

Inaugural address
of
Horace Fairbanks
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of the
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Thursday, October 5, 1876
Inaugural Address

*Gentlemen of the Senate
and House of Representatives:*

In entering upon the legislative duties and responsibilities imposed by the Constitution, it is fit and proper, especially in this Centennial year of our National existence and nearly completed century of the existence of our State under a constitutional government, that our hearts should be filled with thankfulness and gratitude to the Author of all blessings, not only for the general health, peace and prosperity which He has graciously vouchsafed during the past two years, but also for the innumerable blessings which have attended our entire existence as a State. And especially is it fitting that we should remember with gratitude and thankfulness at this time, the mercies and goodness of that Providence which led our fathers safely through those peculiar and trying circumstances which environed them in the memorable year of 1777, and which scarcely have their parallel in the world's history, - when though claimed on the east by New Hampshire, - claimed and menaced on the west by New York, - oppressed and warred against on the north by Great Britain, - unrecognized and unsupported by the sister colonies, they, a mere handful of sturdy yeomen, stood manfully and independently for the right; framed and adopted a Constitution, which for the most part remains unchanged, and under which they and their posterity have been "protected in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property," and have been led to that "firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance industry and frugality," which has made them and us an intelligent, virtuous and happy people. May the same Infinite Wisdom guide us in all legislative deliberations, that we may not the fair proportions of the governmental structure reared by our fathers, but enjoy and transmit it improved, adorned and embellished, to those who may come after us.

Standing on the dividing line of the centuries, it is the part of wisdom to consider not alone the present, its comforts and privileges, but as well the past, that we may learn their cost, its lesions, and take warning from any mistakes by the way, and that we may plan broadly, intelligently and wisely for the future.

The biennial reports of the State officers having in charge particular departments of the public service, will fully inform you of the present condition of the important affairs of the State. The suggestions and recommendations of these officers who have become familiar with the necessities and workings of their respective departments, deserve, and not doubt will receive your careful consideration.

FINANCES.

It is a matter for mutual congratulation that by wise legislation and careful and honest management, the finances of the State are in a most satisfactory and prosperous condition. When we call to mind that ten years ago, after having cheerfully met the enormous taxation necessary for the support of the war, the State was found to have a funded debt of \$1,625,500, it is not a little remarkable, and certainly very gratifying, to find that at the close of the financial year the Treasurer had in hand assets, mostly in ready money, to the amount of \$72,907.11, in excess of all existing liabilities. Although a portion of the State debt does not fall due for several years, and is really due from the State to the State, and a considerable portion of the money then on hand will be needed to defray the expenses which will accrue before another State tax can be collected, we have the proud satisfaction of having entered upon the second century substantially free from debt, and with no State financial burdens for posterity to bear.

The Treasurer's report, to which you are referred, will furnish a clear, definite and detailed statement of the financial transactions of the State for the past two years.

From the report it appears that during the financial year ending August 1, 1875, besides meeting the current expenses, the funded debt was diminished \$59,000, and there was added to the sinking fund \$130,000. At the close of that year, the financial condition of the estate was as follows:

LIABILITIES.

Due towns, U.S. Safety Fund,	\$11,519.96	
Due on Soldiers' accounts,	12,178.24	
Due on outstanding checks,	1,886.06	
Due on funded debt:		
Coupon bonds, 1876,	\$102,000	
Coupon bonds, 1878,	34,000	
Registered Loan, 1878,	31,500	
	-----	\$167,500.00
Due Agricultural College Fund.,		135,500.00

		\$328,584.26

ASSETS

Due on tax of 1874,	\$4,563.45	
Cash in treasury and on deposit in banks,	320,376.84	
	-----	\$324,940.29

Excess of liabilities,		\$3,643.97

During the year ending August 1, 1876, the Treasurer has purchased \$2,000 of the bonds due December 1, 1876, and \$30,000 of the registered bonds, due December 1, 1878.

The balance sheet for the present fiscal year represents:

LIABILITIES.

