

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

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No. 8.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

RAILROAD COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1866.

REPORT.

To His Excellency the Governor of the State of Maine :

The Railroad Commissioners respectfully submit the following report on the condition of the railroads in this State.

In presenting the annual report of the condition of the railroads in this State, the Commissioners regret exceedingly that access cannot be had to the reports of the Superintendents of the different roads in order that their reports might be embodied in this, and thus add much valuable statistical information and interest to a report that must necessarily be somewhat repetitional and dry in detail, from year to year. This cannot be accomplished at present, from the fact that the Superintendent's reports are not made up until January of each year, consequently too late to be included in the annual report of the Commissioners.

The past year has been one of unusual prosperity to the railroads of our State, showing a largely increased business which has been carried on for the most part without accident or loss. This has encouraged the managers of the principal lines to persevere in their efforts to put the roads in good running order, and make them equal to the service required of them. It was thought by many that the close of the war would produce a depression in business which would most seriously affect the railroad interests of the country. Such, however, has not been the fact; on the contrary, the great power and energy developed in maintaining and carrying out the purposes of the war have not been allowed to relapse into quiet, now that the rebellion is conquered, but the people have learned more of the resources and power of our country, and directing these mighty energies, now no longer needed for the defence and maintenance of government, into the more peaceful channels of art and industry, and the future historian of our country will record that the real progress and development of America commenced at the close of the war.

Judging from present indications, Maine will not be found lingering behind in the great march of physical and intellectual advancement; her sons aspire to, and fill the first rank, maintaining their well-earned reputation of being "first in war, and first in the higher and nobler pursuits of peace."

That Maine possesses great natural advantages, none will deny, and the attention of capitalists is now directed to the improvement of the immense water powers as yet undeveloped and running to waste, sufficient to operate the whole manufacturing machinery of the country, while her mountains of iron and slate are as yet almost untouched. The procuring of timber and manufacture of lumber has been in years past and is now the great business interest of Maine, and this branch of industry and profit is now being worked to such an extent that even the immense forests of the more northern portions of the State are hardly sufficient to supply the demand.

The improvement in agricultural implements, together with the increased demand and remunerative prices for the products of the farm, have induced a more thorough and extensive cultivation of the soil which has yielded not only enough for home consumption, but a large surplus for exportation, and we believe that the profitable experiences of the past two or three years and the constantly increasing demands of the future will tend to the enlargement and perfection of agricultural pursuits in this State, widening and perfecting the avenues to competency and wealth, inducing the young men to remain and cultivate the home acres, rather than test the uncertainties of city and commercial life or risk the changes of a southern or western climate.

The shipbuilding and commercial interests of the State are constantly increasing and expanding, requiring enlarged facilities for transportation and communication with the interior; indeed all the interests enumerated above are demanding, and should have all the aid of a liberal legislation to secure the highest development of which each is susceptible, and elevating the State to the high rank which her geographical position and natural advantages entitle her to occupy.

The cheap and rapid means of communication and transportation established by the construction of railroads throughout our territory, adds not only to the material wealth and physical development of the sections through which these avenues are built, but

also by bringing the people into closer contact and communion, tends to the implanting and advancement of liberal views socially and politically, and by the attrition of mind with mind, new views and thoughts are generated, new principles discovered and applied in scientific and mechanical pursuits.

During the past season, several important railroad lines have been projected and surveyed; one from Wiscasset to a point on the Portland and Kennebec Railroad near Harwood's crossing; one from Dexter to Newport, connecting at the latter point with the Maine Central Railroad; another for the extension of the Maine Central Railroad from Danville Junction to a point on the Portland and Kennebec Railroad in Falmouth, thence following the location of the last named road to its terminus in Portland.

Surveys have also been made from Wiscasset to Bath, and Wiscasset to Richmond, all three of the surveys from Wiscasset being made for the same general purpose of securing the best route for the location of the proposed road from the Kennebec valley to Rockland.

Lines have been, or are being surveyed from Waterville through Norridgewock to North Anson, and one from Lewiston to Mechanic Falls.

All these various enterprises will undoubtedly be laid before the Legislature in some form, either for sanction or aid, when I doubt not each will receive the consideration which their importance severally demands and be disposed of in accordance with the wise system which has always characterized the doings of the Legislature of our State. Of the distinctive merits of each particular route, it is not the duty of the Commissioners to speak, neither would it be proper to mention them in other than general terms, as serving to show that a spirit of enterprise is being awakened, and that our people are aroused to the importance of securing to themselves the advantages of increased business facilities.

