

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIFTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

No. 52.

The Committee on Agriculture, authorized and directed to make a visit of examination to the Maine State College of "Agriculture and Mechanic Arts," have attended to that duty and ask leave to report, as follows :

The most of your committee spent the large part of a day in examination of the buildings and other property, and in investigating the present condition, and the wants of the institution.

The real estate belonging to the college consists of three hundred and seventy acres of beautifully located land about one mile above the village of Orono, and fronting on that part of the Penobscot river called Stillwater. This land is comparatively level, and is said to be of very good quality. The college buildings are located near the middle of the westerly portion of this land and consist of one brick building 43 by 84, three stories high used as a dormitory or dwelling for the students and some of the professors. In rear of this, and connected by a narrow hall 48 feet long, is a two story wooden building 50 by 35, in which is the dining room, kitchen, &c. Next back of this is the woodshed and then the stable. The laboratory used for apparatus, specimens, and for lectures and recitations, is of brick, two stories high, the main building 45 by 50 with a wing 36 by 50. This building and the first named buildings are about 50 rods apart. Between these and nearest the last mentioned is a large two story wooden building, erected for a dormitory but is now not much used. The Trustees suggest that if the State admit females to the college, this building can be converted to their use.

All the above named buildings have been erected by the Trustees, and the work appears to have been done in a thorough, substantial manner, with an eye to usefulness, and not to ornamentation or extravagance in any way. Indeed, it could not be doubted, that under the management of the present board of

Trustees, money would be economically expended, and that they would use all the means entrusted to them for the best interests of all concerned.

Some distance to the north of these college buildings and nearer the stream, is situated one set of the farm buildings included in the original purchase. The house is a two story, old fashioned, comfortable looking building, with shed and barn attached, and is occupied by one of the Professors. Eighty or one hundred rods south of the college buildings is the other farm house with sheds and two or three barns. These premises are occupied by the manager of the farm business, and here is kept the stock, and farm products. The house appears to be in fair condition, but the barns are not such as the State can be proud of, and not as good as may be seen on farms of most of our thrifty farmers. One at least of the barns on this place should have a cellar under it, and such other arrangements as would enable the farmer to save and make dressing according to scientific principles and teachings. The stock of the farm consists of 7 cows, 3 bulls, some young cattle and 16 sheep, all of which is in very good condition. The horses which are used on the farm in the summer, are hired out for the winter, to work in the woods.

Your Committee could not of course judge of the general condition of the farm, but they think it safe to say, that a large amount may be well expended in labor and manure, from the fact that there were only 50 tons of hay harvested last summer. There are something over 150 acres in mowing, pasturage and tillage, most of which will probably need a liberal coat of manure before it will produce largely. Much of the labor on the farm is done by the students who work three hours daily in farming season, for which they are allowed from 8 to 10 cents per hour each, and the amount they earn goes in part payment for board, for which they are charged three dollars per week. In this way a liberal education is acquired, with but a small amount of money. The students now number in all fifty-four, thirty-six of them having entered this term.

After a candid consideration of the subject your Committee have come to the conclusion that the State should either abandon the enterprise altogether, as unprofitable; or they should treat it as worth their countenance and patronage, and give to it such pecuniary support as will enable it to thrive, and finally attain a flour-

ishing condition. It may be doubtful if an institution of this kind can be managed by State authority, and managed in such a way, as to become useful and profitable, and at the same time escape the distrust and denunciation of a large portion of the people. It may be doubtful if it will not always be a source of contention and complaint. But if considerations of this kind might have been valid at the start, and of sufficient weight to have deterred the State from accepting the offer of the general government, is it not now too late to make the objections? Does not the good faith and dignity of the State demand the fulfilment of the contract? Is not the child already adopted and a large amount of money advanced for its support? Can we honorably abandon it? These are questions to be considered. Your Committee are of the opinion that further aid must be granted from the State, or the enterprise will not be a success.

The Trustees report that they have advanced \$13,000, which amount was mostly expended in finishing buildings much needed, which buildings would have deteriorated if they had not been finished. Having made this expenditure in good faith, for the interest of the State, the Legislature will not of course hesitate to refund it. They also ask for \$12,000 more to erect two dwellings for Professors, make repairs, &c. The highly esteemed President of the College now lives in Bangor and must continue to, until a place can be provided for him on the grounds. He is earnestly devoted to the work, and it cannot be denied that his usefulness would be enhanced if he could have a residence near the college.

Mr. C. H. Fernald, a popular Professor, who seems to be specially qualified for his position, has, with his family, now to mess with the students, and he will not be contented to remain long unless he be provided with other quarters. So it will be seen that two dwelling houses are much needed. Your Committee are of the opinion that twelve thousand dollars will not be too much for building these houses, and paying for such repairs and outlays as will be called for.

The fund derived from the lands given by the United States, amounts now to \$130,000, which is held by the Trustees, the income to be devoted to the payment of Professors, &c.

The State has already advanced \$86,000, and the \$13,000 which the Trustees have advanced will make \$99,000. This appears to your Committee to be too large an investment to throw away, and

as they believe the institution cannot flourish, if it can even live, without further help from the State, they recommend the appropriation of the amount asked for, \$12,000, in addition to the \$13,000 advanced by the Trustees, and therefore recommend the passage of the accompanying resolve.

D. K. CHASE.
JESSE DAVIS.
WILLIAM IRISH.
ELIHU HAYES.
JONAS BUTTERFIELD.
JOHN HANSON.
EDWIN GRAY.
MATTHIAS SMITH.
WENDELL SILSBY.
O. D. POTTER.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor the Maine State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts.

Resolved, That there be paid from the state treasury
2 to the trustees or treasurer of the Maine State
3 College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, the sum of
4 twenty-five thousand dollars, thirteen thousand dollars
5 of which will reimburse the trustees of said college for
6 money advanced by them, and the balance (twelve
7 thousand dollars) to be expended by said trustees in
8 erecting and repairing buildings and such other pur-
9 poses as they shall see fit.



STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, February 15, 1872.

Submitted by Mr. CHASE, and on motion of Mr. DAVIS, laid on the table and ordered to be printed, with the accompanying Resolve.

SAMUEL W. LANE, *Secretary.*