

Inaugural address
of

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Inaugural Message

Gentlemen of the Senate ad House of Representatives.:

In accordance with the custom of our fathers and in harmony with the constitution of our State, you are convened in General Assembly for the performance of a sacred duty, for the faithful fulfillment of which you have each taken a solemn oath.

The conditions of society are of such a nature in our State, that certain restrictions or laws are necessary for the betterment and happiness of mankind; that justice, honor and fair dealing should govern, so far as possible, the affairs of the people of our State. It is for the consideration of such laws that you are convened. It is a solemn obligation which you have sought and which has been delegated to you by your constituents.

The most perfect system of government the wisdom of the ages has devised, is that contained in our own constitution, which expressly provides that the three co-ordinate departments—the “law-making power,” the “law-executing power” and the “law expounding power”—shall be kept separate and distinct, and that neither shall attempt to exercise the rights which belong to the other.

To you, the chosen representatives of our people; is delegated the high duty and exclusive privilege of all legislation.

At this time, we should bear in mind that Vermont has no seaports or deep waterways, but, strictly speaking, is an inland State, and that certain rules or laws which might greatly work for the betterment of conditions in other communities differently situated, might prove unfortunate for the government of our people.

On the other hand, I feel that Vermont is blessed to a greater degree than any other of the New England States, and, indeed, it may well be said that Vermont, considering her size, is favored to as great a degree by nature as any state in our Union. Nature has dealt with our State in the most generous manner.

By referring to the report of our Commissioner of Agriculture, we are informed that Vermont nearly equals all the other New England States together in the production of dairy products, being the only State whose cows near equal in numbers it in habitants.

In the splendor of our scenery, our mountains and valleys, our rivers and lakes are unexcelled in variety and beauty, and these afford an asset which should be fully appreciated by our legislature, that our people may be enabled to realize all the benefits which should easily and naturally inure from this source.

In addition, we should not forget the natural wealth and extent of our stone products.

The General Assembly is the supreme law-making power of the State and within its jurisdiction there should be no interference by the Executive nor attempted influence by private interests.

A time-honored custom, however, directs that I submit for your consideration a few suggestions concerning some of the larger questions and more important problems, which as experience has demonstrated, and changed conditions now demand, should require your attention at this session, and it is in obedience to that custom that I now call your attention to and recommend for your serious and patriotic action the subjects that are to follow.

AGRICULTURE.

This small territory in which we live and which we love so dearly and of which we feel so justly proud and call Vermont, is greatly blessed in many respects, and especially in the wealth of her soil. As farmers we are just realizing this inheritance, but surely we have not availed ourselves of the best knowledge of agricultural life, for the reason that it has not been easily available.

Large sections of our State testify to this fact.

The agricultural products of our State in certain large areas can be easily doubled, but this can only be done by a greater knowledge of agricultural pursuits

Agricultural life occupies nearly two-thirds of all our people and thus is by far the most important of all our industries, and yet, if I read our legislative history correctly, less has been done to encourage and further the wellbeing of the farmer than any other considerable class.

The Agricultural College is rendering special assistance to agriculture, but its service is crippled by absence of an opportunity to illustrate fully its wisdom to the farmers; still, much has been accomplished by our college. But, if I am advised correctly, very few of its students ever return to the old farm for permanent employment. The college has been and is doing a good work, but there is a general desire on the part of our progressive farmers for some provision for more general and practical instruction. I am informed that Vermont is the only State in our union largely interested in agricultural pursuits which has not even one agricultural school where thorough, practical farming is taught. If agricultural life is in fact the most important of all our pursuits—the corner stone of our prosperity—and absolutely essential to our growth and continuance, no effort should be spared to better these conditions, and to encourage and lighten the burden of agricultural life in our State. Much has been accomplished but there are ample opportunities for improvement along these Lines.

That you may realize more fully the vast importance of agricultural life in our country, I quote briefly a few statistics, referring to the volume of farm products in these United States, which are simply beyond human comprehension.