Due towns, U.S. Safety Fund,	\$11,519.96	
Due on Soldiers' accounts,	11,472.78	
Due on outstanding checks,	1,833.89	
Due on bonds December 1, 1876,	100,000.00	
Due on bonds December 1, 1878,	35,500.00	
Due Agricultural College Fund,	135,500.00	
Due on over-due coupons,	1,605.00	
Due Vermont Asylum for the Insane,	24,333.12	
Due Perkins Institute for the Blind,	2,125.00	
	-----	\$323,889.66

ASSETS

Due on tax of 1875,	\$8,552.21	
Cash in treasury and on deposit in banks,	388,244.56	
	-----	\$395,796.77

Excess of assets,		\$72,907.11

With the same prudent foresight and the same economical and honest management continued, Vermont will never be numbered among the bankrupt or repudiating States, but her promises to pay will, as at present, command a premium in the money market.

EXPENSES.

The expense of administering the affairs of the State must in the future, as in the past, be paid almost entirely from direct taxes, and for that reason should be cautiously and prudently incurred. Taxation should ever be kept at the lowest limit consistent with the permanent protection, growth and development of the interests of the entire people.

The Constitution has happily prescribed this limit. Its language is, "Previous to any law being made to raise a tax, the purpose for which it is to be raised ought to appear evident to the Legislature to be of more service to the community than the money would be if not collected."

The payment of State expenses is from a common fund, raised by a general tax. The danger lies in a neglect to examine carefully each item of expense to determine whether it falls within the letter and spirit of the Constitution. A cursory examination of the accounts allowed by the State Auditor will suffice to show that prosecutions by the grand jury, and trials by the petit jury, occasion large items of expense. At my request the Auditor has examined his books and reports that there has been paid, including the sums paid the jurors, during the last fiscal year, - for the former, \$9,013.81; and for the latter, \$21,443.72.

The criminal prosecutions in each county are under the management and control of its State's Attorney. The incumbent is changed at nearly every election. It is believed that considerable sums in fines and forfeitures are for this reason lost to the State.

The incoming State's Attorney is unfamiliar with the business, and has no knowledge of such as has been left unfinished by his predecessor. Not infrequently has it happened that the expense of obtaining an indictment, and sometimes of a trial before the traverse jury, has been lost to the State, from the indictments being defectively drawn through the inexperience of the State's Attorney. Besides, there has been paid to other attorneys for aiding in State trials during the last fiscal year, according to the estimate of the State Auditor, the sum of \$3,500. It is my belief that a considerable part of this class of expenses might be saved by the creating of the office of Attorney General, to be filled by an experienced and able attorney. It should be his duty to take charge of and systematize the criminal business of the State; attend to the collection of all fines and forfeitures; give instructions and aid to the State's Attorneys in drafting informations and indictments; and to be present and conduct the more important criminal prosecutions. I believe, with the criminal business in the care and charge of such an officer, that the necessity for instituting such prosecutions by a grand jury would in a great measure, cease to exist, and might be dispensed with except in cases of treason and murder. For such cases the grand jury might be called whenever occasion should require, and not in each county annually, as is now done. There is no clause in the Constitution which would be violated by such a change. Prosecutions by information are fully recognized by the common law.

The chief value of the grand jury system, and the occasion which called it into existence in England, grew out of her arbitrary form of government. It furnished security against unfounded and unjust prosecutions of a subject who had fallen into disfavor with the monarch. It insured merited prosecutions against royal and titled families.

I have been led to these suggestions from the belief that some such change in the law as has been indicated, would be made, which would not lessen materially their expense. The right of trial by jury is secured by the Constitution, "except where parties otherwise agree." By such agreements, such causes may be referred under a rule of court. I am informed that the cost to the State for such jury trials per day is about one hundred dollars. Under existing law, cases involving the simple right to recover for labor or property to an amount exceeding ten or twenty dollars, dependent upon the nature of the action, can be, and often are, carried to the county Court by appeal. The trial of such case is rarely completed in less than a day. Is it not a plain perversion, not to say violation of that clause in the Constitution heretofore cited, to impose a tax of one hundred dollars upon the community, to settle a matter in which one of two parties may be entitled to twenty-five or even fifty dollars, and should not the right of appeal in such cases be taken away unless the amount involved is nearly equal to the amount of taxes which the appeal will probably impose upon the community?

The allowance of the right of appeal in such cases is no kindness even to the prevailing party. Beside the ill feelings likely to be engendered by such trials, the expense of the trial to him is usually much more than the amount of the claim.

The ordinary expenses per day of a competent referee do not exceed \$10 or \$15. Hence if all jury cases should be referred, and the state should assume the payment of the referee's fees, a very great saving of expense would be secured to the State, and no right of parties would be thereby sacrificed.

The main obstacle in the way of an agreement of reference is that parties know that they can try their case by jury on the payment of six dollars to the State, and that a trial by a competent referee may cost them many times that sum.

