

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING THE

EXTRA SESSION OF 1853, AND SESSION OF 1854.



Augusta:

WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1854.

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE.


HOUSE.

No. 5.

DOCUMENTS

IN RELATION TO THE

PURCHASE OF THE FEE OF THE REFORM SCHOOL FARM.



STATE OF MAINE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives :

By a resolve approved March 30, 1853, the Governor and Council were directed to purchase of the city of Portland, the fee of the Reform School Farm, if the same could be purchased at a fair and reasonable price.

I herewith transmit copies of the correspondence had between the executive and the authorities of the city of Portland, from which it will appear that the object contemplated by the resolve referred to cannot be accomplished without further legislation.

WM. G. CROSBY.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, }
Augusta, Feb. 24, 1854. }

COUNCIL CHAMBER, }
 Augusta, October, 18, 1853. }

DEAR SIR:—By a resolve passed at the session of the Legislature, held last winter, the Governor and Council were “directed to purchase of the city of Portland, the fee of the Reform School Farm, if the same can be purchased at a fair and reasonable price.”

Acting under that resolve, and in the discharge of the duty committed to us, we beg leave to inquire whether the city of Portland is disposed to convey to the State, the “fee of the Reform School Farm,” and for what consideration.

I have the honor to be,
 Very respectfully,
 Your ob't serv't,

(Signed)

WM. G. CROSBY.

J. B. CAHOON, Esq., Mayor, &c.

CITY OF PORTLAND, }
 Mayor's Office, Oct. 20, 1853. }

DEAR SIR:—Your favor of 18th inst., is just received, making inquiry with reference to the purchase by the State of this city, the fee of the Reform School Farm.

The next meeting of our City Council will be held the 3d proximo, when the subject will be taken up and probably referred to a committee, who will consider and report upon it at a subsequent meeting, and I will advise you of the result at the earliest practicable moment.

With much respect,
 Your obedient servant,

JAMES B. CAHOON, *Mayor*.

Hon. WM. G. CROSBY,

Governor of Maine, Augusta.

CITY OF PORTLAND, }
 Mayor's Office, Dec. 2d, 1853. }

DEAR SIR:—Referring to my respects of October 20, 1853, I have now to advise you of the action of the City Council, with reference to the purchase by the State, of the fee of the Reform School Farm, and with this transmit a copy of the report upon this subject, which was accepted by the Council at their meeting last evening, by which it will be perceived that the city decline naming any sum, unless an arrangement can be made which shall as effectually secure the carrying out the objects contemplated when the grant was made by the city, as at present exists.

With much respect,
 Your obedient servant,

JAMES B. CAHOON, *Mayor.*

Hon. WM. G. CROSBY,
Governor of Maine, Augusta.

CITY OF PORTLAND, }
 In Board of Aldermen, Dec. 1, 1853. }

The Committee on Public Buildings, to whom was referred the communication of the Governor of this State, relative to the purchase of this city, of the fee of the Reform School Farm, respectfully report:

The resolve passed by the Legislature authorizes the Governor and Council, "to purchase of the city of Portland the fee of the Reform School Farm, if the same can be purchased at a fair and reasonable price."

It may be proper to state, that for several years, the city of Portland had it in contemplation to establish an institution for the reform of juvenile offenders; and while this was under con-

