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REPUBLICAN LEGISLATION IN MARYLAND.

What the Legislature of 1896 Did for the Agriculturists of Our Good Old State.

They Do Not Apologize for, but Point with Pride to Their Record—Their Performance of the Broken Promises Made by the Democrats.

AS THE Association of Democratic Editors has charged Republicans with being anxious to escape the consequences of their record in State affairs, it is the purpose of this article to point out some of the enactments that have been engrafted as statutes and their attending benefits to the State.

The first act worthy of mention is entitled The State Board of Immigration, Chap. 295, Code 1896.

This act is an entirely new creation, and if nothing else had been done, would alone entitle the party to the respect of thinking men.

It is admittedly true that no State of our Union possesses more natural advantages than Maryland. It is the duty of this board to make known every feature of attraction to immigrants seeking homes with us.

To do this, reference maps, statistics of each county, showing their resources and capabilities, their shipping and marketing facilities, their social and educational features, are all gratuitously furnished. It is the duty of the Superintendent to visit Europe each year and solicit that class of immigrants most suited to our requirements, and at other times to visit other States and Canada with a view to publishing our advantages in soil, climate and general resources.

The board is empowered to make special terms with railroad and steamship lines in order to secure reduced rates of transportation. The work is a comprehensive one, and it appeals strongly to every lover of our State who would desire that our natural advantages may secure an enviable rank among sister States.

The wonderful strides of our colonial era are among the most brilliant upon record. Sturdy adventurers of the highest social standing, men of grit, honest, outspoken in their independence, having invaded our forests, built for themselves in a little more than a century homes, not only of comfort, but of luxury.

They were aided by the inexhaustible supplies offered by our noble Chesapeake and its contributary branches. The forests offered their quotas of delicious fowl and game. Year by year further inroads were made into forests, till the old rolling-roads became busy marts of commerce.

If all this could be done in 1750 under old systems of rudest transportation, how much more easy may the present tide of immigrants, settling upon the cheap lands now to be found in our markets, with all the attending advantages of cities, roads and rapid transit, convert our idle waste areas into garden spots of home life, beautiful in all the adornments of a modern era

The Belgian peasant who can make a living upon six acres of land, is the type of our desire. (He) who, upon his sterile, shifting sands, piles fertilizing materials upon them until they blossom into gardens; who, covering his barren rocks with soil, brings out of them the fruitful vineyard. These are they who can make not only handsome livings upon our Maryland soils, but out of them build gigantic fortunes.

We want men in many of our counties who will not spend most of their time in hunting for office, but men who will go into the fields, the forests, into the marts of trade, just as their forefathers marked out the channels of prosperity for them.

The intelligent immigrant knows the value and possibility of an acre of ground. We seek to show him that Maryland offers him the best advantages in putting that acre to its highest productive capacity.

Governor Lowndes has put at the head of this bureau men capable of appreciating the work committed to them, and he keeps a watchful eye upon every opportunity that may be made a development of our resources. The result is that settlers in the cold regions of the West are looking back to Maryland and reading with interest all publications that give them information of our opportunities.

Kansas, the mother of bugs and cyclones, has been compelled to give up many of her settlers, now located upon the waters of eastern and southern counties, where cheap lands, cheap transportation and an equable climate offer greater inducements to secure a living. Why, it may be asked, was not this move made sooner? Because no authorized centre of information could be found in our State to give proper intruction. The railroads of the West owning vast areas of waste lands grasped their opportunities, and by attracting advertising directed the tide toward their lands. In many cases home-seekers have had to pay sums of money for transportation large enough to buy a good-sized farm in Maryland. This immigration bureau has no connection with any railroad or steamship line and its information is therefore disinterested and reliable.

The board is centrally located in an office adjoining the Board of Public Works, Merchants' Bank Building, corner of South and Water streets, and near the custom-house. Here are some points to be gleaned from its first report.

