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Remarks in support of bills, 247A and 524A, which provide for a revised edition of Dean Henry's hand-book of Wisconsin, and a larger appropriation to the State Board of Immigration; and against bills ...

Wisconsin Advancement Association

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**Remarks in Support of Bills, 247A and 524A,
Which Provide for a Revised Edition of Dean
Henry's Hand-book of Wisconsin, and a Larger
Appropriation to the State Board of Immigration;
and Against Bills 186A and 208A, Which Attempt
to Abolish the State Board of Immigration.**

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES,
ON STATE AND ECONOMIC BETTERMENTS, COUNTRY
LIVING CONDITIONS, AGRICULTURE, AND THE STATE
BOARD OF IMMIGRATION.

GENTLEMEN:

As suggested at some of your Committee meetings, we herewith submit, a statement of the work that the Wisconsin Advancement Association has already done and proposes to do during the next two years; in co-operation with the State Board of Immigration and the Agricultural Schools of the State, to assist in the material development of Wisconsin.

Plan of the Association. This organization comprises about five hundred land owners of from 500 to 500,000 acres, and bankers, merchants, investors and public spirited men throughout the State; and will have available assets for the year's work of at least \$50,000.00. This money was raised to be spent to exploit exclusively the resources of Wisconsin. The plan of the Association is to continue its work, raising a similar, if not a larger fund, each year for three years, and to place this money, or a large part of it, at the disposal of a joint committee of its own officers and that of the State Board of Immigration.

Resolutions to that effect were passed last fall by this Association, and joint conferences were held, before it was imagined, that the State Board of Immigration, which is the only Board that can do such work for a State, might be abolished.

In the last decade, the southern half of the State, excepting its larger manufacturing cities, has lost or remained stationary in population. During that time the Northern half has gained about 100,000 while the lumber towns of that section have remained stationary or lost in population, showing a decided change in economic conditions. The thousands of typical lumber jacks that filled the streets of Northern towns each Spring have disappeared. The pressure of civilization was too strong for them, and as

lumbering decreased they were glad to follow the larger lumber operators to the West. Their places in the camps have been taken by the new settlers and their sons. This fact is especially noticeable in the different train scenes of ten years ago and today. Then, following the breaking up of lumber camps, every train had its load of hilarious lumber jacks—now Polish, German or other farmer boys are the only ones to be seen. When, therefore, the loss of the lumber jack, so far as population is considered, it becomes evident that the new settlers in Northern Wisconsin, during the last ten years amount to more than 100,000. The big gain in the Northern half of the State, after it was opened up for settlement continued until about 1905, when Canada and the West commenced to extensively advertise.

The development, of the Canadian Northwest, the West and now the new South, has drawn, from the settled agricultural sections of the Southern half and all the lumber towns of the Northern half of the State, much of our money, and many of our young men.

Money Loss to State. It will be noticed that many banks belong to the Wisconsin Advancement Association. They were induced to join when their attention was called to the Wisconsin money passing monthly through them to Canada, the West and the new South, amounting to hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. The cashier of a small bank in Wood County at first refused to join the Association, saying that he did not see how a bank was interested in this new movement for Wisconsin. He was asked to examine the books of the bank to see how much money passed thru it during that month to purchase land in the West. Out of curiosity he did this, and he was surprised to find that \$80,000.00 had been sent during that time, which was lost, not only to his bank, but to the State of Wisconsin forever. It took no further argument to induce him to subscribe \$50.00 at once.

Immigration Bureaus in other States. This work of Canada, the West and the South has become serious to the settled portions of the Country, especially the Middle West. It has alarmed Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and even conservative States like Massachusetts and New York. Within the last few years Immigration Bureaus, have been organized and State money provided, or steps taken to do so in all these States. The Immigration Bureau of New York is doing most effective work to keep her sons at home. When this advertising work of partly developed States is allowed to go on unchallenged it soon seriously affects every part of the older States, from which settlers are taken; manufacturing industries with provisions to supply a certain

trade become embarrassed for loss of part of that trade; land values, following the throwing upon the market of farm after farm, by the owners, in their feverish desire to answer the call of the advertiser to go West or South, must necessarily decrease; and after a time the depression and lethargy, found in the old Eastern States, like Vermont and New Hampshire become a fixed condition of the Country. What so often is said of the individual can always be said of a State. It never remains long at a standstill, it is ever going forward or going backward.

