

HOUSE.....No. 16.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JAN. 15TH, 1833.

Ordered, That a Committee be appointed to consider the expediency of investing a portion of the proceeds of sales of the Lands of this Commonwealth, in a permanent fund, the interest of which shall be annually applied, as the Legislature shall from time to time direct, for the encouragement of Common Schools; and that said Committee have leave to report by bill or otherwise. And

Messrs. MARSH of DALTON,
FLINT of LEICESTER,
STEPHENS of BEVERLY,
AMES of WEST BRIDGEWATER,
FIELD of WESTERN,

were appointed to constitute the said Committee.

L. S. CUSHING, *Clerk.*

REPORT.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JAN. 23, 1833.

The Committee appointed by an order of the House, to consider the expediency of investing a portion of the proceeds of the Lands of this Commonwealth, in a Permanent Fund, the interest of which shall be annually applied as the Legislature shall from time to time direct, for the encouragement of Common Schools,

REPORT.

That all the Lands of Massachusetts situate in Maine, are estimated at
4,750,000 acres, - - - 4,750,000

That there are involved in the question of Boundary betwixt Maine and New Brunswick, 1,250,000 acres, - - 1,250,000

That the Lands involved in the question of Boundary, deducted from the whole quantity, will leave of Lands to which our title is unquestioned, 3,500,000 acres, - - - 3,500,000

That the 3,500,000 acres are valued at 40 cents per acre, and if sold at the same will produce - - - \$1,400,000 00

That there is now due to the Commonwealth, on Bonds and Notes received for Eastern Lands, &c. - - - 170,812 08

That there is now deposited in sundry Banks in Boston, moneys received on account of Eastern Lands, &c. sold since January 1, 1831, - - - - 63,606 24

Making in all, of the funds now on hand, and moneys to be derived from this source, - - - - \$1,634,418 32

That this sum, if invested in Stocks, would probably produce an interest of 6 per cent, and amount per annum to - \$98,065 09

There are (according to the last census) in Massachusetts, 140,000 children, of 5 years of age and under 15 years; and calculating from the returns that have been made by 99 towns, of the condition of their Schools, there are, at this time, not less than 150,000 pupils, (or one-fourth part of our whole population) who receive instruction in the primary Schools.

From these facts, it appears to your Committee, that the proceeds of the Public Lands now in the Treasury, and to be derived from future sales, will, if invested, constitute a Fund, the interest of which will afford competent aid and encouragement to our Common Schools.

It is not intended in establishing a School Fund, to relieve towns and parents from the principal expense of education; but to manifest our interest in, and to give direction, energy, and stability to institutions essential to individual happiness and the public welfare.

The basis of our Government, is the virtue and intelligence of the people. Hence the solicitude of States-

men to place the education of youth upon a liberal and permanent foundation. It is upon this principle that the Constitution of Massachusetts enjoins it upon the Legislature, "to cherish the interests of literature and science, and to spread the opportunities and advantages of education in the various parts of the Country, and to diffuse generally, among the people, the blessings of wisdom, knowledge and virtue."

In accordance with these noble provisions in our frame of government, the Legislature of this Commonwealth has ever extended to the institutions of science a liberal patronage. Our University, Colleges, and Academies have been endowed, and liberal associations, whose end was the public good, have shared in the public bounty. No envious considerations could induce us to speak of these splendid institutions of legislative wisdom, for they are the pride and strength of the Country. We rejoice, too, in the Charity, which feeds the poor, reclaims the wanderer, and in the spirit of Heaven, (though she can not open the blind eyes or unstop the deaf ears) brings the child of misfortune within the circle of knowledge. But while we rejoice in our halls of science, asylums of charity, and the general munificence of the government, we are led to enquire, whether *education*, in our common schools, has been regarded with that solicitude, and cherished with that liberality, to which, from its intimate connection with the virtue and intelligence of the people, it is fairly entitled. The manners and morals, as well as intelligence of the great mass of our population, depend upon the standard of our schools. Their importance has not been forgotten by our Legislature, but the repeated enactments in relation to them, evince a desire for their prosperity. These enactments have not been

regarded in many instances, because the parent who provides the entire instruction of his own children, and partly provides for the instruction of the poor, views with extreme jealousy any dictation of the Legislature, as to the qualification of teachers, character of books, or modes of instruction. He regards the school as the sole property of the district, and by his opposition to the laws, renders them inefficient and useless. Should not our common schools be brought nearer to their Constitutional guardians? Should we not adopt measures which shall bind, in grateful alliance, the youth to the governors of the Commonwealth? We consider the application, annually, of the interest of the proposed fund, as the establishment of a direct communication betwixt the Legislature and the schools; as each representative can carry home the bounty of the government, and bring back from the schools returns of gratitude and proficiency. They will then cheerfully render all such information as the Legislature may desire. A new spirit would animate the community, from which we might hope the most happy results. This endowment would give the schools consequence and character, and would correct and elevate the standard of education. Therefore, to preserve the purity, extend the usefulness and perpetuate the benefits of intelligence—We recommend that a Fund be constituted, and the distribution of the income so ordered, as to open a direct and more certain intercourse with the schools; believing that by this measure their wants would be better understood and supplied, the advantages of education more highly appreciated and improved, and the blessings of “wisdom, virtue and knowledge” carried home to the fire-side of every family, to the bosom of every child.

For these reasons, the Committee beg leave to submit, for the consideration of the House, a bill appropriating a portion of the proceeds of the Public Lands, to constitute the Massachusetts School Fund.

By order of the Committee,

HENRY MARSH,

Chairman.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred
and Thirty-Three.

AN ACT

To establish the Massachusetts School Fund.

1 SEC. 1. **BE** it enacted by the Senate and House of
2 Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the
3 authority of the same, That per cent. of all the
4 funds, now in the Treasury of this Commonwealth,
5 and unappropriated, which have been derived from
6 the sales of the public lands, (and of which, since the
7 1st of January, 1831, there is a distinct and separate
8 account, in conformity with the Act of the General
9 Court passed March 16, 1831,) and that per
10 cent. of all monies which shall be derived from sales
11 of the lands of this Commonwealth, in the State of

12 Maine, heretofore, or hereafter to be made ; shall be
 13 invested in public stock, or bank stock, to constitute
 14 a Permanent Fund—the interest of which, only,
 15 shall be appropriated annually for the aid and en-
 16 couragement of common schools in Massachusetts.

1 SEC. 2. *Be it further enacted*, That the Treasurer
 2 and Receiver General, with the advice and consent
 3 of the Governor and Council first had and obtained,
 4 shall, from time to time, invest the monies hereby
 5 appropriated, in public stock or bank stock—regard
 6 being had to their safety and productiveness.

1 SEC. 3. *Be it further enacted*, That the income or
 2 interest, arising from this fund, shall be annually
 3 divided between the City of Boston and the several
 4 Towns, Districts, &c. in this Commonwealth, in pro-
 5 portion to the number of pupils in each, upon such
 6 conditions as the Legislature shall, from time to
 7 time, enact.