

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sixty-Eighth Legislature.

SENATE.

No. 159.

STATE OF MAINE.

RESOLVE in favor of an appropriation to aid in Erecting a
High School Building in the town of Frenchville in the
county of Aroostook.

Resolved, That the sum of five hundred dollars be and is
2 hereby appropriated for the purpose of aiding in building
3 a high school building in the town of Frenchville in the
4 county of Aroostook, provided said town raise and expend
5 in construction of said building, one thousand dollars, the
6 same to be expended under the direction of State superin-
7 tendent of schools.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The town of Frenchville to which aid is granted in the foregoing resolve, is situated in the heart of Madawaska, and is settled wholly by French speaking people, the descendants of the old Acadians, who first came into the Saint John valley more than a century ago. For a period of half a century the people of this portion of the valley were isolated from the rest of the world, and their lands were divided, and sub-divided among the numerous children, until the farms have become so small as to yield little above subsistence to their cultivators, so that there is actual need of assistance if the town should enjoy such school facilities as it ought to have, in comparison with the other towns of the State. For many years education in this town, like others in the Madawaska territory, was backward, but recently has come an awakening interest, and the citizens desire, not only to acquire education, but also to acquire a knowledge of the English language. They realize the need of an English education, in order to fully enjoy the benefits that belong to American citizens. The town now has one good schoolhouse, only, for its common schools, and no place of its own for the holding of a high school. It desires to provide a building which will cost fifteen hundred dollars, and which will be suited to its needs for many years to come. The town, which is wholly agricultural, has a school population of twelve hundred and eighty-seven, and its total valuation is only about two hundred thousand dollars. At the last election several scores of young men, who had just become one and twenty, were deprived of the franchise because they could not read the constitution in English, although intelligent French scholars. Such school facilities should be afforded to these people, who have especial claims upon the consideration of the State, that the youth should not be deprived of the right to vote because of the lack of opportunity to learn the English language.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, March 11, 1897.

Reported by Mr. CLASON, from Committee on Education, and laid
on table to be printed under joint rules.

KENDALL M. DUNBAR, *Secretary*.