Advertising, as an Investment for the State. Canada allows hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to its Immigration department for advertising purposes. California, New Mexico, Montana, North Carolina, Idaho, Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, Missouri, and many other States, make large appropriations for advertising purposes. Missouri appropriated \$425,000. Minnesota has been appropriating \$20,000 per year, but this year, according to a campaign pledge of the Republican party of that State, and on the recommendation of Governor Eberhard, \$100,000 will be appropriated. Governor Carroll of Iowa strongly urges a similar appropriation by the State of Iowa to establish an Immigration Board for that State for the purpose of stopping the fall in her population.

New settlers are constantly creating a demand for more land and new homes,—new stores to supply them, new industries to supply the new stores, thus permeating every industrial and mercantile part of the State. **Permit us to cite Florida as an illustration.** That State some years ago, was a typical, old fashioned, Southern State, with a vast undeveloped area of sand, and where everybody was asleep. Her metropolis, Jacksonville, was an old dead town. During the Cuban War, Napoleon Broward, in his filibustering campaigns for Cuba, with his boat, the "Three Friends," often sought refuge in the Bayous of the Everglades. He noticed that during a greater part of the year the Everglades, or a considerable part of it, was what might be called prairie land instead of swampy land. After the war he advocated the advertising and settlement of that part of the State. He was elected Governor on that issue. The first advertising by the State was from a fund derived from the sale of 100,000 acres of this land at \$1.00 per acre. From that movement in the Southern part of Florida, the boom kept continually growing, until it spread, extending northward throughout the State, and now, because of the demand created through advertising, good land, sand land and poor land, have increased from one hundred to five hundred times in value. Practically every hamlet and village in the state is prosperous. Towns of from 1500 to 3000 population have sprung up, with fine buildings, within a year's time. People walk the

streets of Jacksonville at night, unable to find lodging places. That city now has twenty wholesale stores, real estate values are continually jumping in prices, rents pay 15 per cent on the investments. Everybody, even the old Southerner, has awakened and is boosting his State, and contented.

People Leaving State. Another important feature, to be considered, is the number of people who contemplate leaving the State to go West or South that will be induced to remain here. Thousands of Wisconsin people, especially young men are to be heard in every town, on every train, discussing the advantages of the South and the West, and of their intention to go there as soon as they possibly can. Hundreds are actually on the way or packing up to go. These people have all seen so many glowing advertisements of the West or the South, and nothing about Wisconsin, that they actually believe there is nothing here.

The member of the legislature, Mr. Strouf, from Manitowoc County, who introduced one of the bills to abolish the State Board of Immigration, frankly admits that his father and brothers have already left Wisconsin for Montana, and that he expects to follow them in the near future. His advice should probably be followed concerning the future of Wisconsin as he must have her welfare at heart.

If the number of people, that are now seriously thinking of leaving Wisconsin could be given, a fact important enough to be ascertained, by the legislature through a committee appointed for that purpose, there would be no question about an appropriation from the State of fifty to one hundred thousand dollars, to exploit the advantages of Wisconsin's unoccupied lands over the places to which these men contemplate going.

Work of the Association. The Wisconsin Advancement Association, under its charter and by-laws, is limited to the work of advertising the State. For that purpose it has a **Home Department**, so called, and a **Publicity Department**.

The work of the Home Department will be to assist the settler in the State by constantly bringing to his attention the best methods of developing and cultivating the land upon which he is located.