The corn crop of our country in 1907 was worth, at the market price \$1,350,000,000; our hay crop, \$660,000,000; our cotton crop, \$675,000,000; our wheat crop, \$500,000,000, aggregating over 3000 millions in one year.

We hear fabulous reports of the wealth of our gold and silver mines, but if our statistics are correct, either one of the four leading agricultural products of our country exceed in value all the gold and silver produced in all the world each year. Such are only a few of the many facts which are available, but they are sufficient to illustrate the value of agricultural life in our country, and if two-thirds of the people of Vermont are engaged in these pursuits such facts should stimulate this legislature to attempt the most progressive legislation along these lines.

Not only would an agricultural high school course more fully develop the rich resources of Vermont and thus largely increase the agricultural products, but for those who would engage in an agricultural life it would lead to an education thoroughly practical. By this means we should in one short generation develop a class of practical and scientific farmers.

I therefore recommend that the present General Assembly establish one or more agricultural schools, with all the necessities and advantages which should pertain thereto.

THE WORTHLESS DOG.

While considering agricultural life, I cannot refrain from referring to one of the special evils or pests of farm life, viz., The Worthless Dog. Personal experience of a most disappointing character and a careful study of farm life conditions in our county for the last eight years, have convinced me that the worthless dogs of our towns and cities have driven the sheep from our hillsides and forced upon our farmers the keeping almost exclusively of cattle. One of the most successful breeders of Spanish Merino sheep in our section, after having spent twenty-five years in perfecting his flock, was compelled to dispose of the remnant and substitute cattle though not till he had shot on his premises the seventy-fourth dog chasing his sheep. This may be an unusual case, but with us there are many others suffering from the same evil.

The result of this plethora of cattle in our State has forced most of our farmers to the production of dairy products wholly, and in such quantities that less than one-third are consumed at home, and the remaining two-thirds must seek a foreign market at a greatly reduced price..

The farmer working on a large scale realizes fully the difficulty of obtaining proper help for dairy purposes but he too often is forced to this task, as he cannot safely devote his energies to the raising and herding of sheep.

The results of this evil may be more severely felt in certain sections than in others, but my attention of late has frequently been called to this subject, and the farmers in Rutland County are earnestly asking for relief.

Our laws do not and should not permit the keeping of dogs or other animals that may be a cause of serious financial injury or damage to our people.

I would recommend to this assembly the serious consideration of this subject; the continuance of a reasonable tax on dogs, the compelling of wearing a collar as at present, with the owner's name plainly marked thereon, and, in addition, requiring each owner of a dog to deposit a bond with the city or town clerk of \$100, more or less, which must be maintained at this amount with one or more sufficient sureties. Thus an injured party could at once realize for his loss, so soon as he could prove the ownership of the offending dog.

Some statute to this effect drawn properly and fearlessly enforced would rid our state of the more undesirable half of our dogs at once, and if this law could be made effective it would inure greatly to the benefit of our farmers, and to the large increase of sheep herding in our State.

In this connection, it may not be out of place for me to call attention to the failure of local officials to enforce our present laws requiring the killing of all dogs not licensed and collared. No law can be effective unless it is enforced.

FORESTRY.

During the last few years the subject of forestry has been attracting increased attention from those citizens who have the best interest of our State at heart.

No argument is necessary at this time to convince our people of the great good to be accomplished by the practice of forestry, so called. The only question is, in what manner can the best results be attained? Our first forestry Law of any importance was enacted in 1904, designed to protect our forests from fires. This law has served its purpose reasonably well, though it is thought that amendments could be made which would help to more thoroughly accomplish this object.

Our people may feel justly proud of our advancement, in this held as, with only four years' experience, there is only one State with a larger nursery than has Vermont. I learn from Professor Hawes and Mr. Hitchcock, of Pittsford to both of whom I am indebted for many facts, that there are now growing on land furnished freely by the State University about three million seedlings. It was in 1906 that the law was passed establishing this nursery for forestry seedlings, and not until 1908 did the State obtain the services of a professionally trained Forester.

