

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1863.

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1863.

FORTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

SENATE.

No. 11.

REPORT.

The Committee on Education, to which was referred the memorial of the Trustees of Farmington Academy, asking for aid in establishing a Normal School; also, the report of the Superintendent of Common Schools on the subject of Normal Schools; have had the same under consideration, and

REPORT:

Your Committee are satisfied that one of the most urgent requisites to the success of our public schools at the present time, is a large supply of well qualified teachers. We believe that a very large fraction of all the money expended for school purposes, is lost through the incompetency of many of the teachers employed.

To prevent this great waste in future, we look to no single remedy. School officers must keep a more vigilant watch at the school-house door against the entrance of unqualified teachers. Candidates for this important work should be impressed with the importance of making larger attainments, if they expect to find employment in the profession.

But we believe that the State, as such, has a duty in the premises which it cannot longer neglect, with justice to this great public interest.

While the State provides by law that each town shall raise money for the support of public schools, according to the population; and while it grants additional bounties, from the bank tax and other funds, to aid in sustaining these schools;—the whole expenditure for school purposes amounting to more than \$700,000

annually ;—is it right or wise for the State to neglect the most important means of rendering this expenditure in the highest degree conducive to the great object for which this money is expended ?

No one doubts that we need a large additional number of well educated teachers for our primary and higher schools. And some may claim that we have the means, in our academies and colleges, of supplying the demand. But while we acknowledge the very important service rendered by these institutions, and must look to them for similar service in time to come, your Committee are convinced that there is need of institutions which shall make it their grand aim to train teachers for their special vocation. Our academies and higher seminaries have their various educational work to accomplish. They are training young men for college and for the various business of life.

The teacher, like the student in law, or medicine, or divinity, needs an especial training for his professional duties. This training it is the intention of the Normal School to impart. It aims to teach men and women the art of teaching. It seeks to make them familiar with the best methods of instruction and government ; to impart a knowledge of the philosophy of dealing with youthful minds, developing and disciplining their mental and moral powers aright. This great work of the teacher, the Normal School assumes, cannot be accomplished without much painstaking and special appliances.

Normal, or training schools, are not an experiment. They have existed in Europe for more than a hundred years, and in this country for nearly a quarter of a century. In Prussia a Normal School was organized in 1735. In this country the first Normal School was opened in July, 1839, at Lexington, Mass. ; two others were opened in the course of the following year. New York followed with her State Normal School in 1845 ; Connecticut in 1848 ; Michigan in 1849 ; Rhode Island in 1854 ; New Jersey in 1855 ; Illinois in 1857 ; Pennsylvania opened two schools in 1860–61 ; Minnesota one in 1860 ; and Iowa, in connection with her State University, established a Normal School in 1860.

The British Provinces—Canada East and Canada West, and New Brunswick, have also their Normal Schools ; those in the Canadas being very liberally endowed and efficient institutions.

The general success of these schools has been ample and gratifying. The testimony of school officers in all parts of Massachu-

setts, in response to a circular issued by Ex-Governor Boutwell, while Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, was almost unanimous to the effect that the system of normal instruction is having a very powerful influence in elevating the standard of instruction and improving the common schools of that State. Similar testimony is given in response to similar inquiries made in New Jersey and Connecticut.

Your Committee are therefore unanimous in the conviction that Maine should put herself upon a level with other States, in this respect, by inaugurating at an early day, within her own borders, a system of instruction which has proved elsewhere of the highest value to the cause of popular instruction.

With this intent we submit the following Bill.

GEORGE B. BARROWS,
GEORGE R. TARBOX,
SAMUEL L. HODGMAN,
DINSMORE CLEVELAND,
GEORGE W. HAMMOND.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE.

AN ACT for the establishment of normal schools.

WHEREAS, the interests of public education are suffering by reason of incompetent teachers, and

WHEREAS, normal schools have proved in other states a very efficient means of furnishing teachers better qualified for their work,

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

SECTION 1. Three persons, whom the governor and council shall appoint, shall constitute a commission to make the necessary investigations, and to locate, subject to the approval of the governor and council, two normal schools ; one in the eastern and the other in the western part of the state, at such places as will best suit the public convenience ; *provided*, that the citizens of such places, or the trustees of any institutions there existing, will furnish, without expense to the state, suitable buildings for the instruction of two hundred pupils, for the term of at least five years.

SECT. 2. These schools are established for the purposes, and shall be conducted upon the principles herein set forth,

First—They shall be thoroughly devoted to the work of training teachers for their professional labors.

Second—The course of study shall include the common English branches, in thorough reviews, and such of the higher branches as are especially adapted to prepare teachers to conduct the mental, moral and physical education of their pupils.

Third—The art of school management, including the best methods of government and instruction, shall have a prominent place in the daily exercises of these schools.

Fourth—These normal schools, while teaching the fundamental truths of christianity, and the great principles of morality recognized by statute, shall be free from all denominational teachings, and open to persons of different religious connections, on terms of entire equality.

SECT. 3. The commissioners shall be guided, in locating these schools, by the following considerations :

First—The size and condition of the buildings.

Second—The character of the community and healthfulness of the location.

Third—The means of access by rail road or otherwise.

6 *Fourth*—Facilities for obtaining board and cost of the
7 same.

8 *Fifth*—Extent and character of library, apparatus
9 and cabinets, offered for the use of the schools.

10 *Sixth*—Opportunity for experimental or model schools.

SECT. 4. The course of study shall occupy two
2 years, with suitable vacations ; and together with the
3 terms of admission, shall be arranged by the superin-
4 tendent of schools, subject to the approval of the gov-
5 ernor and council.

SECT. 5. Any students who shall complete the course
2 of study prescribed, and otherwise comply with the
3 regulations of the school, shall receive a diploma certi-
4 fying the same ; and such certificate shall entitle them
5 to teach in any of the common schools of the state,
6 without further examination by any town committee,
7 provided such certificate shall be renewed once in two
8 years.

SECT. 6. Applicants for admission to these schools
2 shall be sixteen years of age, if females, and seventeen
3 if males, and shall signify their intention to become
4 teachers, and shall come under obligation to teach in
5 our own state for at least two years after they shall
6 have graduated ; and on these conditions shall be re-
7 ceived without charge for tuition ; each pupil shall pay

8 one dollar per session for incidental expenses of the
9 school.

SECT. 7. One of the normal schools shall be put in
2 operation in August, 1863, in the eastern or western
3 section of the state, according as the best arrange-
4 ments can be made therefor, and the other within two
5 years from that date.

SECT. 8. To put in operation the first of these schools
2 and to sustain the same, during one year from its es-
3 tablishment, the sum of four thousand dollars is hereby
4 appropriated from the school fund and bank tax for the
5 current year ; the same to be expended under the di-
6 rection of the superintendent of common schools, in the
7 employment of teachers and lecturers, and for other
8 necessary purposes connected with the school, in such
9 manner as shall be approved by the governor and coun-
10 cil, who shall audit all accounts for expenditures in this
11 behalf, and draw their warrant for the payment of the
12 same, if approved.

SECT. 9. For the support of the two schools after
2 the first year, there is hereby appropriated from the
3 avails of public lands, to be sold for this purpose, by
4 the land agent, under the direction of the governor and
5 council, the sum of six thousand dollars annually, to
6 be expended in the manner and for the purposes desig-
7 nated in section 8.

SECT. 10. This act shall take effect on and after its
2 approval by the governor.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, March 5, 1863.

Reported by Mr. BARROWS, on whose motion it was laid on the table and 350 copies ordered to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

EZRA C. BRETT, *Secretary.*