

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1853.

Augusta:
WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1853.

MEMORIAL

OF THE

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE,

RESPECTING A CONTINUATION

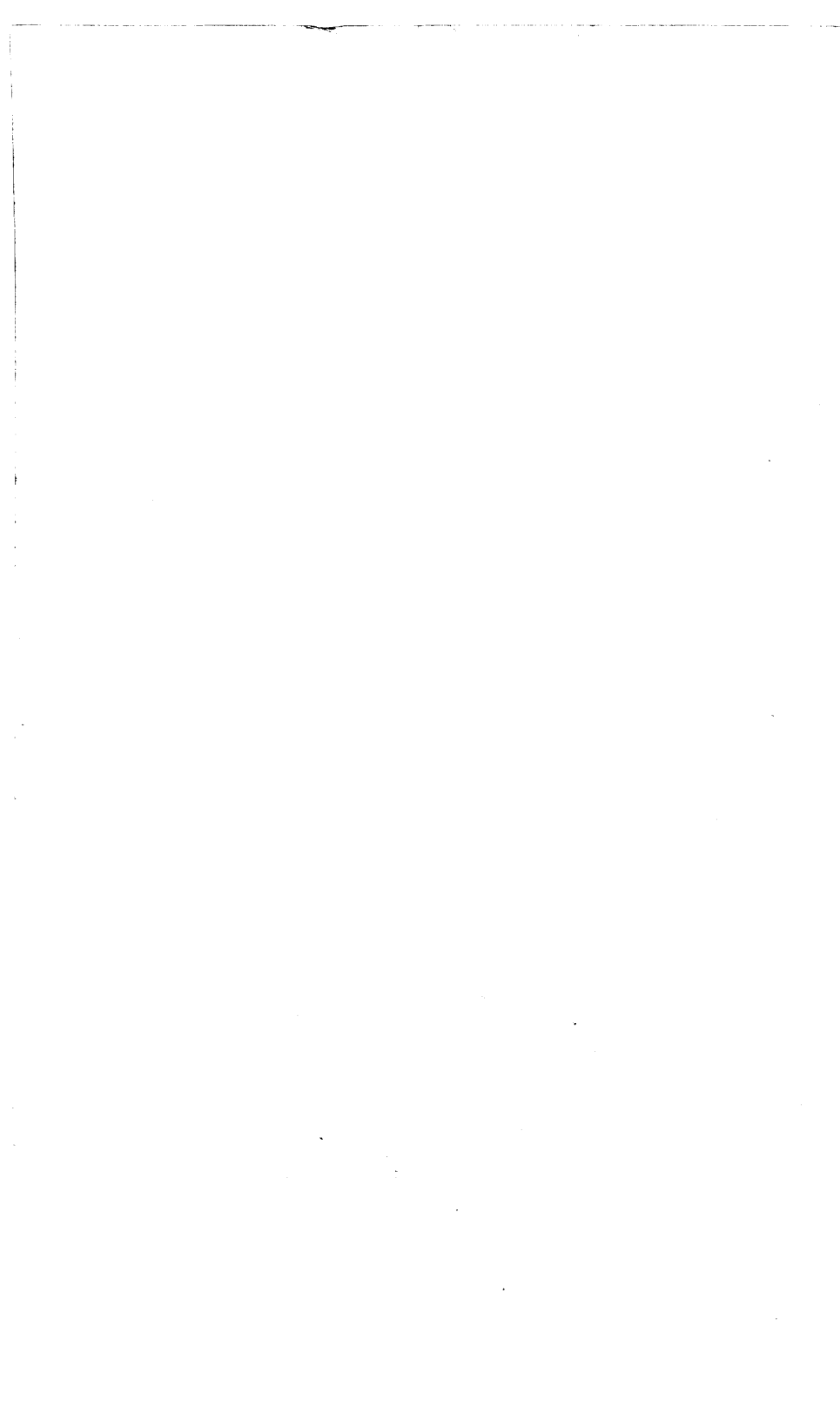
OF THE

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY,

JANUARY 28, 1853.

AUGUSTA:
WHEELER & SIMPSON, PRINTERS.

1853.



MEMORIAL.

To the Hon. Senate and House of Representatives in Legislature assembled :

The undersigned, members of the Maine Board of Agriculture, would respectfully ask your consideration of the subject of a continuation of the Geological Survey of the State, accompanied with an Agricultural Survey.

It is believed that State economy may be justly compared with individual economy,—that, as a general rule, the State government may be considered in the light of a parent, whose duty it is to conduct his affairs with such a liberal and just policy and wise employment of ways and means, as shall not only conduce to the happiness and prosperity of the present moment, but also lay the foundation of a continuance of such a state of things by the natural operation of a well-established system, tending to develop, enlarge and enrich those who are dependent upon his care, and are to follow him as partakers of his labors and recipients of his fortunes. Common sense dictates to such a person, that he should first look about him and make himself acquainted with his exact situation ; that he should examine into his resources in order to ascertain what he has, and inquire into the best means of rendering these resources available.

So should it be in regard to a State. The legislative body, to whom are entrusted by the people, either directly or indirectly, not only the civil policy, but the fiscal powers of the State, should carefully look over the whole territory, without any sectional feeling or party bias, and so direct the operation

of the Executive, that every natural resource of the State should be sought out and made known, every energy aroused, and every judicious enterprise encouraged.