In addition the State has 250,000 seedlings growing at Sharon, on land generously donated to the State by Mr. Chas. Downer for forestry purposes, and about 250,000 were sold and transplanted in 1909, and 375,00 in 1910, and it is expected that 600,000 of these young trees will be distributed in 1911. These trees are sold to our people at their cost, which is about one-half of what they would cost from any other source. They are scattered all over our State and the results in a few years will be most beneficial and far-reaching.

Our State has two reserves, and it should be the policy of the Legislature to provide a method by which the State can acquire, through the State Forester, additional lands, by gift if possible, and occasionally by purchase.

Our people do not appreciate as they will, the influence of these reserves upon the public health, upon the local lumber market, upon the beauty of our scenery and upon our water supply. They serve all these purposes and others, whose influences will be potent in the development of our State.

I respectfully ask your consideration to two practical questions relating to forestry.

First. Can the method of taxing the timber lands of our State be revised, so as to encourage the preservation and growth of our forests?

Second, Shall the State share in a small way in protecting our larger lumber tracts from fires?

The suggestion has been made that the State should establish fish and game preserves in different parts of the State, upon which fish and game can be allowed to propagate freely scattering thence over the surrounding country. I see no reason why some of the money available for the protection of fish and game and some of the money appropriated for forestry cannot be united in the establishment of forest reserves which shall at the same

time be “game preserves,” and under the joint control of the State Forester and the State Commission of Fish and Game.

CATTLE COMMISSION

One of the most difficult problems of state government is that which pertains to our Cattle Commission and more especially to tuberculous cattle, as the vast amounts of money being paid to the owners of cattle slaughtered by order of our Cattle Commission during each biennial term is an enormous drain on our state treasury and there are grave doubts as to the amount of benefit that has been realized.

During the year ending June 30, 1909, there was expended by this Commission nearly \$100,000, of this nearly \$80,000 was paid to owners of tuberculous cattle killed by order of your Commissioner. By the Auditor's report I note also that for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1910, there was paid on orders by your Cattle Commissioner \$50,128.67. This second amount is much less than for the previous year, as the Legislature of 1908 limited the amount that could be used annually for this purpose to \$40,000 and the amounts received from the slaughtered animals, making the total expenditure for this period, as stated, \$50,128.67. These expenditures have continued for twelve years, and still the amount expended during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1909, exceeds any other for a like period.

The details of this Act of 1908 are without doubt familiar to you and I will not further consider them. The thought which prompts my reference to this subject is, are you exterminating this dreaded disease by the means now employed? The figures taken from the Auditor's report would not indicate this result. Are you not continually spending this large amount annually without any apparent results in diminishing this disease? You are all aware that in this age human beings are made immune to certain diseases. The vaccine virus is used the world over as protection from small pox. Antitoxin obtained from the horse an animal immune to ditheria, has saved thousands of human lives. Is there not some form of virus that can be obtained which, under favorable conditions, may render our cattle kind immune to tuberculosis? Many of our progressive farmers are already advised that there is such a virus, that is being thoroughly tested at this time, and in fact a few in our State are using a virus with very satisfactory results. If our efforts to eradicate the “white plague” from our cattle kind by the methods adopted and executed during the last fourteen years, and after an expenditure of many hundreds of thousands of dollars in killing the old cows, have not proved effective, is it not opportune for you to consider some efforts beginning at the other end of the line? If the calves can be made immune and kept so, in a few years the conditions as to this affection ought to be greatly improved and the disease nearly eradicated.

Common business sense demands that this enormous annual expenditure shall cease unless it can be demonstrated more conclusively than has yet been done that we are obtaining commensurate results.

There is another thought which I wish to present and which is intimately connected with this subject, viz., the care of our cattle. Are our present methods the best, realizing how susceptible cattle are to tuberculous infection? The custom generally prevailing is to confine the cattle in stables too often poorly ventilated and with deficient light, and in sufficient numbers to be most injurious, so that if there was the slightest opportunity to contract the disease, they would all become affected.

