

STATE OF NEW-YORK.

In Assembly, March 1, 1850.

REPORT

Of the Special Committee on the Agricultural College and Experimental Farm.

The select committee to which was referred the Report of the Commissioners appointed to mature a plan for an agricultural college and experimental farm, and so much of the Governor's message as relates to the same subject, together with the memorials and petitions of various boards of supervisors, and agricultural societies and private citizens in favor of the same object, have had the subject under consideration, and submit the following

REPORT.

The great subject entrusted to the care of the committee, has for several years past excited a deep interest throughout the entire State. Twice the distinguished citizen who now fills the Executive chair, has pressed it upon the consideration of the Legislature; various boards of supervisors, agricultural societies and private citizens have called upon us to act in the premises. The Committee on Agriculture in the Assembly of last year, submitted to the House an interesting report upon the subject, which will be found in their documents. The able board of commissioners last year appointed by the Governor, have matured and reported a plan for an agricultural college and experimental farm, and the same is now upon our files. Public opinion still moves on in the same direction and with accumulated power. It would be but a waste of the time of this committee, and wearying to the patience of this House, again to go over the ground embraced in those reports. The most ample justice is therein done to the importance of the object contemplated, the present state and past history of similar institutions, the branches of knowledge to be taught, and the expense and general outline of the institution.

It seems necessary for this committee now, only to present a few brief considerations, which seem called for by the nature of the bill which they ask leave to introduce.

The committee with entire unanimity assent to the correctness of the conclusions arrived at by the said commissioners, that such an institution as has thus been called for by so wide spread a public opinion, should be established, and that the same should be founded by the State. The necessity for its existence is found in two very important facts, the first is, that two-thirds of the entire population of the State is engaged in agriculture, it is the great occupation of our citizens and the primary source of our wealth, and must so continue through all future time. Whatever adds to the value or the dignity of labor, tends to the elevation in comfort and

respectability of the great body of the people. A very slight increase throughout the State of the productions of the earth, will *annually* return to the people more than the entire amount which will be expended on the proposed institution, should that sum even exceed any contemplated bounds.

The second ground for its necessity is found in the most *remarkable fact*, that while a very large majority of the inhabitants of the Union are engaged in agriculture, while it is everywhere regarded with respect and held in the highest favor, there is not *upon the continent* a solitary institution where a thorough scientific and practical knowledge of agriculture can be obtained. Millions have been expended in founding institutions to teach law, theology, and the higher departments of science and literature; and even the blind, the insane, and the deaf and dumb have not been overlooked and forgotten. But that great science which lies at the *foundation of all others, and is paramount in importance to them all*, has been left to struggle along as best it might, guided by the flickering light of an uncertain experience, and unaided by the fostering care of the government which it sustains. The results of modern improvements, and the progress made in the present century, in the science of agriculture, demand at the hands of the State the most favourable consideration of this subject, and that this great desideratum should be supplied without further delay. The great farming interests of this State have too long been overlooked and forgotten, or sacrificed to the interests of more artful or more clamorous bodies. But now when their wants are understood, and their requests are duly presented to our consideration, they are too reasonable to be longer postponed. To this point the attention of your committee has been earnestly directed. We have been urged instead of following the recommendations of the commissioners above referred to, to advise the establishment of agricultural departments attached to some of the present literary institutions of the State. And various reasons have been presented to our consideration, in favor of this plan; but your committee have been entirely unable to satisfy themselves that this course would be wise in itself, or satisfactory to the people of this State. All the memorials referred to your committee from whatever sources they may have emanated, as well as the reports and recommendations above alluded to, concur in favor of "an agricultural college and experimental farm." Public opinion has been directed to this mode of accomplishing the desired end; and seems to your committee to have concurred in it. They have been unable to discover from any source that the course first above referred to, would be in accordance with the wishes of any considerable body of our fellow citizens, unless it be those