The great work of constructing the European and North American Railroad has been commenced, after contending with and overcoming delays and obstacles of such a nature, that an enterprise, not possessing intrinsic merit, must long since have failed to accomplish. It is said that "history never repeats itself," but history, often, justifies the anticipations and measures of leading minds whose projects, statements and exertions were treated with coldness and contempt at the time of their advancement, and such

we doubt not will be the result when this great enterprise becomes an accomplished fact, and our State and people are reaping the benefits derived from it ; then the men whose sagacity and foresight planned and executed the undertaking, will reap their reward, and take rank with the great benefactors of the age in which they lived.

The Commissioners take pleasure in reporting that the main lines of railroads now in operation in this State, are generally in good repair, and such improvements are constantly being made as will conduce not only to the safety and convenience of the public, but also the permanency and durability of the roads. The Maine Central and Portland and Kennebec Railroads may be mentioned as examples in this respect worthy of imitation.

The Maine Central Railroad, under the excellent management of the able Superintendent, Edwin Noyes, Esq., still sustains its former reputation as one of the best and safest roads in the whole country. Originally well constructed, a system of judicious and reasonable repairs has been adopted and practised, which has gained for the road a high character, and won the full confidence of the public. Mr. Noyes has always made it a point to secure by all means the safety of the bridges and track, and spares no expense to accomplish this object, rightly believing this to be the first and most important duty of a railroad superintendent. In giving it his personal attention, he acquires a full knowledge of the necessary repairs, and perfects them in the most economical and reasonable manner. At the annual examinations by the State Commissioners, every facility is granted for full and close investigation, and whenever defects are discovered in the track or bridges, and the notice served by the Commissioners on the Superintendent of the existence of such defects, the repairs are promptly made. During the past Summer and Fall, this Company has laid in its track, five hundred and sixty-three tons of new iron, improved pattern, repaired and laid two thousand old rails, and fifty-four thousand new sleepers. Seventeen miles of road bed have been gravelled, and the track raised upon it. This is a large amount of work to be accomplished in one season, and is very creditable to the officers of the road. The rolling stock of the road is in good condition, and improvements are constantly being made ; several of the passenger cars have been rebuilt and remodelled into monitor cars ; elegant and spacious smoking cars have been built and

placed on the road ; a number of freight cars have also been added to the rolling stock. The above work is all done at the shop of the company in Waterville. The station buildings along the line of the road are generally in good repair ; the passenger depot at Waterville has been improved and enlarged ; a new passenger and freight depot built at Monmouth ; wood sheds and water stations have been built at Danville Junction and Bangor. It will be necessary the coming summer to rebuild and repair several bridges, for which preparations are already being made.

The Grand Trunk Railway has been improved somewhat during the past season, but there is still great need of new iron and sleepers. The daily passage of from eighteen to twenty-four trains, most of which are heavy freight trains, over this track, subject the iron to unusual wear, causing largely increased expenses when compared with other lines of road in the State over which a less number of heavy freight trains are run. Portions of the road bed need a large amount of gravel, and as there are large deposits of this material in convenient localities along the line, there seems to be no excuse on the part of the Company for not availing themselves of the benefit to be derived from the use of it, and reducing largely the cost of maintaining the track in good and serviceable condition ; until this is done, the track must continue in a rough and unsatisfactory state. Seven and one half miles of new iron, and thirty-four thousand three hundred and seventy ties have been laid in the track the past summer, and we believe the track is in better order the present winter than it has been for the four preceding years. The passenger trains have been run within the limits of this State without accident, though delayed occasionally by the breaking down of freight trains, mostly occurring beyond the limits of the State. This line of road has been so long in bad condition, that the public have become distrustful, and fail to notice or give credit for the improvement made, and as the road is so vast in extent and operations under one management, delays and interruptions are of frequent occurrence on different portions of the line, and all are published in general terms as occurring on the Grand Trunk Railroad without regard to locality ; but the Commissioners are happy to say that but a small proportion of these delays occur within our limits, and a comparison of the condition of the road in this State with other portions of the line, show very largely in our favor. The station buildings and bridges are all in

good order and great care is taken to guard against accident or detention at the bridges. A large amount of iron and sleepers will be required the coming summer, and as the facilities for re-rolling and obtaining iron have been greatly increased by the building and operating of a rolling mill at Portland, it is hoped that at least a portion of the want will be seasonably supplied without obliging the Commissioners to resort to unusual or extraordinary measures to insure attention to these reasonable demands.

Androscoggin Railroad.—The track of this road is generally in a fair state of repairs, though about two hundred tons of iron and several thousand sleepers are needed between Leeds Junction and Farmington. The bridges are for the most part light structures, requiring constant care and watchfulness to secure the safety of the trains passing over them. That over the Androscoggin river at Brunswick needs immediate attention, and the Superintendent has been notified to that effect, not only in regard to this but the other bridges along the line. There is great necessity for gravel on several sections of the road.