Cattle were evidently created for outdoor life; their hoofs, thick skins and heavy coats all indicate this fact. It is a well known fact that cattle kind readily contract tubercular disease; and why should not the same treatment be applied to them that benefits human kind? It is now a well established fact that the most efficient remedy for this affection in human beings is pure air, and should not the same conditions apply to our cattle? Our progressive farmers are awakening to this fact and more good sheds opening to the south or east are being used every year. If our State is to join with the farmers in an effort to free Vermont cattle of this plague, should they not exercise good judgment and the care of their cattle?

I therefore recommend to this assembly that your Cattle Commissioner be authorized to thoroughly investigate the subject of rendering calves immune, with power to furnish and use the virus until a thorough trial has been made, at the expense of the State.

I also recommend that you clothe such commissioner with authority to prescribe rules regulating the care of cattle where the State furnishes aid, particularly in requiring the use of comfortable sheds, well—ventilated

stables and pure water. If the State is to assume some portion of the expense of keeping cattle free from disease, it should have a certain supervision in the care of these animals.

I have tabulated and hereto attach a detailed statement of the expenditures since July 1, 1898, by the Cattle Commissioner.

APPENDIX

EXPENDITURES BY CATTLE COMMISSION FROM JULY 1st, 1908, TO JULY 1st, 1910

	Paid to Cattle Commissioners and Expenses	Paid to Sec. of Board of Cattle Commissioners	Paid for Testing Cattle	Paid for Cattle Killed in Vermont	Paid for Cattle Killed in Massachusetts	Protection of Butchers of Killing Cattle in Vermont	Total Expense
July 1, 1898 to June 30, 1899	\$1,401.14		\$3,323.63	\$3,475.50			\$8,200.27
July 1, 1899 to June 30, 1900	1,126.52		3,877.25	4,399.75			9,403.52
July 1, 1900 to June 30, 1901	682.57	\$1,107.84	3,664.97	12,646.58			18,101.96
July 1, 1901 to June 30, 1902	586.71	1,637.80	1,498.83	20,289.75			24,013.09
July 1, 1902 to June 30, 1903	849.93	1,102.39	1,718.50	13,865.40		\$160.59	17,696.81
July 1, 1903 to June 30, 1904	1,491.43	1,502.17	1,195.40	22,683.37	\$2,209.42	582.87	29,664.66
July 1, 1904 to June 30, 1905	2,279.96	1,566.50	1,342.82	23,948.80	2,847.23	1,183.53	33,168.84
July 1, 1905 to June 30, 1906	1,269.94	1,810.48	2,895.54	38,618.01	1,914.08	2,021.49	48,529.54
July 1, 1906 to June 30, 1907	3,155.26		1,289.80	23,406.33	3,463.31	2,111.20	33,425.90
July 1, 1907 to June 30, 1908	3,114.63		1,1639.68	48,670.69	1,974.84		65,399.84
						Cattle Killed for beef	
July 1, 1908 to Feb. 1, 1909	2,715.61		1,3930.32	65,931.44	1,244.46		103,018.83
Feb. 1, 1909 to June 30, 1909	1,562.74		110.34	16,773.00	191.70	559.02	
July 1, 1909 to June 30, 1910	3,848.97		10,055.13	30,301.70	1,632.77	3,713.69	49,552.26
	\$24,085.41	\$8,727.18	\$56,542.21	\$325,010.32	\$15,477.81	\$10,332.39	\$440,175.52

HIGHWAYS

The subject of better highways is fast becoming one of the most important factors in our state government and the last four years have demonstrated to a certainty the wisdom of the state's assuming the control of the betterment of our roads, It was predicted by many when Act No. 111 of the Laws of 1906 was passed creating a State Highway Commissioner who should in effect have almost complete control of our highways, that the towns would lose their interest in their roads but the contrary has been the result. The annual appropriation of Fifty Thousand Dollars by the State for highway purposes in 1906 was increased to Seventy-five Thousand Dollars in 1908; and for the towns to benefit by this appropriation, they must contribute a like amount. This fact has stimulated the town officials to greater endeavors than ever before.