I think it would be economy to provide for the payment, by the State, of a part or the whole of the referee's fees, and that the expense of trial by jury may be lessened by proper legislation in the two directions indicated, without any detriment to public or private interest.

ASSESSMENT OF TAXES.

The framing of statutes so as to compel an equitable and just contribution from every interest and citizen, towards the expenses of administering the affairs of the State, has ever been one of the most difficult and perplexing questions with which legislators have to deal. The right of the State to compel such just contribution is unquestionable. Without it every department of the government becomes paralyzed.

The duty of every citizen, and of every species of property, to contribute towards the expense of his or its protection, is equally clear. The protection furnished by the State to its citizens and to the property within its limits, gives the right to exact, in war, the personal services, and in peace, a poll tax from the former and contributions from the latter, wherever the owner thereof may reside. This is substantially the doctrine announced in the 9th article of the Bill of Rights.

Within the past few years there have been frequent complaints that the spirit of this article in the Bill of Rights is violated in the apportionment of the public burdens. Not unfrequently has it been claimed that property of the same kind and value was placed in the Grand List at different valuations in different sections of the State. At other times it is claimed that a large amount of property invested in railroads, telegraph companies, insurance companies, and other companies, to protect which and determine the rights thereto, annually costs the State a large sum, almost wholly escapes taxation; and again, that owners of real estate are unjustly discriminated against, in that they are taxed on its appraised value, notwithstanding they may be largely indebted for it, while the owners of personal estate are allowed to deduct from its appraised value the amount of debts which they may owe. It is claimed by some that there should be no deductions made from the assessed value of personal property, for the debts of the owner; that such allowance induces fraud and the creation of fictitious debts for the purpose of obtaining deductions, and that the expense to the State, to protect and determine the rights to personal property for which the owner is in debt, is greater than when the same is fully paid for, and hence it is unjust that the owner of property, because he is a debtor, should be relieved from contributing therefrom to the expenses of the State.

Without doubt there is too much foundation for these complaints, though the class first mentioned could have no existence in fact, if listers would faithfully observe the law, and appraise all property at its just value in money.

It is notorious that they do not regard the law in this respect, but appraise property at from one-third to two-thirds its just value in money, often vieing with each other to place and keep the property in their locality in the list as far below its value as possible. I am informed that conscientious listers often refuse to sign and make oath to the list from a knowledge of their failure to comply with the law.

The prevalent feeling that the practical operation of the law for the assessment of taxes is unequal and unjust, has been, and is, working a sad demoralization of public sentiment. By a numerous class of citizens it is no longer considered a public duty to assume and pay their full share of the public expenses, but rather that they have a right to avoid as much of it as they can, even by resorting to questionable devices. It is feared that the Legislature may have inadvertently aided in the work of demoralization, by too readily passing acts to legalize grand lists, with and without specifying the defects to be legalized, and even to legalize the omission of the listers to sign and make oath to the list. Would not a more healthy sentiment be inculcated by refusing the passage of all acts which do not specify the defect to be cured, and all acts to legalize defects occasioned by the omission of the listers to complete, sign and make oath to the list according to law, and, also, by enacting a law rendering the listers personally liable to their towns and to the State for all losses occasioned by their neglects or omissions in this respect.

I am convinced that the law in regard to the assessment of taxes needs a careful and considerate revision – such a revision as will apportion and distribute the public expenses as equally and justly as possible among all the citizens and upon all the pecuniary interests of the State. Whether such a revision can be effected at a single session of the Legislature may be doubtful.

EDUCATION

The importance of this interest cannot be overestimated. More than ninety thousand children are in process of training the schools of the State.

Their weal or woe is largely determined by the character of the schools which they attend.

These children are soon to give character to the State and other States.

The State can better afford to neglect any other interest than this, which is so closely allied to her welfare and destiny.

Free institutions cannot long exist among a people characterized by ignorance and vice. Intelligence and virtue are the bulwarks of all free government.

The pecuniary interest connected with education are very large. The direct taxes raised annually for this purpose amount to nearly \$600,000. But this sum represents hardly a tithe of what the people of the State annually expend to educate their children.

There must be added a large sum paid for text books, and a many times larger sum for the board, clothing and time of the children.

