

INTRODUCTION.

AT the semi-annual meeting of the Board of Education of the State of Illinois, held at Normal, Ill., on the 15th of December, 1875, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted :

WHEREAS, Since the control of the Museum of the Illinois State Natural History Society was transferred to the State Board of Education, no general declaration has ever been made by this Board of the relations and policy of the Museum, or of the purposes of the Board concerning it ; and

WHEREAS, It seems desirable that the students and friends of science should know definitely and authoritatively the nature, scope and promise of the work of said Museum, in order that they may intelligently co-operate with its officers for the promotion of the scientific interests of the state ; therefore,

Resolved, That we regard the Museum as a State Institution, devoted to the prosecution of a natural history survey of the state, to the encouragement and aid of original research, and to the diffusion of scientific knowledge and habits of thought among the people.

That we consider it an important part of its work to supply collections of specimens to the public schools, as far as this can be done consistently with its own general interests, and especially to provide all needed facilities for the instruction of teachers in natural history, and in the most approved and successful methods of teaching the same ; and

That we cordially invite the co-operation of the scientists of Illinois, offering them the free use of its collections, library and apparatus, and assuring them that whatever may be contributed to its cabinets or its funds shall be used faithfully and impartially for the advancement of science throughout the state at large.

In pursuance of the first of the above resolutions, the issue of a series of publications has been undertaken, which it is intended to devote especially to the natural history of Illinois. These bulletins will contain original contributions to a knowledge of any department of the natural history of the state ; such compilations, synopses, and the like, as will bring together widely dispersed and virtually inaccessible published matter relating to the local natural history, placing it in manageable form, within reach of the ordinary student ; and papers of value on economical science.

Within these limits it is desired that the publication may be made the

organ of all Illinois naturalists, upon whose active aid the success, and especially the degree of usefulness, of the enterprise is, of course, almost entirely dependent.

It is believed that by thus limiting the undertaking to a special field in which our own naturalists may be supposed to be better able to work than any others, and to which they are more likely to devote themselves with ardor and success, all the advantages of a local stimulus to research may be gained without inflicting upon science any increase of the number of rival centers of publication of similar scope and purpose.

For the purpose of providing better facilities than now exist for the future prosecution of the work here outlined, it is necessary that complete collections of specimens should be made in all parts of the state, that a full and well-selected library should be brought together, and that these should be thoroughly organized for practical use. Contributions of specimens and books are therefore earnestly desired. These will be received at the Museum, properly cared for, promptly arranged, catalogued and indexed, and held for the use of any working naturalist.

S. A. FORBES,

Curator Illinois Museum of Natural History.

NORMAL, ILL., Oct. 16, 1876.