Our people are fast learning that our public highways are the avenues of travel and of commerce, and are nearly equal in their importance to our railroads. They are, as it were, the arteries of our social and commercial system, reaching out into our country and gathering the products of our farms and mills, and transferring them to our rail way stations and to commercial centers.

It is becoming more evident every day that good highways are indispensable to our commercial growth and wellbeing. Our people are fast learning that it is the surplus from our farms and mills which we sell that increases our wealth; it is not that which we consume; and thus the cost of transportation and distribution is an important factor; and if it is too expensive, the products of our farms and mills are valueless.

The discussion of this subject could be continued indefinitely.

The effects of good roads upon our educational life is self evident and too apparent to require discussion, Easy and cheap transportation to and from our schools is of the greatest importance and the same arguments pertain to our churches and to all social life.

The automobiles have come to stay and must be reckoned with in highway problems, and they are contributing largely to the construction and maintenance of our roads.

Great as are the benefits of good roads, I can but feel that we are adopting a safe and businesslike method in dealing with this subject. I cannot feel that our people are ready to bond our State for trunk highways, so-called. The improvements during the last four years are great and another two years will certainly show still greater progress along this line, and if the appropriation could be quite considerably increased, and I think it can be, with no fear of a State tax, the improvement will be that much the more.

The report of our Commissioner of Highways has been published and is before you, and I urge your careful consideration of the same, and especially of Mr. Gates' recommendations, the first of which refers to a larger appropriation by this legislature; and in this I earnestly concur.

TAXATION.

The effort to devise a more satisfactory system of taxation than that now on our statute books, has occupied the time of your last two legislatures to a greater extent than any other subject and still but little or no advancement has been attained. The Commission appointed in 1906, after two years of careful consideration, gave your assembly a most complete and instructive report, and this was submitted to the Legislature of 1908, but no definite results we attained, and again we find the same plank in the Republican State Platform, demanding further consideration and action as to tax reform—more particularly to remedy the evils of double taxation, so called, and, again, to “impose the burden of support of the government equitably among all men.” Surely every gentleman present has promised to use his best endeavors to accomplish this purpose. You are all agreed that some changes should be made, but it is difficult to determine how far and in what manner the evil can be remedied.

The levying of a tax upon real estate on an appraisal representing its fair cash value is generally considered as equitable, but the system of taxing all personal property at the same rate as that levied upon real estate is subjected to severe criticism. Modern authorities on taxation favor the division of personal property into such classes that varying rates may be imposed thereon.

In States wherein such classifications have been adopted, tangible personal property like live stock, stocks in trade, lumber and machinery, are usually subject to the same tax rate as the real estate; and intangible personal property like loans, bonds, mortgages and credits, which are simply an evidence of property and nothing more, are taxed at a much lower rate.

Many states have constitutions that prohibit such varying classifications, and a general movement is being made to eliminate those constitutional provisions, requiring that all property, personal and real, must be taxed at the same rate and in the same manner,

The constitution of Vermont contains no express provisions requiring an uniformity of taxation; but the question of whether or not the effect of the language employed therein prohibits uniform taxation is raised in the case of *State vs. Clement National Bank* now pending in our Supreme Court.

For nearly thirty years our State has reserved for its own revenue certain classes of property and taxpayers, and exempted them from town and county taxation, e. g., deposits in savings banks and trust companies; and the property of railroad, transportation, express, car, telephone and telegraph companies. No two of these corporations are taxed upon the same basis, and yet each contributes approximately in fair proportion to the support of the State government.

The increase, during the past ten years of substantially one hundred per cent in the amount of bank deposits subject to the State tax of seven-tenths of one per cent, or seven dollars per thousand, demonstrates the advisability of allowing a lower rate on intangible personal property than is imposed upon real estate.