Next to enacting provisions, insuring security of property and equal rights, this, it is their specific and sworn duty to do. It gives us pleasure to say that we believe that such a course is expected of our Legislature by every citizen, directed, as it ever ought to be, by sound, careful prudence, and conducted in such a way, as, while it shall bring to light things of great value, and spread information of important interest, will not burthen oppressively the pecuniary energies of the community whose good it is designed to subserve.

The Geological Survey, commenced a few years since, was a measure of this class, inasmuch as it tended to unfold the mineral and geological treasures and agricultural powers of the State, and to lay before every individual citizen, full and exact accounts of what was discovered, and what might be expected to result from the knowledge of what is contained within our borders.

It was commenced in obedience to the public will, at a time when the finances of the State were in an easy condition, but was suspended when the heavy expenditures incident to our boundary difficulties called for retrenchment and the most rigid economy. The most ardent friends of the Survey saw the necessity of this suspension, and cheerfully submitted, and cordially sustained the measure, patiently hoping that the time would again come when an enterprise of so much importance to the welfare and reputation of the State, should be resumed and carried on to a full and perfect consummation. We believe that the time has now come, and that you will freely take such measures as will not only ensure the completion of the Geological Survey, but that it may also be connected with an Agricultural Survey—or at any rate, that Agricultural Geology may receive particular and careful attention from the Geologist while performing his duties.

We would respectfully beg leave to remind you that to the Geological Survey of the public lands in the Aroostook region during 1836 and '37, and to the Exploration and Agricultural Survey in 1838 of the same section, we are indebted for the first correct knowledge that we had of the value and capabilities of that territory. The reports of these surveys induced settlers to go in upon the lands,—led to the ultimate settlement of the boundary disputes, and caused what was then waste land to us to become one of the most flourishing and growing sections of Maine.

We can however hardly think it necessary to enter into a labored argument, in order to convince your enlightened body of the utility of such surveys. A large amount of valuable statistical information might be adduced, illustrating the necessity and proving the value of examinations of this nature. The examples of other States, that since our Agricultural Survey was commenced, have followed the example thus set them by us, and, fortunately, not meeting with similar embarrassments, have pushed them to completion, might also be cited. These would perhaps be better examined and considered by the Committee to whom we hope this memorial will be referred. At present we must content ourselves by submitting a few general observations in regard to its importance and feasibility at the present time.

Every one will allow that a large proportion of the elements of industrial prosperity are derived from minerological and agricultural products. Every one will admit that those people, who have at command the most minerological and agricultural resources, have it in their power to become a strong and prosperous community.

Every one will admit that these resources are to be found implanted by the hand of the Almighty, more or less abundantly, in different parts of the earth, and that they do not spontaneously develop themselves, but that it is left for man to seek them out, bring them to light, and put them into practical use by the aid of industry and art.

Hence it naturally follows, that, unless a thorough and systematic survey—an actual Exploration of the territory by individuals fitted for that business can be had, we shall continue to go on, as we now do, uncertain as to what we are *actually doing* and what we are *capable of doing*. We now know neither our strength nor our weakness in regard to these things ; nor is it possible for us to know it until a greater array of statistical matter, of actually ascertained, undeniable facts, shall be sought out and presented to us in a plain and simple manner. Then, and not till then, shall we know our real stature—the full measure of our strength—and learn to what we may aspire and what we may hope.

We are aware that we shall be met, even by many who are greatly in favor of such surveys, with one strong objection—viz.—*pecuniary inability to meet the expense*. We are not among those who would advise or approve of needless and lavish expenditure of the people's money, even in a cause that would redound to the people's good.

We know full well the present liabilities of the State, and we would not imprudently add to her burthens. You will permit us, however, to say—and we grieve that we must say, that her resources are at present not so numerous, available, or productive, as they *ought to be*, or, as they *would have now been*, had the policy of a careful and thorough research been carried out ; whereby new enterprise would have been encouraged—new taxable property created, and greater value given to property long established.

We do not deem that the expenditure from the treasury of the amount that would be necessary for this purpose, would be mis-spent or mis-directed, but we believe it would be money well invested ; from which would flow results that would be beneficially felt for a long series of years.

We might here add much respecting the obligations the State is under to finish the Geological Survey, not only as a matter of justice to those parts of our territory that have not been

examined, but as a duty devolving upon us to unfold and develop what has been given us by God, or as the fulfilling of the pledge impliedly given by its commencement to the cause of science and the productive arts.

We need not press these considerations on men who so well understand what high obligations devolve upon them, and who, when convinced of their duty, will not hesitate to perform it in a manner that shall prove their love for the State, their regard for rectitude, and manifest their anxiety to elevate the reputation of their country by high and consistent action as men and as Legislators.

Submitting this subject to your honors in full confidence that you will give a careful investigation, and act in the premises in such way and manner as shall be the best for all concerned.

We remain with great respect,

Your ob't serv'ts,

ISAAC SPRING,
EZEKIEL HOLMES,
ALEX. JOHNSTON, JR., } Committee.

IN BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, }
Jan. 28, 1853. }

Read and accepted, and ordered to be communicated to the Committee on Agriculture, with a request that they submit it to the Legislature.

E. F. CRANE, President.

E. HOLMES, Secretary.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, }
Feb. 2, 1853. }

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to procure the printing of 350 copies of the memorial of the Board of Agriculture, for the use of the Senate.

Copy of order.

Attest :

LOUIS O. COWAN, Sec'y.