

# 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

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE,  
*State - Library.*  
OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1841.

---

**Augusta:**  
SEVERANCE AND DORR, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.

1841.

26

---

---

**TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.**

**NO. 20.**

**SENATE.**

---

---

**R E P O R T**

**OF THE**

**COMMITTEE ON MANUFACTURES,**

**ON THE PETITION OF**

**LUTHER CAREY.**

---

---

**SEVERANCE & DORR,.....Printers to the State.**



# REPORT.

---

## STATE OF MAINE.

The Joint Standing Committee on Manufactures, to which was referred the petition of Luther Carey and others, praying the Legislature to fix a bounty on silk manufactured within this State, have had the same under consideration, and ask leave to submit the following

### REPORT:

The Committee are fully impressed with the importance and correctness of the policy of protecting and encouraging the production and manufacture, within our own borders, of all those necessaries of life which our climate will admit, and of such of the luxuries as the habits and customs of society have brought into almost universal use, and the use of which society will not be likely to abandon. Of the latter class silk is among the first. The consumption of this article is not confined to any particular class in the community, but is used more or less by almost every individual. Of the many considerations which strengthen the views of your Committee upon this subject, they will name only a few. The first is, the protective policy tends to place us, as a nation, in a state of independence in relation to other powers, to which, perhaps, without it, we could never hope to arrive. For we can hardly conceive how a nation can be considered independent, which depends upon foreign countries for those articles which are necessary for the comfort

and convenience of its citizens. Again, the division and employment of labor which such a policy tends to produce, has, in the opinion of the Committee, a strong tendency to add to not only our wealth, but to our independence, and contribute to the permanence of our institutions. They believe it will not be denied that it is safer to rely, for the maintenance of good order and a faithful discharge and execution of our laws, upon a sober and industrious population, than upon an idle, dissipated and miserable populace. If personal property is any guarantee for our national independence, we have a still further inducement to foster and protect domestic industry; and we may add, to create, if necessary and possible, employment for that industry. It is believed by your Committee that were the subject of national prosperity and independence left entirely out of the question, motives of humanity and good feelings for our fellow beings would be a sufficient inducement for every philanthropist to countenance and aid such a policy. For unless it can be shown that idleness is happiness, or that it tends to happiness, then certainly the opposite is true. To illustrate, let us suppose a community exclusively engaged in any laborious pursuit, where the very young, or old, or feeble, where, in fact, none but the most robust can be employed—and compare it to one where, in addition to agriculture, the various mechanic arts are prosecuted, thus giving employment to young, old, robust and feeble, and where each, instead of suffering the mortification consequent upon personal or public dependence for support, knows and feels that he is supported by the products of his own industry. It is hardly possible to calculate the difference in the two situations, aside from the important fact that industry is one of the safest barriers against vice and intemperance, and that the opposite is the most certain way to engender and produce it. Believing, therefore, that the only safe guarantee we can have for the stability of our free institutions lies in the virtue, industry and intelligence of our citizens, it seems to us to be the part of wisdom to pursue such a policy as shall, in

the greatest possible degree, tend to those points. The division of labor among pursuits of agriculture, the mechanic arts, &c. in addition to giving employment to all, affords a better and more ample reward to those employed, by creating for each a better, a nearer, and more certain market for their products.

As your Committee believe that the points they have stated will not be controverted, they proceed to make a few remarks, in relation to the policy generally of protecting domestic industry and manufactures. This protection they think should be given with the view first, to enable those who may engage in the manufacture of any new and necessary article to withstand the competition which they must necessarily encounter by having the same article thrown into the market from abroad, and from those countries where the manufacture has arrived to a great degree of perfection, and where labor as compared with our own, costs merely nothing; and with the view also of producing employment for all classes, ages, and conditions in society. They do not believe it is either desirable or necessary that this protection should be perpetual. The character of our people for ingenuity and perseverance is a sufficient guarantee on this point. The history of the cotton manufacture in this country is evidence that if any branch of industry is protected for a period of time sufficient to enable the manufacturer to pay the laborer a just compensation—that Yankee ingenuity will supply the rest.

The cotton manufacturers in this country are able at the present moment, not only to undersell foreigners in our own market, but to compete successfully with them abroad—while at the same time they pay for their labor nearly or quite three times as much as is paid in Europe for labor in the same employ. This has been accomplished with only a few years of protection from Government, and in the opinion of your Committee, should be one of the strongest inducements to Government to afford to other branches of industry the same aid, and

at the same time it should dispel all fear that there is any danger that it will be necessary to make it perpetual. Errors may and no doubt have been committed by granting a protection in some instances, beyond what was necessary to pay the difference in the price of labor and the raw material, thereby making the business profitable for a time, without that effort on the part of the manufacturer to improvement, or that close application to business, which is necessary to success in all ordinary business. But because these errors have been committed, it does not follow that we should abandon the policy. Your Committee have reason to believe that this system has not been properly viewed by a portion, at least, of the community. It has been looked upon as a sort of bounty given to the manufacturers, where in fact it is simply enabling him to employ our own laborers at the ordinary price of labor, instead of abandoning his business, or employing foreigners at the low price for which they would be obliged to work in their own country, thereby throwing certain branches of business into the hands of a population not our own, and which, as they believe, none would wish to have take the place of our own native citizens. They believe also that this policy should be pursued with a view to national independence, by producing at home all the necessaries of life, and with particular reference to our position in case of war, and with the object of making us an exporting instead of an importing, a creditor instead of a debtor country.

Your Committee do not believe that this can be accomplished by any State legislation, but should be left to the National Government. They believe that any effort on the part of this State to encourage the manufacture of silk, while some twenty millions worth of silks are annually brought into the country, duty free, would fail to accomplish the desired object. It would be like putting to sea against wind and tide. The only course of legislation which we believe it is desirable for this State to pursue, in relation to manufactures, is one which shall put them upon an equal footing with the manufactures of



other States. If such a policy should be pursued, it is the opinion of your Committee that the vast water power of this State, (being more than all New England besides) with our other natural advantages, will be a sufficient inducement to capitalists, at home and abroad, to invest their capital within our own borders, and on our own noble and permanent waterfalls, instead of investing it in other States, where none of the facilities are better, and where water power is vastly inferior to ours. With these views, your Committee would recommend that the petitioners have leave to withdraw their petition.

L. CUTLER, Chairman.

STATE OF MAINE.

---

IN SENATE, March 31, 1841.

Read and laid on the table, and ordered that 500 copies be printed for the use of the Legislature.

[Extract from the Journal.]

ATTEST, DANIEL SANBORN, *Secretary.*