A like tax on notes, bonds and other securities held by individuals would doubtless materially increase the amount reported for taxation and largely increase the revenue derived from this source. In thus reducing the tax rate on notes secured by mortgage, from the local rate to seven-tenths of one per cent, or seven dollars per

thousand, it would to that extent more than one-half relieve the evil effects of double taxation; and should also affect materially the rate of interest at which loans from individuals might be obtained.

It should be the policy of Vermont to keep her taxation laws as nearly as possible abreast of the times; to correct any feature therein that works injustice or permits evasion of taxation; and to invest listers with such reasonable powers and support as will enable them to obtain just and fair results.

Too radical legislation would be unwise, but earnest effort to bring about some of the most needed reforms in methods and administration are demanded by our people.

I do therefore recommend that the same rate of taxation be imposed upon intangible personal property like loans bonds, credits and mortgages on property within our State as that levied upon deposits in our savings banks.

I would also recommend that our statutes be so amended as to “provide for State central authority in some form that shall have a proper degree of authority and oversight of the administration of the laws in our cities and towns.” relating to taxation. Your Commissioner of Taxes might be invested with this authority or a special commission be appointed for this purpose.

LEGISLATION PERTAINING TO WAG EARNERS

Both of the dominant parties of our State have promised certain forms of what is known as labor legislation, and this Legislature will not, I trust, fail to make good these promises. I do not favor what is known as class legislation, but if the Assembly has enacted laws favoring the farmers, and the members of all the professions, there is no good reason for refusing the same or similar benefits to the wage earners, who are far less able to endure the misfortunes of life. If it is your wish to avoid the worst forms of socialism and anarchism, let us treat all classes alike—for these and many other reasons I trust the “ten dollar” exemption bill will receive your favorable consideration. Both parties are committed to the same promises as to the Employer’s Liability Bill. I will not detain you by repeating the arguments advanced in behalf of this measure. The public press has reiterated them time and again, and during the last campaign both parties were obligated to this measure, and I earnestly recommend that this obligation be kept, and that the legislation promised be enacted.

There is another labor question, so called, which I trust will receive attention by this assembly, viz:, a law providing for some equitable form of arbitration in labor difficulties, and my suggestion would be, some enactment similar to the Canadian law. I believe that some effective legislation along this line would inure greatly to the mining and manufacturing industries of our State, and to the laborers as well.

The question may arise as to the constitutionality of this latter measure, and, if so, this would be an opportune time for the consideration of this subject.

EDUCATION.

There is no subject of more vital importance to the welfare and betterment of our State than that of the education of our children. A State is not esteemed most for its wealth nor its rapid increase in population, nor for its physical attractions or natural resources, hut it is prized and respected above all for the intelligence and character of its people. That they might better promote these and render each succeeding generation better equipped for its life work than its predecessor, our fathers provided for a system of free public education.

For many years every Legislature has, endeavored to do something to strengthen our educational system, and it remains for the Assembly of 1910 to contribute to the work and offer to the children of our State the best advantages possible along educational lines.

The children are the subjects of our ambition, and the teacher is the instrument for their betterment. If the teacher is not fully equipped for the task, what are the results? My fear is that our system is the weakest where it should be the strongest, namely, in its teachers in our rural schools.

Vermont employs a larger percentage of untrained teachers than any other New England State, the percentage being about 78 percent, more than three-fourths of our teachers, then, are untrained. In Rhode Island, on the other hand, less than one-third of the teachers are not trained for their work.

Our fathers were proud of the fact that as to the education of her children, Vermont of all the States in the Union, was second only to Massachusetts, but today we have fallen to a discreditably low rank and are on a level with some of the Southern states.

These facts do not make pleasant reading, but they are facts, and we cannot alter them by closing our eyes. The time has come when we must look the situation squarely in the face; find out the trouble and begin to remedy it *at its source*.