Land Clearing Contest. In the carrying on of this work, the Home Department, has already inaugurated a stump pulling and land clearing contest, to be held during the last week in May in the Counties of Clark, Marathon and Marinette. Premiums amounting to \$1000.00 will then be given to the best steam power, and the best hand power, land clearing machines, taking part in this contest. The work is in charge of a joint committee selected from the State Board of Immigration and this Association. Judges

will be appointed to determine the merits of these machines, and their decision will be published in bulletins for the farmers of Northern Wisconsin, Northern Michigan and Northern Minnesota.

As a result of this contest, announced last fall, the Soo Railroad appropriated \$25,000.00 for the development of a high powered machine, which, according to present information, has been perfected and will have the power to go from field to field, at the rate of seven miles per hour and there, with its 500 feet of cables, clear three or four acres of land per day at a cost of from ten to fifteen dollars per acre. Other machines with traction engines have also been perfected. This contest has stirred unusual interest all over the Country. Letters are constantly being received from the manufacturers and inventors of stump pulling machines, interested in this contest. The following letter was received today:

Mr. W. H. Killen,
Land Commissioner Soo Line,
Soo Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn.

April 6, 1911.

Dear Sir:—Last Saturday I went out to a stump pulling contest which was held on the south side of this city. Mr. Wipperman who was formerly with the Arpin Lumber Company Land Department, has the simplest stump puller that I ever saw or heard of. There were at least 25 of us in the party and 20 of the men, from the Chicago Board of Trade, whom I have sold land to in Taylor and Price Counties, were there. I saw oak stumps 18 inches and up to 2 feet in diameter, pulled in less than three minutes and it does not take five minutes after pulling the stump to adjust the block onto another one and pull it.

It is simply a patent block with an endless chain, which the Yale and Towne Mfg. Co. of this city, have a patent on and are now selling to hardware men, etc., for hoisting. One man could lift 20 tons with this block.

Mr. Wipperman is soon to give another exhibition on the north side in this city, and when it comes off, I will let you know as I wish you to see it. All of the men that saw it work were very well pleased and three of them purchased. It is a great thing for us in the land business, and for the future of Northern Wisconsin. Everybody you meet here who is interested in Northern Wisconsin lands are now talking about this stump puller.

Yours very truly,
W. E. HUGHES

The Powder Companies that always advertise affective clearing with their explosives, not to be outdone by these machines, have redoubled their efforts, and with their experts will be in the contest to show the farmers what can be done with explosives; and

afterwards will give demonstrations, throughout the State on the field and with moving pictures, on land clearing.

This Home Department will also work in co-operation with the Madison and County Agricultural Schools, to the extent that it will bring to the attention of every farmer in Northern Wisconsin, the result of the experiments of these Schools. It will endeavor to make common to all, the work of the Agricultural Colleges and their experimental associations, for intensive farming and high class dairying.

County Organizations. It is now engaged in organizing branch associations throughout the Northern part of the State, especially among the people of the Northern cities, for the industrial development of these cities, and among the new farmers of Northern Wisconsin, for co-operation and successful farming. It has already started such associations in Antigo, Crandon, Stevens Point and other towns.

Lecture Course. The Association has also maintained for the last three months through Illinois and Iowa, a lecture bureau, consisting of advance agents, Mayor LaMont, of Wausau, as lecturer, with stereoptican scenes and moving pictures, on Wisconsin. The newspapers of the towns where these lectures were given throughout these States had long writeups on Wisconsin, and an unusual interest was created, as against the South and West, in favor of undeveloped Wisconsin.

Land Show. One thousand square feet of floor space has already been purchased for the great Colliseum land show to be held at Chicago next fall. The Wisconsin display at this land show must necessarily be held under the auspices of the State Board of Immigration and the Wisconsin Agricultural School. Such an exhibit was maintained last year on a smaller scale, with only 200 square feet of floor space.

New York Land Show. New York has also announced a big land show to be held next fall where prizes amounting to thousands of dollars will be given as premiums for the best crops of various kinds. Steps should be immediately taken to enable the Wisconsin University and other schools of agriculture in this State to prepare for this contest. The States winning prizes at this contest will get the widest publicity, and Wisconsin, under the direction of the University should be the first in the contest.

