

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1864.

AUGUSTA:
STEVENS & SAYWARD, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.
1864.

FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE.

No. 6.

AUGUSTA, February 9, 1864.

To the President of the Senate

and Speaker of the House of Representatives :

I have the honor to lay before you a communication from the Hon. Francis O. J. Smith. The purpose of Mr. Smith will be best learned from the document itself.

It relates to a subject deeply interesting to a large class of the citizens of Maine, viz.: The establishment of a Primary Agricultural College.

The wise liberality of Mr. Smith in his proposition to donate a handsome estate in furtherance of that object is such as will challenge the thanks of the Legislature in behalf of the people of Maine.

SAMUEL CONY.

NEW YORK CITY, February 5, 1864.

To his Excellency, SAMUEL CONY, Governor of Maine:

SIR: I am owner, in fee, of a well known farm in Gorham, County of Cumberland, nine miles from the city of Portland, accessible, by railroad, several times daily, and the same now occupied by Col. J. J. Speed.

It consists of a fraction rising ninety acres, of which about one-fifth is in wood land and pasture, and four-fifths of tillage, without a rod of waste land in the four-fifths, under proper cultivation.

It has upon it a small farm house and barn, of inconsiderable value.

But, it has a mansion house and stable, the former of commodious size, built of the best material, and in the most workman-like manner, and of great architectural beauty. It is in good condition of repair, and upon a site of unsurpassed natural, as well as artificial beauty. It is within three-fourths of a mile of the State Female Seminary in Gorham village, and like distance of the York and Cumberland railroad depot. It cost a former owner, as I am well informed, upwards of thirty thousand dollars.

I propose to donate this entire property to the State, with a perfect title, *on the single condition*, that the State will locate and sustain upon it permanently, the Primary Agricultural College which it has undertaken to establish under the munificent grant of lands by the Government of the United States.

I speak of a *Primary College*, as it will be found wise and advantageous to the State, in the future, and more satisfactory to the people, to distribute portions of the funds that will be derivable from the federal grant, if judiciously handled, to different localities and branch schools of instruction in the State, in order better to secure the diversity and extent of territory and soil, requisite to develop and reduce to practical illustration and popular instruction, the varied departments of agricultural science and its adjunctive arts.

The scattered population of the State will, also, be doubtlessly better accommodated by this distributive system.

Cattle and sheep husbandry, and horse breeding, for instance,

require a far greater extent of territory, and a very different soil, from that best suited to the cereal products, and grasses, and root culture.

So theoretical instruction—lecturing tutors and consulting managers—of a State system for diffusing agricultural knowledge for subsequent or cotemporaneous reduction to practice, as well as an accumulating State library for consultation, and perhaps, in time, a Zoological Garden and a Museum of Natural History may each well have a location different, and even distant from the auxiliary branches of a State system, where practical agencies will be the peculiar characteristic of their selection and uses.

However, be this as it may, and I defer all to the ultimate decision of those to whom is properly entrusted the responsibility of the subject, I tender the State the above donation of a property I believe to be preëminently suited in beauty and salubrity of location, in proximity to the commercial capital of the State, in accessibility by railroads and county roads, and in ready adaptability to the ends in view, coupled only with the one condition above expressed.

I will venture to add, that if accepted, it will afford the State an immediate nucleus for starting the great beneficent scheme of the Federal Government for popular instruction in the noblest of human employments, without affiliation with any existing creations of a sectarian character, and with a fair prospect therein of maintaining it in like exemption *forever*—a result which cannot be too cautiously fostered to enshure permanent and undisturbed success, and the enduring good will of all truly catholic minds.

Your Excellency is at liberty to make such use of this communication as may in your judgment be most judicious for definite action upon it, at an early day.

With sentiments of great respect,

Your obedient servant,

FRANCIS O. J. SMITH.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }
February 9, 1864. }

On motion of Mr. TURNER of Augusta, laid on the table and
350 copies ordered to be printed for the use of the Legislature.

HORACE STILSON, *Clerk.*