Upon one thing, all who have investigated the educational conditions in Vermont are agreed, viz.: if we are to keep pace with the progress of other States, and indeed if we are not to actually retrograde, the standard of our rural schools must be decidedly raised. And the standard of these schools depends largely upon the efficiency of the teachers in them,

The trouble at present is not in the character and natural ability of the teachers in our country schools, but in their lack of training. Reference has already been made to the very large percentage of untrained teachers in our schools today. In this age of special training for every pursuit, there is not another walk in life here such a condition would be tolerated, and yet the education of our children lies at the foundation of all progress

The difficulty with our present situation, which at once presents itself, is the lack of training facilities for those who wish to become teachers.

Our normal schools, three in number, draw their pupils to a large extent from the communities immediately around them, and the effect is shown in the percentage of trained teachers in the rural schools in different parts of the State.

For example, in Rutland County, where one of the Normal Schools is situated, excluding the city of Rutland and West Rutland, the percentage of trained teachers is four times as great as in Windham County, which has no normal school excluding Brattleboro and Rockingham. A large percentage of the pupils in attendance at each of the Normal Schools is drawn from the town in which they are situated and the towns immediately around them.

It is no more than fair, then, to other parts of the State, and it is absolutely necessary, if we are to bring our schools throughout the State up to anything like an even standard, provision should be made for training teachers in each section.

Excellent results have been obtained in other States by establishing training courses in connection with high schools and academies under the supervision and direction of the State Department of Public Instruction.

I therefore recommend that the Legislature appropriate a sufficient sum to establish training courses in the principal high schools and academies, where the towns' are willing to co-operate by contributing in a proper proportion to their maintenance, giving to the State the immediate control and supervision of these courses and the power to determine where they shall be installed and how long continued. With but little expense, the number of trained teachers in the rural schools by this means can be easily doubled, if not increased fourfold. School Boards will pay better salaries, if they are sure of competent teachers, thus helping to overcome another difficulty we have to contend with in the low wage scale for teachers. Our people will be only too willing to pay for results when they can be obtained.

But these teacher training courses should not be our only reliance. We need to supplement these with a high grade normal school, centrally located, and completely under state control one which will set the pace for the entire State, and which will take rank with the best schools of the kind anywhere. The best is none too good for us where the education of our children is concerned.

The State is at present contributing to the support of three normal schools in different parts of the State and has been doing so for more than 30 years. From 1870 down to 1908 every committee appointed to report upon the matter, so far as I have been able to learn, has unanimously found that the present system has proven inadequate to the State's need,

In 1870, only three years after the establishment of the first school, the *board of education*, composed of Governor Hendee, Hon. Merritt Clark, Rev. William A. Robinson, D. D., Hon. Jonathan Ross, L. F. Ward and Prof. George Webber, made a comprehensive report, from which I quote as follows:

“It became obvious to the Board that the present system, while accomplishing all that could reasonably be expected of it, was proving itself entirely inadequate to the wants of the State, and as a permanent system was unworthy of any State that aimed to make liberal provision toward public education.

“In fact it seems to have been taken for granted from the outset that the present plan was to be only an entering wedge and that something larger and better was of course to follow,”

Thirty-six years subsequent to this report the Legislature of 1906 appointed a Committee, consisting of Hon. Frank L. Green, Supt. Clarence H. Dempsey, Bert L. Stafford, Hon. L. Ethelbert Sherwin and Willis N. Cady, to investigate and report upon the present condition of our State Normal Schools. To their report I would respectfully call your attention. Their conclusion was:

“The present Normal Schools do not adequately meet the educational needs of the times.”

Following this the Legislature of 1908 passed an act providing for a commission to investigate and prepare plans for a central normal school. The commission for some reason was not appointed, but the act shows the conclusion of the legislature.

It is apparent that the State needs something more than the present normal schools can give.

The appropriations have doubled in the last ten years and now amount to \$30,000 a year, yet the number of graduates for the *decade* has not appreciably increased and in two schools has in fact decreased.

In considering the question of increasing our normal school facilities, it should also be borne in mind that the plant and buildings of the present normal schools are owned and controlled entirely by self-perpetuating boards of trustees in two instances, and by the *principal of the school* in the other. The State has no ownership in or control over them. This is probably one thing that has held back their proper development, or common business sense forbids the State to make any large investment to improve property which it does not own and control absolutely.