But the pecuniary interests connected with the public schools dwindle in importance into insignificance, when compared with the habits and characters which are there being acquired. A thoroughly intelligent and virtuous people, inured to habits of self-control and perseverance, are invincible everywhere, whether in the world of mind or matter.

It is not so much the amount of money which we expend, as the character which we give to the public schools, that is all-important. Almost any expenditure of money, whether for the better superintendence of the public schools, or for securing the hearty co-operation and interest of the parents and guardians, or for training and bringing into the service more experienced and better qualified teachers, if it only serves to elevate the character of the public schools and give to the State more intelligent, virtuous and persevering citizens, is economical and judicious. If it fails to secure these results, the expenditure is wasteful.

I trust that this interest, whether it relates to the public schools, or the higher institutions of learning, will receive your careful consideration.

The report of the State Superintendent will inform you of the work done during the past two years. I commend his recommendations for legislation to your consideration.

It seems to me that an economical and efficient management of this great interest requires a uniformity of text books through out the State, and that there should be secured a decrease and consolidation of the number of small schools, which are usually intrusted to young and inexperienced, not to say unqualified, teachers.

My predecessor's recommendation of the establishment of town libraries I most heartily endorse, not alone as a means of education for the young, but also as a means of continuing the work of education and culture among those who are engaged in the active pursuits of life, and as a source of solace to declining years.

STATE LIBRARY

This library, which is very complete in the department of American law, besides being well furnished with miscellaneous works, has entirely outgrown the room set apart for it in the State House.

It is evident that some further provision for its accommodation must soon be made. It seems to me that an enlargement of the present room is almost impracticable, and that sooner or later there must be erected for its accommodation a separate fire-proof building, which should be kept open throughout the year. The library is

now of such dimensions and importance that it should be readily accessible for research and investigation at all times.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MANUFACTURES AND MINING.

The Secretary's report, with the accompanying papers, will inform you of the work accomplished during the past two years. Its work has thus far been confined to fostering the interests of agriculture. This doubtless has resulted from the fact that agriculture is the more prominent and general interest. The Board is concerned with the three great industrial pursuits of the State. Each of these industries is essential to, and more or less dependent upon the others for its best development, and should be judiciously encouraged and fostered by the State. I think that these interests are sufficiently important to warrant the continued employment of a judicious and properly qualified Secretary; that in collecting and arranging facts and statistics, making experiments, holding public meetings, suggesting the best methods and bringing them to the attention of the people, he can find ample work which can be done profitably in the interest of the State.

I would recommend a larger appropriation than is asked for by the Board, whose expenditure should be guarded by suitable legislation; and also that the State Geologist, whose official duties lead him to a consideration of the mines and minerals in the State, be made an *ex officio* member of the Board.

THE INSANE.

This unfortunate class are peculiarly the wards of the State. Bereft of reason, and frequently of friends, the State will be derelict in duty if its guardianship be not generous, active and vigilant.

I have read the report of the Commissioner with interest. It is apparently a thoughtful and carefully prepared document. I commend it to your careful perusal and study. The facts and deductions therein stated are startling. I have not sufficiently examined, and am not sufficiently familiar with, the facts and circumstances either to adopt or deny the conclusions of the Commissioner. If his conclusions are well founded, there is imperative need of immediate legislative action.

That the number of insane under treatment and needing relief should have steadily, year by year, increased from the foundation of the Asylum, while the population of the State has remained comparatively stationary, is a matter that challenges attention and enquiry into the causes of the increase. May you carefully consider this important subject, ascertaining as nearly as possible the exact facts as to the relative increase or decrease of insanity in our own State, and other parts of the country, and may your action in the premises be wise and just to the Asylum, to the State, and above all, to these unfortunate wards of the State. I commend to your consideration the suggestions of the Commissioner with reference to the enactment of safeguards against improper commitments, both to the asylum and to the county jails.

STATE PRISON AND COUNTY JAILS.

I think it may be safely asserted, after an experience of nearly a century, that the operation of our system of prison discipline, both as practiced in the State prison and in the common jails, in its effect upon the prisoner by way "of encouragement of virtue and prevention of vice and immorality," has been a failure; that the prisoner, from the effect of his imprisonment, instead of having become a reformed and better man and citizen, with inclinations towards virtue, has become discouraged, hardened, and too often hopelessly fixed in a criminal course of life. Too often has it happened that the day of his discharge has witnessed a repetition of his former criminal act, or some more heinous crime.