The business of the road is increasing, particularly on that portion of the line between the flourishing city of Lewiston and Brunswick. As the road is now controlled by one company throughout its entire length, it is to be hoped that the long needed improvements between Leeds Junction and Farmington will be perfected.

Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad from Portland to Portsmouth, N. H.—The business of this road is steadily increasing to such an extent as to require constant enlargement of station accommodations and addition to the rolling stock. Four large and powerful engines and several freight cars have been put upon the road the past season, and many new and elegant passenger cars have been added to the trains by the Eastern and Boston and Maine railroads, by whom this road is leased, though operated under a distinct organization.

The track is in excellent condition, and as the earnings of the road largely exceed running expenses and interest account, the Company always have surplus means at their disposal to be applied in perfecting the road bed and all other needed additions and improvements.

Four hundred tons of iron and a large number of ties have been laid in the track during the last season. The stone arch bridge over the Mousam river in Kennebunk, referred to in the report of

last year as needing repairs, is in process of reconstruction at a cost of about twenty-five thousand dollars. A new pile bridge has been built at the Great Works stream in South Berwick, and a small pile bridge in North Berwick. Other structures along the line have received necessary repairs, and a gang of workmen, with a competent overseer, is kept constantly at work on the long bridge over the Piscataqua river at Portsmouth. A new engine house and turn table have been built, and preparations are being made to erect a new and commodious passenger station in Portland. The mechanical works of the Company are all to be removed to Cape Elizabeth, where new buildings are being erected for this purpose. The unprecedented and disastrous fire which swept away so large a portion of the beautiful city of Portland, retarding, but not stopping its growth or overcoming the indomitable energy of its citizens, has added greatly to the business of this road, and this demand has been met with a spirit of liberality on the part of the officers of the road, by running additional trains at reduced rates of fare for the transportation of men and materials. Francis Chase, Esq., the efficient Superintendent of this road, has received the full confidence of the Company and the public.

• *Boston and Maine Railroad.*—There are but about two and one-half miles of this road, including part of the important bridge at Salmon Falls, within the limits of this State, and this small portion of this favorite and well managed road is maintained in the same good condition and state of repair which characterizes the whole, and has won for it a well deserved popularity with the travelling public, under the management of William Merritt, Esq., the able Superintendent.

The Great Falls and Conway Railroad branches from the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad, at a point in the town of South Berwick called Brock's Crossing, thence passing by the villages of South Berwick, Great Falls and Rochester to Union Village in New Hampshire. Arrangements are in progress to extend the road to Conway, upon the completion of which it must become a very important feeder to the P., S. and P. and Eastern Railroads. There are but about three and one-half miles of this road within our jurisdiction, which was found upon examination to be in comparatively good order, needing only a few sleepers and some gravel upon which to raise the track. A. A. Perkins, Esq., is the Superintendent.

The Portland and Rochester Railroad extends from Portland to a point on the Saco river called Bar Mills, in the town of Buxton. This road is not in so good order as its importance demands, and it was found upon examination that the iron was badly broken and worn and many of the sleepers rotten and unsafe. The bridge at Deering's Mill Pond was also found to be defective. Mr. Woodbury, the President of the road, was promptly notified by the Commissioners of the existence and character of these defects, and immediately commenced making such repairs as would secure the safety of the trains the present winter. Two hundred tons of iron have been purchased, and a large portion of it laid in the track, and such repairs made as the Commissioners judged necessary for the present at Deering's bridge. This bridge should be rebuilt the coming summer. As the President is now giving his personal care and attention to the road, and devoting his time to its interests, it is expected that long needed improvements will be made and its reputation advanced. The rolling stock of the road has been increased and improved the past season by repairs and the addition of a dummy car and a new passenger car to be run in connection with it; the last named car was built in a neat and substantial manner at the shop of the Company. A new turn table has also been built at Saco river. Stone abutments and piers have been built, preparatory to the proposed extension of the road, and we trust that this enterprise so essential to the business interest and welfare of Portland will not be much longer delayed.

The Portland and Oxford Central Railroad extends from Mechanic Falls through Minot and Buckfield to Sumner. The track of this road is in good condition, showing much improvement since the examination of 1865; iron not much worn and sleepers generally sound. Some of the bridges were found to be defective, and directions were given by the Commissioners to strengthen the bridge at Pottle's Creek with additional girts and braces, and the truss bridge at Buckfield by trestle supports under the lower chords, with foundation in the bed of the stream. This will prove ample security during the winter, until new chords can be put in the bridge. Under the management of the gentlemen now controlling the road, its business has increased, and efforts are now being made to extend the line next season from Sumner to Canton, the accomplishment of which will doubtless be highly beneficial to the interests of the Company. D. A. Vanvalkenburg, Esq., is the Superintendent.

