

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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RESOLVES

OF THE

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE,

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

PASSED AT THE SESSION

Which commenced on the seventh day of January, and ended on the twenty-fourth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five.

Published agreeably to the Resolve of June 28, 1820.

AUGUSTA:

WILLIAM J. CONDON.....PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1835.

MESSAGE

OF THE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MAINE.

TO

BOTH BRANCHES OF THE LEGISLATURE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

AND OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES :

The objects for which we are convened are of deep interest to our constituents, and impose a high responsibility upon ourselves. Assembled to consult for the public welfare, we are forcibly reminded of the goodness of an over-ruling Providence, in continuing to us the immunities we enjoy, as a constituent member of this highly favored Republic.

We meet under circumstances of general prosperity. The productions of the year that has just closed, are abundant, affording an ample supply for the wants of the community. We have been free from the ravages of the fatal disease by which some portions of our land have been visited ; and we are bound to acknowledge our gratitude to God for these blessings, and to implore his guidance, in our mutual endeavors to serve the people, in the several stations which they have assigned us.

We have cause, Gentlemen, to think highly of our country. Our soil is exuberantly rich ; our climate in general is healthy ; our government is based upon the principles of equal rights and equal privileges, and operates lightly upon all, and our people are free, independent and happy. A comparative view of our present resources and prosperity as a nation, with what they have been at any former juncture, will forcibly demonstrate, that we are rapidly advancing in wealth, population and political influence.

The promptness, energy, and patriotism, which have characterized the administration of the federal government, during the official term of the illustrious individual who is now at the head of it, command the highest respect and confidence of the American People. It is, moreover, a consideration, which may justly inspire the citizen with increased reliance upon the wisdom of the National Executive, that those measures of his administration, which have been most signalized by determined opposition, have in their progress and results been most successful, in securing popular esteem.

The policy and successive measures of the National Administration, relative to the present United States Bank, have received the commendations of each Legislature of this State, during a series of years past; and in the recent popular elections, these commendations have been sanctioned by our constituents, too obviously for misapprehension, and too distinctly to admit of doubt respecting the course, which obedience to their will, imposes upon us respectively.

An institution, which, like the present United States Bank, discloses a disposition to wield its extensive powers in rivalry with those of the government which created it, cannot be regarded otherwise than as dangerous to public liberty. The experience of more than a year has confirmed me in the opinion, that as a servant of the National Government, the Bank can be spared without detriment to the fiscal operations of any Department; as a rival of Government, in any thing, it surely ought not to be endured. Being fully convinced, that it has become obnoxious to the charge, of assuming to control by counter influences of a dangerous character, the policy and measures of the federal government, and that the monopoly of power which it possesses over the industry and business relations of the people, can, with more safety to the public, be divided among local institutions, I shall cheerfully accord my co-operation, in any proceedings which your deliberations may suggest as expedient, for conveying to the National Executive and to Congress, the clearly indicated wishes of the people of Maine, upon this subject.

The recent political agitation in our country, has been productive of mixed benefit and evil to the community. It has aroused the citizen to reflect seriously upon the worth of political

virtue, and to renew his choice in the exercise of his suffrages, between popular freedom on the one hand, and a subjection to the influence of combined wealth on the other. So far, the effect has been indisputably salutary. But there is cause for apprehending, that the same occasion has given rise to inroads upon the freedom of our popular elections, altogether opposed to the spirit of our free institutions.

The freedom and purity of the elective franchise, lie at the foundation of our republican system of government. Upon the fidelity with which these are watched and protected by the citizen and public officer, the duration of popular liberty mainly depends. Corruption, oppression, and menaces, in whatever manner presented, are alike adverse to them. That the personal independence of the citizen, in all elections, may receive every species of protection that timely legislation can furnish, and that these hostile influences may be prevented from acting upon the choice of public officers, or be properly dealt by when detected, I respectfully suggest, whether it may not be advisable to render them, in this State, penal offences by legislative enactment, and subject to exemplary punishment.

