

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING THE SESSION

A. D. 1891.



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1892.

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# Sixty-Fifth Legislature.

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SENATE.

No. 30.

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## STATE OF MAINE.

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*To the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

In reply to the joint Resolution of the Legislature, approved January 27th, 1891, directing the State Valuation Commission to report "without further delay" it has to say that the Commission entered upon the discharge of its labors at as early a day as practicable and has prosecuted them as promptly as possible under the circumstances. The Commission is required, by the act and resolve under which it was appointed, to examine the valuations of the five hundred towns, cities and plantations for the years 1887, 1888, 1889 and 1890. The Commission has adjourned from time to time as circumstances seemed to warrant. Being required to examine the returns for 1890 the Commission was unable to enter upon that part of its duties earlier than Nov. 4th, having met in August when they were unable to proceed as but few of the

assessors' returns for 1890 had then been received; that on the assembling of the Commission at that date a large part of the assessors' returns for 1890 had not been forwarded as required by law, though each city, town and plantation, had been specially requested to forward the returns at an earlier day and on blanks furnished for that purpose early in the season. The Commission has used all reasonable diligence to obtain the returns, and all have not yet been received. The last return received by the Commission was on the twenty-second day of last month.

The Commission was obliged to return quite a number of the inventories for 1890, as well as for previous years, for explanation or correction, and in a few instances to require the presence of the assessors to explain. In about one hundred and fifty cases, assessors or others have appeared for hearings as to towns and cities, before the Commission.

These hearings could not be properly had until the valuation for 1890 was received. In addition to the towns and cities and plantations, the Commission has had at least four hundred pieces of wild or timber land, containing about eight millions of acres, equal to three hundred and ninety-one townships of twenty-two thousand and forty acres each to inquire in regard to, in order to ascertain their location, nature of the soil, kind and amount of growth; the distance from floatable water; expense of driving and value of stumpage, in order to fix their values to compare with other property.

The Commission has had at least seventy-five hearings in regard to timber lands involving the question hereinbefore indicated.

The Commission has investigated, in order to fix the value per spindle, twenty cotton mills, containing eight hundred and seventy-nine thousand, eight hundred and seventy spindles, involving several lengthy hearings, also one silk mill, and forty-six woolen mills containing three hundred and twenty-four and one-half sets of cards and machinery, the sets of cards ranging from thirty-six to sixty

inches in length. These investigations have required much time and great care, in order to fix an equitable valuation so far as possible. The extending of railroad facilities has stimulated new industries in some localities which have sprung up and which have required the special attention of the Commission.

Water and electric light companies and pulp manufactories have commenced operations in many places, which have required special effort, and the returns and much of the information concerning these enterprises, have not been obtained without much care and the exercise of unusual patience.

A large number of building, loan and trust companies have been organized which have required special attention.

The foregoing contains but a brief summary of the labors of the Commission. The Commission hope, in the progress of their labors, to be able to make, within thirty days, a report which shall fix and equalize the values of the taxable property in the State as nearly as it is possible for them to do in the exercise of their best judgment, having regard to the evidence of values so far as they have been able to obtain them.

HIRAM KNOWLTON, *Chairman.*

February 2, 1891.

STATE OF MAINE.

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SENATE, February 3, 1891.

On motion by Mr. THATCHER of Penobscot, laid on table to be printed.

KENDALL M. DUNBAR, *Secretary.*