I recommend that this Legislature appropriate a suitable sum for the establishment of a centrally located State Normal School to be entirely under the control and ownership of the State, and that a board be appointed with power to locate and establish the same. For this board, we should be content with only the very best qualified men in our State in educational matters who will make their decisions entirely unmoved by *partisanship* or *local prejudices* and with an eye solely to the good of the whole State.

The question is not, as it has often been made to appear, the abolishment of present normal schools, but the increase of normal facilities. It stems to be the consensus of opinion that the State ought to be doing more than it is, and that the first step is the establishment of a *State “Normal School.”* The present normal schools may also be continued, if they can prove their efficiency and fill a place in our educational system, as I hope they can.

The school at Randolph, by reason of the lack of pupils near by, is the least able to do good normal work and has the least prospect of improvement. On the other hand, it is admirably situated for an agricultural high school, and, if the State could obtain ownership of the property, I should favor the establishment there of a completely equipped first class agricultural school,

I leave these matters to your careful consideration and simply ask that the subject be approached with an open and unprejudiced mind and in a broad and patriotic manner. Being careful to do no injustice, let us see to it that nothing prevents us from giving our children the very best advantages that can be had,

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

Some few weeks since, in accepting the high honor which the last Republican Convention conferred upon me, I referred briefly to the proposed constitutional amendments, and, at that time, fully concurred with the suggestions submitted by the committee appointed to consider this important subject.

It is not my purpose at this time to discuss in detail the eight amendments proposed. They have been fully dealt with in the public press, during the last two months, and the arguments pro and con must be too familiar to you all to warrant further reference at this time.

I appreciate fully the sacredness of our constitution, of how carefully it should be guarded and with what wisdom and deliberation we should act in changing the same. I also realize that we are living in another age from that in which our constitution was framed and thus subject to changed conditions—that the constitution is the work of man and not infallible, I earnestly recommend a careful consideration of each of the eight amendments.

I would also recommend an amendment that would so govern our election of town Representatives and county Senators that, at each session of our Legislature, at least one-third or one-half of their number shall have had legislative experience. I know of no amendment that would more efficiently hasten the work of the General Assembly.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

These are subjects which should receive your earnest attention. They have been kept before the public most industriously in our State for many months past and it is unnecessary for me to detain you with a recital of the arguments pertaining to these measures, stating in what manner proper legislation on each of these subjects would inure to the betterment of our people or for the commercial interests of our State.

CONCLUSIONS.

I wish to emphasize the importance of early consideration of such questions as are of state-wide significance.

You will serve best the freemen of Vermont if you at once undertake the solution of those broad questions, which will promote the interests of the great body of our people.

The work of the session ought to be accomplished as quickly and speedily as is consistent with a good understanding and deliberate consideration of the problems you attempt to solve.

You will accomplish most in my judgment by undertaking little. In the short space of a single session, you will find it impossible to correct all the mistakes of the past and enact all the wise legislation which the present and future require. Let me advise, then, that from this day until adjournment you direct your entire attention to a few large matters that imperatively demand your consideration and action.

I believe I voice the sentiment of the State in asking that your efforts be so continuous and so well directed that this General Assembly may complete its work and adjourn before Thanksgiving Day.

During your service here, those you represent expect you to put aside all personal considerations and bend every energy to serve in word, thought and deed, the public weal.

Irrespective of party affiliations, the men of Vermont have given expression to their views upon many questions about which there is a general consensus of opinion. They will expect from you nothing less than that you see these measures written into the laws of this session. They will exact from you little more. If you fulfill their expectations, they will approve your action, and the coming years will demonstrate that Vermont through your efforts has made substantial progress, political, moral and material.

The Governor having concluded the reading of his message, withdrew, and the Joint Assembly dissolved.

GUY W. BAILEY,
Secretary of State, Clerk.