I cannot but regard the late Acts of Congress relative to the Gold and Silver currency of the country, as conducive to great improvement in this essential department of our national concerns. And it is worthy of consideration, whether a gradual curtailment of the privilege of issuing bills under the denomination of five dollars, now extended to the several Banking Institutions in this State, by the twentieth section of the Act of March 31, 1831, will not beneficially serve the policy, thus commended by national legislation. Simultaneous with the operation here suggested, an enactment of similar import with the repealed section of "An Act to restrain unincorporated Banking Associations, and for other purposes," passed March 13, 1821, would also be found expedient, to prohibit the circulation, within this State, of the bills of foreign Banks, of denominations prohibited to Banks in our own State.

Upon the subject of education, the duties of the Legislature are made imperious by the language of our State Constitution. Much has heretofore been done by the State Government for the improvement of the rising generation, but it is in the nature of this class of claims to increase with the increasing abilities

of our people and government to sustain them. Perhaps an undue proportion of the bounties of the State, has heretofore been applied to the education of the male sex. I need not urge upon intelligent and reflecting minds, the importance as well as the justice, of advancing at an equal pace, the cultivation of intellectual power in the two sexes. The progress of our youth in knowledge and virtue, as they approach maturity of years, greatly depends on the mental and moral habits formed in early life, under the influence of females, to whose care our children are ordinarily committed during that important period, when first impressions are imparted to the mind. As a matter of economy, merely, female education is deservedly entitled to the most liberal provisions. But we should be behind the spirit and the lights of the age, if it were not so regarded by us for its own sake alone. In both views, I commend it to your favorable consideration. And in this connexion I will remark, that the opinions expressed in my first communication to the Legislature of the last year, relative to the necessity of making further provision for the qualification of instructors for our common schools, have been confirmed by subsequent reflection and observation, and they are now adverted to, for the purpose of again presenting the subject to the attention of the Legislature.

A Resolve was passed by the last Legislature, granting the sum of twenty thousand dollars for the benevolent purpose of establishing an Insane Hospital in this State, on condition that a like sum should be raised by individual donations. In furtherance of this object, the Secretary of State caused the Resolve to be published for general information; but this appeal to the sympathy and public spirit of our citizens, has not been attended with the success which was anticipated. As it is not perfectly clear from the phraseology of this Resolve, whether it was the intention of the Legislature to continue it in force, beyond one year from its passage, further legislative action upon the subject may be necessary.

In this connexion, permit me to introduce to your notice, an Institution recently established in our parent Commonwealth. I allude to the New England Asylum for the Blind, at Boston. In accordance with the provisions of a Resolve, passed at the last Session of the Legislature, appropriating the sum of one thousand dollars to be expended under the direction of the

Governor and Council, in defraying in whole or in part, the expences of such applicants as might be deemed fit subjects for the bounty of the State, six persons have been placed at said Institution, one for the term of two years, and the remainder for the term of one year.—Should it be deemed proper to continue these beneficiaries beyond these periods, a further appropriation will be necessary to defray their expences. And I would suggest for your consideration, whether we may not, as the friends of humanity, and as the advocates of an enlightened public policy, avail ourselves of the opportunity presented by this Institution, of extending new and invaluable privileges to a portion of our fellow citizens, who have heretofore shared but sparingly in the bounty of the State.

Our Penitentiary System will necessarily be a subject of inquiry. Under the Resolve of the twenty-eighth of February last, a Committee was appointed to visit the State Prison at Thomaston, to investigate the conduct of its officers and the affairs of the Institution generally, and to report with all reasonable despatch, the result of their examination. This Committee have executed the trust confided to them, in a highly satisfactory manner; and a copy of their Report is herewith communicated.

