

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIFTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 39.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The Swedish colonists in Maine number over 1,000 persons. These have all come to our State within the past two years under the auspices of the Board and Commissioner of Immigration; 553 Swedes are settled in the colony at New Sweden; about 500 others are at work in our cities and villages, on our farms, and in our tanneries, quarries, lumber-woods and work-shops. All have paid their own way to Maine. The 500 who are working out, are self-supporting.

Of the 553 colonists of New Sweden, 114 arrived in 1870. These harvested their first crop, consisting of 3000 bushels of grain and 5000 bushels of potatoes, last fall, and have been self-supporting since October 1st, 1871.

The remainder of the New Sweden colonists, numbering 439 persons, arrived last summer. They have felled trees, cleared land, and built houses and barns. They can raise no crop till next fall. In the meantime they must be furnished with provisions. They must also be provided with seed and necessary tools next spring.

It is for this purpose chiefly, that an appropriation is now asked for. The provisions, tools and seed are not *given* the colonists, but *sold* them on credit, and payment taken in labor in building State highways which are a permanent benefit to the State; \$2,238.00 of the debt of the colonists has already been repaid the State in labor, and the remaining indebtedness will be repaid whenever called for.

The appropriation now asked for is vital to the success of the colony. Without this aid 439 Swedes, who have paid their own way over 4000 miles of sea and land, with simple faith in the State

of Maine must starve or desert their new homes in our woods. With this aid they can live till they harvest their first crop ; the entire colony will be firmly established, and will increase in the future by its own natural growth, and the natural immigration of friends, with little or no further aid from the State.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-TWO.

AN ACT to promote immigration and facilitate the settlement of the public lands.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled, as follows :

SECTION 1. There shall be a board of immigration in
2 this state, composed of the governor, secretary of state
3 and land agent.

SECT. 2. It shall be the duty of said board to
2 appoint a commissioner of immigration, an agent resi-
3 dent in New Sweden, and to exercise a general super-
4 vision over the expenditure of all moneys appropriated
5 by this act.

SECT. 3. It shall be the duty of said commissioner
2 to collect statistics and other useful information con-
3 cerning the climate, soil, productions and resources of
4 the state, the amount and location of unsettled lands
5 in Maine, the terms offered by the state to settlers,
6 together with the condition and progress of the colony
7 at New Sweden, and such other information as he

8 may deem proper, and cause the same to be translated
9 into the Swedish language and distributed in Sweden
10 and the United States in such manner as may be
11 deemed desirable and best calculated to promote the
12 provisions of this act; *provided*, the whole amount
13 expended for this purpose shall not exceed the unex-
14 pended balance of the appropriation for same purpose
15 enacted by the legislature of A. D. eighteen hundred
16 and seventy-one.

SECT. 4. It shall be the further duty of said com-
2 missioner to exercise a general care and oversight over
3 all immigrants coming to Maine, to give them all
4 needful information, to assist them in settling upon
5 the public lands of the state, or obtaining employment
6 within its borders, and to have special charge of the
7 colony at New Sweden, to the end that its develop-
8 ment and prosperity may be promoted in every way
9 consistent with law; and the compensation and entire
10 expenses of said commissioner shall not exceed the
11 sum of twenty-five hundred dollars. And it shall be
12 the duty of said agent resident in New Sweden to have
13 special charge of the state store-house, stores, tools
14 and all other state property there, to receive and dis-
15 burse all state supplies and keep proper accounts and
16 vouchers therefor; and the compensation of said agent
17 shall not exceed the sum of three hundred dollars.

SECT. 5. The board aforesaid may, if in their opinion
2 the circumstances require it, expend for provisions,
3 tools and seed to be sold the colonists, and for which
4 payment may be taken in labor on the roads, public
5 buildings and other public works, an amount not
6 exceeding eight thousand dollars; for schools two
7 hundred dollars; and for all other necessary aid an
8 amount not exceeding one thousand dollars.

SECT. 6. The board aforesaid may cause all immi-
2 grants arriving under the provisions of this act to be
3 settled on any of the public lands of the state not
4 otherwise appropriated, and assign to each man over
5 twenty-one years of age, by certificate from the land
6 agent, a lot of one hundred acres of land; and the
7 land agent shall, at the expiration of five years from
8 the date of said assignment, grant each of the persons
9 aforesaid, or his heirs at law, a deed of warranty or
10 other valid title of the lot assigned him; *provided*
11 each of said persons has established his residence on
12 the lot assigned him, has built him a comfortable
13 house thereon, and has cleared not less than fifteen
14 acres of land within the time aforesaid, ten of which
15 shall be laid down to grass; and all said persons shall
16 be exempt from state taxation until January first, in
17 the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and seventy-
18 six.

SECT. 7. The governor is hereby authorized to draw
2 his warrant upon the treasury for any of the sums
3 specified in this act.

SECT. 8. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent with
2 this act are hereby repealed, and this act shall take
3 effect when approved.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 9, 1872.

Reported from Joint Select Committee on Immigration, by Mr. SMITH, and on his motion laid on the table and ordered to be printed, together with the accompanying Statement of Facts.

SAMUEL W. LANE, *Secretary.*