full power and authority to settle, divide and manage the same township, or any part thereof, or to sell, convey and dispose of the same, in any way and manner, that shall best promote the welfare of said **Seminary**; subject however to the control of the **Legislature**.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, FEB. 27, 1836.

ORDERED, That seven hundred copies of the foregoing Report, Bill, and Resolve, be printed for the use of the Legislature.

[Extract from Journal.]

Attest: WILLIAM TRAFTON, Sec'y.