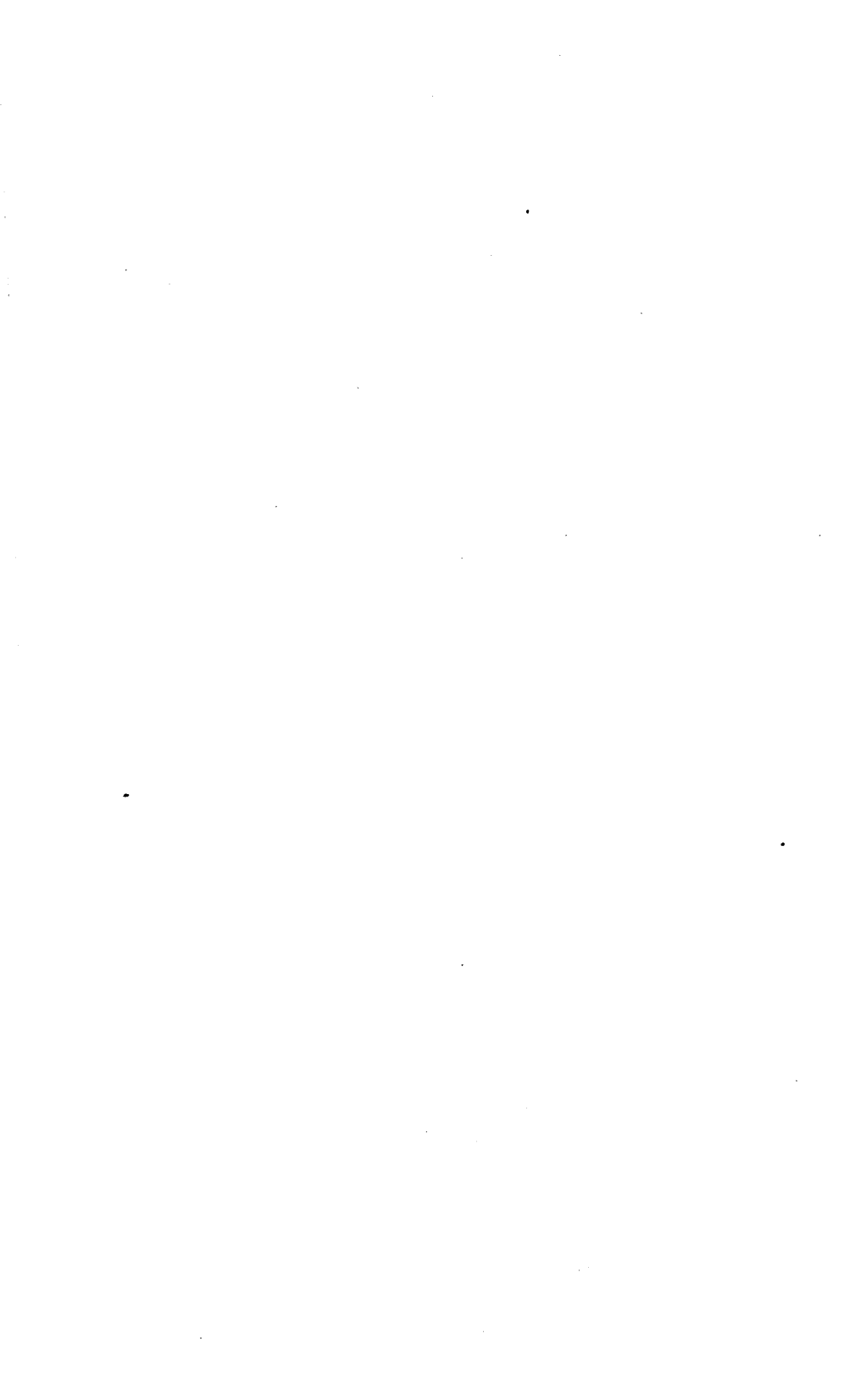
sideration, other cities and towns in the State felt the great necessity of this subject, and suggested that an effort should be made to establish a State Institution, similar to one in Massachusetts, by which the whole State might share in its benefits; and to aid in this philanthropic enterprise, our City Council in 1850 authorized the Mayor to propose to the Legislature, that the city would furnish the State with some suitable Island or other location, in this vicinity, free of cost, provided the Legislature would establish a State Reform School, and construct the same upon such location. The Legislature, after maturely considering the subject, and perceiving the great necessity for such an institution, made provision for its establishment. Commissioners were appointed to select a site and cause suitable buildings to be erected. After examining our Islands, and several farms in this and other places, the Commissioners gave preference to the one selected, provided the city would purchase and convey it to the State for this purpose. When the proposition was made to the Legislature, it was supposed a suitable site could be obtained for 4 or \$5,000; the price demanded for the above was \$8,500. Desirous of meeting the views of the Commissioners, and not wishing to throw any obstacles in the way, but rather to afford every possible facility in forwarding the work, the City Council authorized the purchase and conveyance of the property in question, which was accordingly done, with the condition in the conveyance, that it should be used for the purpose designed; a copy of the conveyance is herewith annexed, by which it will be perceived, that the conveyance was made by the city to the State, "for and in consideration that said estate herein conveyed shall be forever used and improved for a State Reform School for the employment of juvenile offenders," and "upon condition that said estate shall always be held, used and forever improved by said State for such Reform School." This is the purpose for which the property was conveyed by the City to the State, and your Committee are unanimously of the opinion, that no action of the City should be had, which would prevent this purpose from being

carried out in the most perfect good faith. It will be perceived by the above statement, that the City gave \$8,500 toward the establishment of this institution, the interest of which at 6 per cent. is \$510 per annum, which amount of interest in fact the City is paying annually towards supporting it, besides its proportion of the annual expenses included in the State tax, borne equally with the other cities and towns in the State.

The Commissioners have done themselves much credit in causing to be erected very substantial buildings, and in the selection of a gentleman of high standing and much experience to put the school in operation, and its doors are now thrown open for the reception of that class of juvenile offenders for which it was intended, designed to reform and educate them for useful employment, and to send them out into the world possessed of moral principle, qualified to act well their part upon the stage of life—on the farm—in the workshop or other useful labor; to be industrious and good citizens, instead of growing up in in vice and vagrancy and diffusing a baneful influence in the circles in which they would move; they may become men of character and standing in society, and constitute part and parcel of those whose object is to promote the interest of the human race by enacting and sustaining such laws as are best calculated to accomplish this object; and this your Committee consider of more consequence than any pecuniary consideration, and would not suggest the naming any sum for the fee in these premises, unless some arrangement can be made that will as effectually secure the carrying out the objects contemplated when the grant was made by the City, as at present exists; but if such an arrangement can be made, it will then be for the Council to consider the sum to propose.

Per order,

JAMES B. CAHOON, *Chairman.*



STATE OF MAINE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
February 24, 1854. }

ORDERED, That this message and the accompanying correspondence be laid upon the table, and 350 copies be printed for the use of the Legislature.

JOHN J. PERRY, *Clerk.*