

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sixty - Third Legislature.

SENATE.

No. 85.

STATE OF MAINE.

The undersigned, a majority of the committee appointed by a joint order of the two Houses of the Legislature to investigate the cause or causes of the late outbreak of disease among the cattle at the State College farm, the loss of other cattle at said farm prior to that time, the disposal of the cattle therefrom, and the doings and correspondence of the Commissioners on Contagious Diseases Among Cattle and in relation to the same, have attended to that duty and after several hearings and an exhaustive examination of the facts, beg leave to report, that the disease from which the herd of cattle at the State College farm was suffering in March and April, 1886, was tuberculosis, a disease identical with consumption in the human family; that said disease, according to the evidence introduced before us, which is made a part of this report, is contagious, and readily communicated by reason of the constant intermingling of the different animals of a herd together, and is transmittable from either parent to its offspring.

The date and source of the first introduction of the disease into the College herd, is unknown, but the evidence tends to disclose that it had existed there for some years, and that it had caused the death of several cattle on said farm before the slaughter of the herd in April, 1886.

The outbreak of said disease there in the winter and spring of 1886 was the most malignant on record, and seems to have

been caused by the collecting and intermingling of so many cattle, some of which, at least, were diseased in close and well-finished stables and by the thorough impregnation of said stables with contagious virus from those and former diseased animals. Little out-door exercise and concentrated and stimulating food were also potent factors in the rapid extension and progress of the disease.

This herd, which appears to have been thoroughly inbred, which fact caused the disease to develop in an unusually severe form.

The disposal of the cattle from said farm for several years past is shown by the evidence introduced before us and is referred to.

The doings and correspondence of the Commissioners on contagious diseases among the cattle on said farm, are also herewith submitted in the evidence introduced. The facts seem to fully justify the destruction of the entire College herd.

In relation to those cattle sold from the College farm for several years past, if we are allowed by the terms of the order for investigation to make a recommendation, we must certainly recommend a most careful examination of those animals, and especially the bulls recently sold therefrom, by a competent board of cattle commissioners, to the end that every vestige of said disease, wherever found, may be stamped out and destroyed. As a committee of this Legislature, we take no part in any controversy arising out of this matter. Yet we cannot help coming to the conclusion that the Cattle Commissioners have not given such attention to this case as the exigency required, and we respectfully suggest that the existing condition of things may have grown out of the fact that one of the members of said Commission seems to have held several official positions, the duties of which were incompatible with each other.

We make the majority report of the Cattle Commission, signed by Dr. Bailey and Messrs. Bell and Ferguson, a part of the evidence in this investigation, and, as a consequence, a

part of our report, and we respectfully call attention to the testimony given in said investigation by Dr. J. F. Winchester of Lawrence, Massachusetts, a member of the Cattle Commission of Massachusetts, and A. W. Cheever of Dedham, Massachusetts, also a member of said Board, and others.

The above report is signed by I. C. Libby, who differs from the other members of the Committee in the recommendation of the examination at the State's expense of any apparently well animals and also any reflection on any member of the Cattle Commission.

Samuel H. Allen, } *Committee on the part*
 Alfred W. Rich, } *of the Senate.*

S. J. Walton, }
 Enoch Adams, } *Committee on the part of the House.*
 I. C. Libby, }

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, March 10, 1887.

Reported by Mr. ALLEN, from Joint Special Committee to Investigate the Cattle Disease, and laid on table to be printed.

C. W. TILDEN, Secretary.