Publicity Department. In the work of advertising the State and especially its undeveloped portions, thruout the country, the Association, by its publicity department, has already organized a

news service bureau. The news and editorial column of the large Metropolitan papers, especially of Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and St. Paul, have been freely given for publicity work on Wisconsin. The publishers of these papers are only too anxious to attract new settlers to that area which is tributary to their cities, instead of the far West. The Inter-Ocean, Examiner, Tribune, and Record-Herald, have already printed pages concerning this new movement for Wisconsin. Especial attention is called to the article which appeared in the Chicago Record-Herald of April 2nd, and of which copies can be obtained from the State Board of Immigration. The Milwaukee papers, have likewise joined in the work and articles and advertisements concerning the advantages of Northern Wisconsin have and will continue to appear.

The newspapers, published in Foreign languages, and the farm journals, have also taken up the good work. The publishers of these papers honestly believe that Wisconsin offers better advantages to the home seeker than the West, or the South and will not hesitate to publish those facts.

Farm Journals. Plans are already under way for the joint work of the ten leading farm journals of the Middle West with a circulation of over 1,000,000 a week, to tell the world about the undeveloped areas of Wisconsin, and the great opportunities there, for general farming, especially fruit culture, truck gardening and dairying. Among the papers, journals and magazines in which articles have appeared within the last forty days or are to appear within the next thirty days, concerning the advantages of Wisconsin, to the homeseeker, are the following: The Chicago Record-Herald; Chicago Tribune; Chicago Evening Post; Chicago Examiner; Milwaukee Sentinel; Milwaukee Free Press; Evening Wisconsin; Illinois Staats Zeitung; Germania; Milwaukee News; Polish Syndicate of papers; Bohemian Syndicate of papers; Wisconsin Farmer; Orange Judd Farmer; Prairie Farmer; Wisconsin Agriculturalist; Northwestern Farmer; Hoard's Dairyman; St. Paul Farmer; Breeder's Gazette; Swedish Tribune News; Scandinaven; Der Deutsche Farmer; Northwestern Agriculturalist; Homestead; Real Estate Seller; National Land and Irrigation Journal, etc.

Benefit to the State by Way of Taxation. If the State Board of Immigration, the Wisconsin Schools of Agriculture and the Wisconsin Advancement Association, through their joint efforts, succeed in bringing to the State during the next five years, 10,000 new settlers, which is a conservative estimate, it will mean an available increase, for State and County taxes, of over two hundred thousand dollars per year.

To Illustrate, 10,000 Undeveloped and Unimproved Eighty Acre Tracts of Cut Over Land: would be fairly assessed at \$300 each, with a total of \$3,000,000. If taxed at a 3 per cent rate it would mean a State revenue of \$90,000.00. If, on each one of these eighty acre tracts, a new settler were placed, he, with his home and other improvements would easily increase the assessed valuation of each tract to \$1000.00, or \$10,000,000 in all. If taxed at a 3 per cent rate, it would mean a State revenue of \$300,000, or a gain of \$210,00 over the same amount of unimproved land, and would be more easily paid because dead property has been turned into producing property to bear the tax. Permit us to cite a case. The City of Marinette has lost in population and her assessed valuation is stationary. The County of Marinette, outside of the City, has gained in population nearly 10,000, when the loss of the City is taken into consideration. Much timber during the last ten years has been cut. Yet the assessed valuation, outside of the City has increased over 300 per cent, during that time. One settler, speaking of it said, that when he bought his land he paid \$6.00 taxes, but since he has made his farm he paid \$60.00 taxes, but he had become a prosperous farmer and paid the \$60.00 easier than he paid the \$6.00.

The foregoing shows a benefit to the State in taxation for only one year. If that benefit be multiplied by ten or fifteen years' taxes, the result is so large that it appears incredible. Yet the only question, that can be raised, is with reference to the number of new settlers that will be brought in. The list furnished the Secretary of State of the new settlers that came to Wisconsin within the last five years amounting to over 2,000 through the sporadic efforts of a few land sellers, shows what can be accomplished by a large organization, such as the Wisconsin Advancement Association, co-operating with the State through its Board of Immigration.