An examination into the extent of Pauperism in our State, will be sufficient to demonstrate the propriety of some legislative action upon the subject, of a precautionary character at least. While ample provision should be made for all cases of real indigence, great vigilance should be exercised, to guard against offering inducements either to the dissolute or the idle, to prefer a state of dependence upon public charity, to one of honorable industry and self-support. Economy in the public expenditures will not only be promoted thereby, but a moral influence, of still greater worth and consideration, to an enterprising people, will be thus exerted, silently to be sure, but not the less effectually. In a land such as we inhabit, affording numerous advantages for successful industry, there ought to be but few occasions calling for the interposition of public alms. Still these will necessarily occur, and should be properly provided for. But where pauperism is the result of vice or idleness, the public bounty administered to it, should, if practicable, be accompanied by a discipline calculated to work reform, as well as to yield support.

Pursuant to a Resolve of the last Legislature, a Board of Commissioners on Internal Improvements has been organized, and will improve the earliest opportunities of fulfilling the designs for which it was instituted. The appropriation already made for the purpose of defraying the expences of its operations, will probably be sufficient to meet its demands upon the Treasury, during the current year.

The care and management of the Public Lands still continue to require the attention of the Legislature. The annual Report of the Land Agent, exhibiting his proceedings during the past year, and the condition of the Land Department at the present time, will be presented at an early day for your consideration.

It affords me pleasure to inform you, that the Canada Road westward of the Bald Mountain, has at length been completed, agreeably to the arrangement of this State with Massachusetts. The importance of this road to the internal commerce of our State, is rapidly developing, as the attention and enterprise of our citizens are more directed to the advantages which are opened to them by it. The want of settlements upon parts of this Road, retards somewhat its general usefulness. This consideration, in connexion with the interest which the State still retains in an extensive tract of land through which it passes, may properly suggest the policy of affording, for a limited period, new encouragements to settlers upon this road.

By a Resolve of the last Legislature, the State agreed to assume the repair and preservation of the Mars Hill Road, from its commencement in Lincoln, in the County of Penobscot, to its termination in Houlton, in the County of Washington, provided it should be first put in a state of repair by the United States. In the month of September last, I was advised by the Acting Quarter Master of the Army of the United States, that the Road was then in the repair contemplated by the Resolve, and ready to be surrendered to the care of the State Government. An Agent was thereupon appointed to examine and report upon the condition of the Road as thus offered. A Report favorable to the acceptance of the road, has been made by him, and a copy of the same is herewith transmitted.

I have been informed by the Agent appointed under a Resolve of the Legislature, passed March 5, 1832, that he has com-

pleted the Baring and Houlton Road through Indian Township number two, in the County of Washington, and through the tracts belonging to the State, with the exception of about four and a half miles in Township number eight. This section is now under contract, and will be finished early in the ensuing season.

The militia law of the last year appears to have produced the most beneficial effects. It has excited among our young men, a spirit of honorable emulation, and has removed, in a degree, the causes of discontent, which have heretofore existed in the community upon this subject. The Annual Report of the Adjutant General, will be communicated at an early period of your Session, and will exhibit the condition of the effective military force of the State.

Upon the subject of the North Eastern Boundary, which is still kept in controversy by the claims of the British Government, I have received no information, since my first communication to the last Legislature. The vacancy which has for some time existed in the representation of the Federal Government at the Court of Great Britain, has, no doubt had the effect, to delay the settlement of this interesting question. It is to be hoped, however, that the time is not distant, when the embarrassments, which have so long weighed upon the general prosperity of this valuable section of our State, will be removed.

The Report of the Treasurer will in due time be laid before you, by which you will be furnished with a detailed statement of the fiscal concerns of the State.

It will become necessary during your present session, to elect a Senator to represent this State in the Congress of the United States, for six years from the third day of March next.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I will only add, that I shall cordially co-operate with you in any measures, which may have for their object, to unite the people in mutual confidence, and to perpetuate the principles of our republican government: and may the blessing of God rest upon your deliberations.

ROBERT P. DUNLAP.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, }
Augusta, January 9, 1835. }