This, to my mind, indicates that our system of prison discipline is radically wrong in principle. The State has, and can have, no feelings of revenge towards an erring citizen. Her conduct towards him should not be such as to lead him to feel that he is an outcast from her care and protection. Neither should it be such as would indicate a disregard for his criminal act. Her treatment should be such as evinces the utmost abhorrence and detestation of his crimes, but at the same time the greatest regard and tenderest solicitude for him as a man and as a citizen.

I fear that while the State has been most active in showing abhorrence of crime, it has been lacking in earnest efforts to save the criminal from his crime to manhood and good citizenship. When any person, old or

young, is fully convinced that he is an outcast from society, and that there is no hope of his ever regaining the good opinion and esteem of his fellow citizens, he is irrevocably lost to a virtuous life.

Hope is the great stimulating motive to action and to striving for better things. When this is crushed out, the man once bad is bad beyond recovery. The tendency of our system of prison discipline, to my mind, is to banish from the convict's mind all hopes of a return to a virtuous life. Consider the treatment of the State towards this class of persons.

A young man is accused of the commission of a crime. He is at once arrested and thrust into the county jail. No person on behalf of the State visits him, save the jailer to pass in his meals three times a day, and to lock him safely in his cell, or the State's Attorney to inquire whether he wishes to plead "guilty" or "not guilty." Not a book, not a newspaper does the State furnish him with which to while away the tedious hours. If the jailer out of kindness provides reading matter for his prisoners, it is a favor and not a right. His associates may be of any degree of criminality. It is the common receptacle for all accused of the commission of crime within and awaiting their trial, as well as the place for punishment of those convicted of minor offences.

In a dim-lighted, ill-ventilated room, with nothing to do, not even, when transferred to the State Prison for safe keeping, on the order of the Governor, allowed to work, though requesting it, he passes his days and nights as best he can, brooding over his hard lot, planning ways of escape, or listening to the recital of obscene stories, or the criminal life and criminal exploits of his associates. And yet he is not a convict. He is only an accused. And this is the attempt of the State to prevent the commission of crime, most frequently the offspring of idleness, by compulsory idleness! At length he is tried. If acquitted, he goes out soured and hardened; if convicted of a minor offence he is returned to his life of idleness in jail; and if of a higher crime, put to hard labor in the State Prison. The right of the State to incarcerate him springs from the right of self preservation. By an overt act he has manifested the possession of a character which endangers the rights of others. He is incarcerated to deprive him of the power to invade the rights of others, not alone during the term of his confinement, but permanently, by removing the criminal inclination and disposition, and to deter others from the commission of crime. It would seem that of right he should remain incarcerated so long as he is possessed of the criminal inclination and disposition, and that the State should be active in its endeavors to dispossess him of these characteristics. The court is left to determine the time of his incarceration as best it may, with little knowledge of his former life, less of his criminal tendencies, and of the length of time which will be required to eradicate them.

In the State Prison he is confined in his solitary cell, or driven under keepers to his tasks, is allowed no communication with his fellow prisoners—scarcely any with his keepers; he may have a few books, if able to read, but receives no instruction, except on the Sabbath, a little from the chaplain. From his arrest to the close of his sentence, the State against whom he has offended, and which has laid her heavy hand upon him, has not extended to him a helping hand, and has scarcely spoken a cheering word. Is it a matter of wonder, then, that he broods over his hard lot, as he views it; feels that the hand of the State is not only against the *crime* which he has committed, but against *him*; that all she cares for him is to make him grind in her prison house, and that he comes from his incarceration a worse instead of a better man?

The experience of the past century, both in our State and in other States—for our State has done as well, and perhaps better, than many others—teaches, I think, very plainly and forcibly that our system of prison discipline demands a radical revision; that the jail should not be a place of imprisonment for debt or minor offences, that that class of offenders should be sent to a work-house to be established in connection with the Reform School, in which the school and reform element should have a prominent place, that the jail should be owned and controlled by the State, and should not be used for the detention of persons charged with all classes of crimes, but to one should be assigned those charged with one class of crimes, and to another those charged with another class of crimes, each having for inmates persons of the same degree of criminality, as nearly as practicable, that each should be furnished with a well selected library and some current literature, and in each should be kept a school, not of idleness and vice, but of learning and virtue. Perhaps there should be provision by which those awaiting trial, who should request it, could labor in the work house and receive a portion of their earnings.