The peach crop of the Eastern Shore averages 2½ millions of baskets yearly. Over forty carloads of strawberries have been shipped daily from one county, Somerset, to the markets of the North, giving a market value per acre of $50 to $300.

The lands of Kent and Talbot are pretty generally cultivated, with two-thirds of the land owned by tillers. Somerset and Dorchester have a great deal of uncultivated land to be bought on easy terms. Caroline and Cecil need greater population. Southern Maryland has much waste land. In St. Mary's about one-third is idle and it can be bought from four to six dollars per acre.

Only a small part of Calvert county is improved, though the lands are good for both tobacco and fruit. Thirty per cent, of the lands of Charles now lie idle. In Prince George's about one-half is untilled.

Anne Arundel has a great variety of soil. Here most of Maryland families took their start. It is still one of the finest fruit and vegetable producting counties of the State, and the soil is identical with the famous county of Cumberland, New Jersey, whilst the climate is even better. The western section of Maryland is the hill country, fairly teeming with the wealth of its mineral deposits. The shipments of its coal sum from four to five million tons annually.

Several of its counties, Frederick and Washington, are the finest agricultural regions of the State, to which may now be added a peach-growing area, which is yearly growing larger and more profitable. The northern central section is a group of fine counties, with Baltimore county leading in point of wealth. As Anne Arundel is the southern market garden of Baltimore City, so Baltimore county is the northern one. Carroll and Haward are more generally farming and dairying areas, with Harford and Montgomery, both especial and general.

All of these need more settlers and smaller farms. The oyster and fishing interests of the State will be noticed more extensively in another review. The building stones of Maryland are important, and they are to be found in many public buildings of our capital.

Maryland, now becoming independent in politics, is happily looking to the only true solution of her development—viz: an intelligent business administration of her departments, and her people are going to sustain only such administrations as shall as now, and hereafter, place her where she deservedly is entitled to stand—as the vanguard of her sisters, opening her arms stretching from mountain tops through "the land of the forest and of the rock, of broad blue bay and mighty river," way out to the Goddess of Liberty, to all self-respecting, working, honest settlers. The dawn of an enduring prosperity is within her grasp.

In this connection my fitly be added the department of the State Geological and Economic Survey, chapter 51, the first report of which has just been issued. This bureau has been placed with Johns Hopkins University, with Prof. Clark as superintendent. The faculty of the university has contributed through many channels much material for this department.

The object of this bureau is:

1st. To examine our geological formations with reference to economic products, viz.: its building stones, clays and ores.

2d. To examine and classify its soils and show their adaptability to our various crops.

3d. To examine the physical features bearing upon the occupations of our people.

4th. To prepare geographical maps illustrative of our resources.

5th. To make special reports, with illustrations, both special and general, of the geological and natural resources of the State.

Lastly. To enter into a study of any scientific subject of marked interest to the development of the State.

These duties are of infinite advantage. The first report has just been published, from which may be quoted some points of value. The first report mentions that Capt. John Smith first called attention to the valuable clay soil he noticed as he entered the Chesapeake. This clay industry now yields ten million dollars yearly. In 1833 a survey was established and carried on successfully. In 1848 and in 1862 agricultural chemists made surveys, notably that of Mr. Higgins. Since then the Government and Johns Hopkins University have had the field in conjunction. The Maryland Academy of Science has also left as an interesting record of research. The magnetic surveys of the United States Coast work are invaluable to surveyors. The Baltimore *American* in an editorial review of this first report records: "The volume is a credit to that administration under which the work was inaugurated, and will be of service to all the students of the State, and it will serve as a strong incentive to the investment of outside capital in our industries." These bureas of general utility are specially worthy of notice, for they are the signs that our Maryland legislators are beginning to awaken to the necessity of doing more than nursing political jobs. Maryland's Legislature of '96 has taken three steps in the right direction, which will assuredly redound to the honor of the administration.

