

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1855.

AUGUSTA:

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1855.

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

NO. 6.

REPORT OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE STATE.

JANUARY 24, 1855.

The Joint Select Committee appointed to consider the expediency of an appropriation to complete the Geological Survey of the State, submit the following Report :

In the year 1836, Dr. Charles T. Jackson commenced the Geological Survey of the State, having been employed for that purpose by the Board of Internal Improvements, under the Resolves passed by the Legislature in March of the same year, authorizing them to contract with some suitable person to perform that service, and appropriating five thousand dollars "to be by them expended in carrying on said Geological Survey."

The Survey was continued during a period of three years, and until suspended in consequence of the straitened circumstances of the Treasury, growing out of the troubles connected with the North Eastern Boundary question.

The labors of Dr. Jackson and his associates, excited in the public mind a lively interest in respect to the Agricultural and Mineral resources and capabilities of the State, and had the effect to direct the capital and enterprise of our citizens into new and inviting fields.

Had the work been prosecuted to its completion, without interruption, and the full and complete reports been published and distributed among our people, it would, doubtless, have contributed in a very powerful degree to increase the wealth and resources, and as a natural consequence, the population and strength of our State.

The Committee are strongly of the opinion that the Legislature should not longer delay the requisite appropriation for the prosecution of this important enterprise. In the opinion of scientific men

—an opinion resting, it is believed, on very adequate foundation—our State is rich in mineral wealth, which it only needs the aid of science to bring to view. Leaving out of view the precious metals, which are known to exist, although the veins in which they originate have not been discovered, it is thought that the ores of copper, lead and tin, may be sought with good prospect of success. Coal also is believed to exist in the region drained by the Aroostook and Sebois rivers. Should these minerals be found in our State, in such quantities as may be hoped, they would form a more permanent source of wealth than the richest mines of gold and silver.

But though the development of our mineral resources is an object eminently worthy of the attention of the Legislature, yet the agricultural interests of the State must be a matter of paramount concern.

A thorough Agricultural Survey of our territory could not fail to have a powerful influence in directing the attention of our people to this honorable and dignified employment, and in guiding their labors to the most satisfactory results. Were the Geologist required to make an accurate analysis of the soil of several different localities in each town, and to exhibit the results in his Reports, the effect would soon be seen in a more intelligent cultivation of the soil, and a consequent larger increase of the agricultural products and wealth of the State.

The Committee cannot forbear to remind the Legislature that, while we have allowed this enterprise to remain unaccomplished, through a period of sixteen years, many of our sister States have made their Geological Surveys, and valuable beds of coal, mines of gold, silver, iron and other metals, now in successful operation, and a new and powerful stimulus given to the enterprise of their people, evince the wisdom of the measure.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Legislature authorize the Governor and Council to contract with some suitable person to carry forward the Geological and Agricultural Survey, and that it make the requisite appropriation for the accomplishment of that object. In behalf of the Committee.

H. H. BOODY, *Chairman.*

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVES authorizing the continuation of the Geological and Agricultural Survey of the State.

Resolved, That the Governor with the advice and
2 consent of the Council, is hereby authorized to con-
3 tract with some suitable person or persons to continue
4 the Geological and Agricultural Survey of the State,
5 at a salary not exceeding two thousand dollars per
6 annum.

Resolved, That the person who shall be employed
2 to continue the Geological Survey, shall be required
3 to select complete suits of specimens of all the rocks
4 and minerals of Maine, specimens of which are not
5 already in the possession of the State and of the
6 Institutions herein mentioned, and deposite one of
7 them in the Public Buildings, one in the Cabinet of
8 the Society of Natural History in Portland; also, one
9 in the Cabinet of each College or other Literary
10 Institution in the State, which shall pay the expenses
11 of transportation.

Resolved, That the Geologist be required to make
2 an accurate analysis of the soil of at least two different
3 localities in each town in the State, and exhibit the
4 results thereof in his Reports.

Resolved, That the sum of four thousand dollars be
2 appropriated from the Treasury, to be expended under
3 the direction of the Governor and Council, in contin-
4 uing said Geological and Agricultural Survey.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, }
February 2, 1855. }

Ordered, That this Report, with the accompanying Resolves, be laid on the
table and 350 copies printed for the use of the Legislature.

LOUIS O. COWAN, *Secretary*.