Bangor, Oldtown and Milford Railroad.—At the examination of this road, some defects were discovered in the track, and bridges at Stillwater and Oldtown. The officers of the road were duly notified and repairs directed. A large wooden culvert near French St., Bangor, was found in a very unsafe condition,—since rebuilt in a substantial manner. A portion of the iron is badly worn and must be replaced with new rails the coming summer. Several thousand sleepers are required to replace the rotten and defective ones now in the track. The road is doing a profitable business, and is economically and carefully managed.

Portland and Kennebec Railroad.—Walter Hatch, Esq., Superintendent. The marked and rapid advance of this road to public confidence and favor is justly due to the liberal policy and energetic action instituted by the Directors and carried out in detail by the able President of the Board, the Hon. R. D. Rice, during the last four or five years. When these gentlemen first assumed control of the road, it was in a dilapidated and unsafe condition, the iron broken and nearly worn out, sleepers rotten, bridges, station houses and other fixtures requiring rebuilding or extensive repairs. Very little if any gravel had been put upon the road bed since its construction, and the rolling stock had deteriorated to such an extent that the business of the road was seriously impeded or transacted with great difficulty. Public confidence had been sacrificed, and the natural business of the road had been directed into other channels. The first effort of Judge Rice was to induce a return of this business, and secure it to this line by putting the road in such condition as would enable it to attend to and transact it. In order to successfully accomplish this desirable end, the Somerset and Kennebec Railroad was leased by the Portland and Kennebec road and brought under its control, thus opening the rich valley of the Upper Kennebec and insuring through connections with Bangor, by intersecting the trains of the Maine Central Railroad at Kendall's Mills. The results arising from this combination of interests have proved of great value to the Portland and Kennebec road.

The next marked improvement was the extension of the road from Woodford's Corner in Westbrook to a point near the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth depot in Portland, thus obviating the circuitous route by the way of the York and Cumberland depot, thence around the city, and giving the road a terminus entirely under its own control. Large and commodious station buildings,

engine house and wood sheds have been erected at this terminus. A large machine shop has been built at Augusta, and the repairs of engines and cars carried on there. Two new passenger depots were built at Augusta and both destroyed by fire the same year. Additions have been made to the rolling stock of new engines, passenger and freight cars and the old ones repaired. The bridges with one or two exceptions have been rebuilt or received the necessary repairs. The work of re-sleeping and graveling the road is nearly completed, and a large amount of new iron has been laid in the track,—a record of liberal expenditure and improvement for which the Company is justly entitled to commendation.

During the past season, five hundred and twenty-five tons of new iron, three hundred of repaired and cut iron, and between thirty and forty thousand sleepers, have been laid in the track, and seventeen miles of road bed gravelled. This statement includes both the Portland and Kennebec and Somerset and Kennebec roads; about twelve hundred feet in length of new wood sheds, and one thousand feet of side track have been built at different points on the line, tasteful and convenient passenger depots have been erected at Augusta and Gardiner, and a new engine house and turn table at Bath. The wooden bridges at Shinglemen's Creek in Bowdoinham, Lang's Mills in Vassalborough, and Adams' gully in Skowhegan, have been removed, culverts built and embankments made over them. The rolling stock is about being increased by the addition of two new freight engines and several freight cars, the growing business of the road demanding increased power and facilities for transportation.

In the foregoing statements we have included the Portland and Kennebec and Somerset and Kennebec roads, for the reason that both are controlled and operated by the same Company, and perhaps any further reference to the Somerset and Kennebec road may be unnecessary. We only state in general terms that the track is in good order, and that since the road was leased by the Portland and Kennebec Company, many of the bridges have been rebuilt and others received necessary repairs, and whenever defects have been discovered in these structures the proper officers have been notified and the remedy applied; neither would we fail to impress upon the minds of the officers of this road the absolute necessity of constant care and watchfulness over these important structures, by making close and frequent examinations.

In conclusion we think we can congratulate the people of the State, and the several Companies, upon the general good management of our railroads, as is proved by the freedom from accident or disaster and the regularity of trains. And with the hope that all these important enterprises now in operation, or projected, may tend to the full development of our beloved State, and add to the material wealth and prosperity of her citizens,

I most respectfully submit this report.

A. W. WILDES,

For the Board of Railroad Commissioners for the State of Maine.

SKOWHEGAN, December 31, 1866.

STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, {
January 17, 1867. }

On motion of Mr. HALE of Ellsworth, ordered to be printed.

FRANKLIN M. DREW, *Clerk.*