How many new settlers will the State Board of Immigration need, to bring, or assist in bringing, for a return to the State of the \$10,000 or \$15,000, a year, which she is asked to appropriate for publicity work, not only to keep her own sons at home, but to bring industrious settlers here.

From the figures just given it will be seen that the average increase of taxation from an unimproved to an improved tract of land is \$21.00. This would require the taxes of 715 new settlers for one year or the taxes of 140 new settlers for five years. Nor does that include the new stores, cheese factories, canning factories, warehouses and other things necessary in time to meet the demand of these new settlers. According to the new interest that has been created for Northern Wisconsin during the last two months by the advertising work of the Advancement Association

we can safely predict an increase to Northern Wisconsin of at least 10,000 new settlers with their families in a few years.

It is the clear view of situations like the foregoing, based upon experience, that induces other states, and large real estate companies to spend hundreds of thousands and even millions of dollars for publicity work, as a business investment.

A Wisconsin Legislature with the spirit of such Western or Southern men, would with earnestness, consider as a business proposition, and probably pass without much opposition, the bill pending before this Legislature to make the clearing of cut over lands in Northern Wisconsin, a State reclamation proposition, in the same manner that Western and Southern States have appropriated hundreds of thousands of dollars to reclaim their arid and swampy regions. It has been demonstrated that dead, non-producing property, when improved, will in time yield in taxes, besides the State's charge and first lien for the cost of the improvement, more than the original charges.

It is respectfully submitted that the total State expenditure for 1900 for educational, penal and charitable institutions was \$2,890,000 while in 1910, it was \$7,258,000, making an increase of over 200 per cent in ten years. During that same period, the State increased only 13 per cent in population, showing that this increased burden of taxation, though cheerfully borne, was largely placed upon the same property that paid the 1900 taxes. It must be clear to men of public affairs that the people will not get relief from this ever increasing burden of taxation by retrenchment, such as proposed in the abolishment of the State Board of Immigration. The legislature must adopt a policy, if possible, that will turn dead property, into producing property and thereby increase for the owners, and for the purpose of taxation, the market value of such property.

NECESSITY OF PRIVATE LAND OWNERS CO-OPERATING WITH THE STATE.

When this Association was organized its promoters believed that the State would, for its development work, appropriate a sum equal to that privately subscribed, \$50,000. The platform of the Republican party, before election, which refers to the opening up of Wisconsin's undeveloped area, gave us reason to hope for that appropriation. Many members were induced to join the Association upon these representations. It took months to convince many Lumber Companies, and other large land owners, to join with their acreage upon an assessment basis of one cent an acre. These Companies thought that this association, like the other two that had been previously organized, for similar purposes, would fail. They realized, however, that their co-operation with their money

was absolutely necessary to such a movement and finally consented to try once more.

State Appropriation Equalling Private Subscriptions. When the State Board of Immigration was created four years ago, it was rightly suggested by the members of that Legislature that the land owners themselves should contribute part of the money needed for advertising Wisconsin.

These remarks, which were told and retold at the time of the organization of this association, caused the adoption of the assessment plan, by which the Association is able to raise at least \$50,000 per year for publicity work. The men who attended that meeting were sincere and enthusiastic in their efforts to boom Wisconsin; and to that end were anxious to do everything that the State could ask, for better promotional work by its own Immigration Bureau.

If the work and offer of these men, through this Association, with their money, to assist in the colonization of Wisconsin, be rejected by the State, the plans of the Association will probably be carried on for the present year, but naturally will fail afterwards. The abolishment of the State Board of Immigration at this time, or refusal, to allow it a fair appropriation, so that it can co-operate with the Association must necessarily be accepted by the people of Northern Wisconsin, as the end of all efforts to compete with the South and the West. The Wisconsin men, and especially the small holders that have held on to these tracts waiting for the new settlers will soon be forced to let go. It is impossible for the small holders to hold on to non-productive property very long. The larger owners, tax men, and the State, will again deal in these properties. If this movement fails now, it will necessarily be the last effort to develop Northern Wisconsin for years to come, and young men will have to go elsewhere. What else will there be for them to do? The old settler will stay, of course, but they with their developed property will have to bear the taxes. **Who wants to stay in a country that people are leaving?**