The prisoners should be divided into classes according to the character which they manifest while under a course of discipline. A part of each day should be devoted by the keepers to instructing the prisoners in learning and in virtue, and the rest to labor, not for contractors, but for the State. In short, the State should put forth most active and earnest endeavors, from the arrest of the accused to the imprisonment of the convict, to reclaim him from a life of crime to a life of virtue and the State Prison should no longer be an institution "for the reformation, as well as the punishment, of" all offenders, *with the reformation all left out*. It may be objected that to effect such a change will cost money. Shall we stop to balance a few thousand paltry dollars in determining whether we will rescue a *man* from crime and lead him on to a virtuous life, or hold him irrevocably in the chains of vice?

I earnestly recommend a thorough revision of our system of prison discipline in the direction indicated and I commend to your careful consideration the reports of the Directors and Superintendent of the State Prison.

STATE REFORM SCHOOL.

It is a pleasure to turn from the Prison to the consideration of this topic. Although not personally acquainted with its operation and working, from all sources I hear it commended as a reformatory institution. The credit of its success is due to the wise and considerate action of former Legislatures, together with the faithful and efficient management of the officers of the institution. You need not be urged to aid by all needed legislation in perfecting and developing the great work so auspiciously entered upon.

The Reports of the Trustees and the Superintendent fully inform us as to the condition of the Institution, its wants and requirements. I would recommend the making of all appropriations necessary to carry out any judicious plans which they may have suggested. I venture to suggest whether it would not be wise in all alterations and enlargements to have in view the furnishing facilities for dividing the inmates into classes, so as to be able to classify them according to the degree of discipline or correctional treatment required.

LEGISLATION.

It is doubtless true that we legislate too much. This naturally results from our system of enacting laws. Legislators serve their brief day, and then others fill their places. On many subjects of legislation men entertain widely differing views, but each is confident that his views are correct. Hence the frequent change of this or that provision of the statute. It rarely happens that the revision of an entire subject is attempted but a single provision, here and there, is changed to meet the varying views of different legislators, which results in an inharmonious whole.

I think that a legislator should be fully persuaded of the absolute necessity for a change of the statute law before he should vote for its alteration or amendment; and then only for such alteration or amendment as will clearly remedy the evil. Hasty legislation is always dangerous. The original constitution had a special provision against it. It not only gave the Governor and Council the right to propose amendments to laws which had passed the Assembly, but, if the amendments were not concurred in, they had the right to suspend the passage of the bill until the next session of the Legislature. This was a wise provision, and its spirit ought to guide legislation under our present system.

The sessions are too short to originate, mature and perfect legislation touching large and varied interests. Such legislation must usually contain many provisions, and be more or less intricate. There is not time amid the rush of the business of the session to prepare and nicely adjust the different provisions necessary to render such law applicable and just to all the interests likely to be affected. Usually, too, the men elected to the Legislature are, as they ought to be, taken from the busy callings of life, who have had no time to mature any perfected system of legislation, which would be applicable to and affect many interests. Properly to mature and prepare such legislation is a work of time and study, and often requires the collection of facts and statistics. Eminently of this character are the laws for the assessment: of taxes, and for the punishment and prevention of crimes, a revision of which I have recommended. For such revision, and for the revision of the laws on any important subject, I would recommend that commissioners be appointed, under proper limitations and restrictions to inquire into and carefully consider the whole subject, to prepare such legislation as they may judge necessary, and to report the same, with their reasons therefor, to the next Legislature. I think this method not only a

safeguard against hasty and crude legislation, but withal economical. It will furnish business ready-prepared for the consideration of the Legislature immediately upon its organization, without spending the first two or three weeks, as has been too frequently the case, in making preparation to commence the work of the session.

The completion of the hundredth year since the independence of the State, since the adoption of the Constitution, and since the battle of Bennington, mark the coming year emphatically as our centennial year. These memorable events in a large measure determined the character of our political existence, territorially and nationally. The remembrance of them, and of the principal actors in them, should be sacredly cherished and perpetuated. Is it not eminently fitting and proper that they be recognized by some suitable observance?

I shall take no time to consider national affairs. If each State will wisely and honestly conduct its own affairs so as to insure to itself and to the nation intelligent, virtuous and enterprising citizens and public servants, national affairs cannot well go amiss.

Allow me, in closing this already too lengthy communication, to express the hope that our mutual relations may be most friendly, frank and cordial, and our mutual work honestly, faithfully and speedily accomplished.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Montpelier, October 5, 1876

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HORACE FAIRBANKS.