The third enactment was the establishment of Farmers' Institute, chap. 102, the purpose of which is to offer object lessons to farmers of what may be accomplished by scientific knowledge. There are many men who yet have little faith in "book farming." To this class information is furnished to remedy existing evils. Men competent to instruct are required to be present at convenient places, where questions may be asked and answered. This board is a part of the work of the Agricultural College, under the direction of its board of trustees, and an adjunct to the experiment station of the College. This Station and its Institute, under practical, intelligent farmers, can be made, and is making itself of vast importance to our agricultural interests. It meets a growing want in finding remedies for all enemies to farm products. Both teach the best modes of feeding, fattening and marketing our stock. They teach the most economical modes of fertilization, the demands of crops and how best to meet those demands. Into all these adjuncts of the State's development, with a keen sense of their supreme import, our Governor is ever looking with encouraging assistance.

With these schools for our farmers' sons, the old saying that our dullest boys must be made farmers will no longer be handed down, for they open up a field of study as boundless as the ages. Not until all time through ceaseless changes of her rock foundations has been opened up will research be exhausted. Upon those rock-ribbed walls of geologic formation our students may now read God's revelation and man's omnipotence. Science broad and unending is the study of our modern farmer, and he who knows nature's laws, though he may direct them from the veranda of his house, will go down to history as the most successful cultivator of the field. The Legislature of 1896 has honored itself for all ages in the record of these three enactments.

The Gloom of a Polar Night.

During scientific researches in Nova Zembla I had the sensations and experience of the long Arctic night. It began November 3 and ended January 20. September was pretty comfortable. Then suddenly snow covered the mountains. The Samoyedes, my only companions, put on their winter clothing, the fishing boats set sail for Archangel, the ground froze, the sun lost its warmth and heavy snows fell. Winter had come in earnest. On the day when the sun showed itself for the last time all hands went out of doors to bid farewell. It remained in sight for half an hour only. For a few days longer there was a morning twilight. Then this faded and gave place to black night. The stars shone the whole twenty-four hours. The huts of the colony were buried under the snow, of which thick whirlwinds filled the air. The wind shook the huts to their foundations. Sometimes for days together the inmates of the different huts could hold no communication with each other, though the huts were side by side.

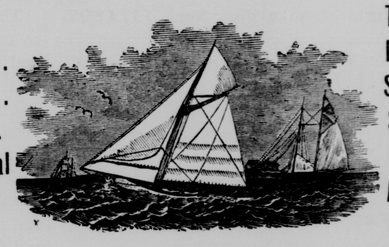
If anyone went out he was seized by the wind and had to be dragged back by means of ropes. In this darkness and desolation the aurora borealis did much to entertain and cheer them. It lasted sometimes for five days in succession, with splendors of color it seems impossible to describe. To enjoy the spectacle I used to remain for hours together in the snow, sheltered from the wind. I have never seen anything more terrible than a tempest during the Polar night. Man feels himself overwhelmed in immensity. When there came a lull in the storm the men ventured out, to breathe the air and purge their lungs of the exhalations of the smoking lamps fed with seal oil. Twilight appeared again in the middle of January, and on the 20th the sun rose above the horizon, while the members of the little colony stood in line facing it and fired a salute. No one had died or been seriously ill, but all had the look of corpses and were feeble as convalescents after a long sickness. Health returned with the appearance of the sun.—*Constantine Nossiloff, in Le Tour Du Monde.*

Fun With a Phonograph.

The man who looks after the machines in the phonograph parlors on the avenue has funny experiences with visitors from the deepest backwoods. Recently, he says, a man came in and regarded the machines intently for a while. He saw how the nickle was dropped in the slot and saw persons stand with their ears near the brass horns from the talking machines. Finally he edged over to the kinetoscope, dropped in a coin and literally glued his ear to the eyehole. When the machine stopped, he straightened up and said to an attendant, "Well, young feller, that's the derndest fine imitation of the drum corps down to our town that I ever did hear." And the attendant laughed so hard he couldn't straighten out his face to tell the old man his mistake. —*Washington Cor.*

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