The members of this Association that had hoped for an appropriation from the State, equal to that privately subscribed by them, soon learned that economy and retrenchment was to be the slogan of this Legislature. After consulting with the Secretary of State, James A. Frear, and Dean Russel, as members of the State Board of Immigration, it was concluded that \$15,000 was as much as could be asked from the State this year, for that board—and the officers of this Association reported to its members at the annual meeting, that the State Board of Immigration might not be able to obtain over ten or fifteen thousand dollars, this year and that it was not deemed proper, under the present conditions

to ask for more, nor until it could be shown from results that a larger appropriation for publicity and development work was a good investment.

One Special Benefit of Board. It is also essential that the Board of Immigration be continued because of the confidence reposed by home-seekers generally, in the publicity work of a State. Any pamphlet or document distributed by a State Board, will have twice the affect that similar matters would have when issued by an individual, or a private corporation.

The Advancement Association desires mostly to supplement the work of the State Board of Immigration.

The Association has no land to sell. Its purpose is only to assist in a fair presentation of the opportunities for settlers in Wisconsin. Immediately after its organization, resolutions were passed and spread upon its record, forbidding anything but fair and honest publicity work.

News Service. The Association has organized a distributing bureau, and has made arrangements for the publication, in several papers and farm journals, of all articles that might be written by the Immigration Commissioner and his assistants. The cost of maintaining such a Bureau is considerable, and of this, the State will be relieved. The State will also be relieved to the extent, that it desires, of contact with the advertisers, and the purchasing of space for advertising purposes.

The publication of a new edition of Dean Henry's noted book on Wisconsin, will be of the greatest benefit to the State. That book is now practically out of print—second-hand copies selling at over one dollar per copy.

The bill also pending before the legislature, for three more experimental stations, under the management of the University, will, if enacted, be of the greatest assistance to the new settler, located on lands similar to the land on which these experimental stations are to be located.

The bill as prepared by the State Board of Immigration, asking for an appropriation of only \$10,000 or an increase of \$3,000, over the present law, so as to provide for expenses necessarily to be incurred, by the Board or its members, when attending to State Exhibits. The important thing for State publicity work is to have good writers, under the control of the Immigration Commissioner. We believe that if the appropriation were raised to \$15,000, it would be an ample provision to enable the State Board to employ two writers who could devote their entire time preparing articles, for publication, on Wisconsin, which could be published and distributed all over the country, through the

distributing bureau of the Advancement Association, or whatever means the State might prefer for that purpose.

New Settlers. We have in a measure endeavored to comply with the request of the Legislature for the names of settlers that have come to Wisconsin within the last five years. Letters were sent to the Land Companies of the Association that were engaged in colonization work, asking for that information.

Seventeen Land Companies did prepare and forward lists of colonists that were induced to come to Wisconsin through their efforts and as they say, in a measure, with the help of the State Board of Immigration, through its publicity work. These lists are filed with the Secretary of State, showing the name and residence of each colonist and where he came from. From the seventeen Companies that reported alone, they show over 2,000 settlers brought in alone by them and as they say, assisted without doubt, by the State Board of Immigration.

If the reports of these 17 colonizers show nearly 2,000 settlers brought to the State by them alone within the last five years, it can safely be estimated that 10,000 settlers with their families came to Northern Wisconsin during that time. Will it be said that the Immigration Board did not materially assist to bring some of them here, especially the great number that purchased improved farms?

Respectfully submitted,

P. A. MARTINEAU, Marinette.

M. J. WALLRICH, Shawano.

W. H. MYLREA, Wausau.

W. H. KILLEN, Appleton.

FELIX KRAMER, Madison.

C. K. ELLINGSON, Hawkins.

G. D. JONES, Wausau.

Special Committee of the

WISCONSIN ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION.