SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BUREAU OF INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR STATISTICS FOR THE STATE OF MAINE, 1903

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SAMUEL W. METTHEWS

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STATE OF MAINE.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF
INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR STATISTICS,
AUGUSTA, December 31, 1903.

To His Excellency, John F. Hill, Governor of Maine:

SIR: I have the honor to present the report of the Bureau of Industrial and Labor Statistics for 1903.

Very respectfully,

SAMUEL W. MATTHEWS,
Commissioner.

INTRODUCTION.

Maine possesses many natural resources which have, as yet, received but little attention, and their importance and extent of development are, therefore, comparatively unknown and unappreciated by the general public.

The work of the Bureau during the past year, has included in its scope some of these new and hitherto untried fields of investigation.

MINERAL SPRINGS.

Nature has been very generous to the State of Maine in the distribution of mineral and medicinal springs. Our investigation finds 81 of these springs. The products of several of these are largely sold without the limits of the State and the gross amount received for Maine mineral waters is more than $300,000. The descriptions of these natural fountains of health will be found of interest, and their possibilities as a source of wealth deserve consideration.

MINERALS.

Maine's granite, lime and slate are recognized throughout the country for their extent and quality. Their development has attained proportions which make them most important elements in our prosperity and influence. These minerals have heretofore been the subjects of careful investigations by the Bureau. There are other minerals in the State, of limited extent so far as is now known, and their development has not attained important proportions. Whether or not they can ever become profitable for investment is now a problem which is receiving the attention of experts and scientists.

APPLE CULTURE.

Apple culture in Maine is a large, important and growing industry. According to the United States census, the number of apple trees in the State in 1900 was 4,184,781, while in 1890 it was 3,003,109, an increase of 1,181,672, or 39.3 per cent in 10 years. The yield in 1899 was 1,421,773 bushels, while in 1889 is was 3,071,471 bushels. Comparisons between the crops of different years are of but little significance as the quantity produced in any year is determined largely by the character of the season. The high quality of Maine apples gives them a prominent position in the markets of the world and the demand for these apples for foreign as well as domestic consumption is constantly increasing.

Some interesting information and valuable practical suggestions may be found in the communications sent to the Bureau by prominent apple growers in the State and incorporated in the article published in this report.

LABOR UNIONS.

In the report of the Bureau for 1902, was published the results of inquiries into the subject of organized labor in the State of Maine. That investigation brought out many interesting facts as to the extent, purposes, character and influence of these organizations.

The present report contains the latest information relating to the conditions and growth of labor unions, obtained mainly from the returns of their secretaries. A marked increase in the number of unions and membership has taken place during the past year. Among the inquiries made by the Bureau were those relating to hours of labor, daily wages, annual earnings of working men, trade disputes, strikes, etc., from which many interesting and important facts as to labor conditions in the State are obtained.

The legitimate province of this Bureau is statistical only, and economic conclusions to be derived from existing facts are left for others to deduce.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILLINOCKET.

The illustrated description of this town in the wilds of Maine, reads more like romance than reality, and furnishes another example of what Maine might become were her water powers and other great natural resources developed to their full extent.

Four years ago last May, where is now a thriving town of about 3,000 inhabitants, provided with the privileges and conveniences found in well regulated cities, there was an almost unbroken wilderness. This wonderful change in so short a time is the work of enterprise, energy and capital applied to the development of natural resources, resulting in the investment of millions of dollars and the erection of one of the largest pulp and paper mills in the world.

Other features of the report are a compilation of returns of assessors of cities, towns and plantations, of factories, mills and shops for manufacturing purposes, enlarged, completed or in process of erection during the year 1903; a brief article relating to railroads in the State; cotton and woolen industries, and statistics from the United States Census covering all the manufacturing industries in Maine, and special and detailed statistics of the manufacture of lumber, pulp and paper.

The report of the Inspector of Factories, Workshops, Mines and Quarries is published in this report in accordance with the provisions of the law.

But few labor disturbances have taken place within the State during the year and these are enumerated and described in the returns of the secretaries of the labor unions. Labor has been in good demand and employment at fair wages the prevailing rule.

The commissioner renews the expression of his obligations for efficient services rendered him in the prosecution of his work by his able and faithful clerk, Major Charles J. House, and special agent, Francis Wiggin.