

Inaugural address
of
Redfield Proctor
As it appears in the
Journal
of the
Joint Assembly
Biennial Session,
1878

Thursday, October 3, 1878
Inaugural Address

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

We are assembled in accordance with the provisions of the constitution to assume the duties of legislation as representatives of the people. It is their right and duty to demand of us the utmost fidelity to their interests; and a just appreciation of the great trusts they have placed in our charge must impress us with a deep sense of our responsibility to them, and inspire us with the highest resolve to quit ourselves like men. In this spirit let us approach the business of the session.

STATE FINANCES.

The State is virtually out of debt. The amounts due the Agricultural College fund and due towns on account of the United States surplus fund, are not properly chargeable to liabilities in arriving at our present financial standing. Omitting these, therefore, there was on the first day of August, a balance of \$87,934.74 in the treasury, after providing for unexpended appropriations and for the payment of the last of our war bonds, which mature on the first day of December next.

This is a proud record for our little State. In the great war of the rebellion, our soldiers made the name of Vermont respected and honored, by friend and foe. And now the State has shown herself not unworthy to be the mother of such sons by promptly and ungrudgingly meeting the last dollar of her war obligations, and has illustrated the self-evident truth, that the greatest measure of public faith and honesty goes hand in hand with the truest courage and patriotism.

The following is the statement of the treasurer, showing the assets and liabilities of the State at the close of the last fiscal year:

LIABILITIES.

Due towns U.S. surplus fund	\$11,519.96
Due on soldiers' accounts	11,074.35
Due suspense account (outstanding checks)	1,833.80
Bonds due December 1, 1876	6,500.00
" " December 1, 1878	135,500.00
	\$199,928.11

ASSETS.

Due on tax of 1877	\$8,731.62
Cash in Treasury and in Banks	186,111.27
	\$194,842.89

Excess of Liabilities	\$5,085.22
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Deducting from the Liabilities the amount due Agricultural College Fund, and due towns on account of U.S. Surplus fund, not probably to be called for for several years, the Liabilities would be	\$ 52,908.15
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Leaving a balance of Assets of	\$141,934.74
from which to pay unexpected appropriations, estimated to be paid within ninety days	\$ 54,000.00

Leaving a balance of	\$ 87,934.74
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toward expenses of the current fiscal year, including expenses if a Legislative Session.

The Treasurer's biennial report gives a detailed account of the transactions of his department for the past two years.

STATE EXPENSES.

I should regret to have you draw any argument from these facts in favor of an increase of State expenses. However desirable it may appear to make more liberal expenditures for some of our public institutions and for many other purposes, the present is not a favorable time for such increase. Our towns are, most of them, in debt, many of them very heavily, and it is a plain duty, so far as is consistent with the necessary requirements of the State, to relieve the people of State taxation and enable them to pay off their town debts. The amount of this indebtedness on the third day of March, 1868, exclusive of the United States Surplus Fund borrowed, was, in round numbers, one and a half millions, or nearly the same as the total amount of State debt at the close of the war. On account of heavy debts since contracted by towns in aid of railroads, the amount is probably quite as large now. Individual indebtedness also is large. The returns of labor, capital and business enterprise of all kinds, are comparatively small. There are strong signs that we are entering upon an era of low prices the world over. The great improvements in machinery of all kinds; the opening of hitherto semi-barbarous countries to the influence of civilization, and the consequent stimulus to production; the advance in means and methods of transportation and exchange of commodities between different countries; the rapid increase in the general facilities for doing business, and many other signs all point in this direction. Such a period is one of hardship where taxation is high; where public and private extravagance are the rule, where the laws are not ample for the protection of persons and property, or prompt and inexpensive in execution. But under favorable conditions, a period of comparatively low prices may be one of great prosperity, stimulating industry and commerce by opening new markets to the successful competition of cheap production.

Heavy taxation drives away capital, clogs the wheels of business, and falls with severest weight on those least able to bear it. It not only takes from them directly their proportion under the law, but it increases the cost of articles of consumption so as to levy an indirect tax upon each individual.

Recent statistics show that the prices of our farm products, of labor, and most articles that go to make up the cost of living, do not vary materially from what they were in 1860. Our population has increased less than ten per cent., and our grand list less than five, since that time. Is there any good reason, then, why our State expenses should be more than doubled?

Let me call your attention to some facts from the report of the "Joint Special Committee, relating to the increase of State expenses," made at the last session, and which you will find in the appendix to the Journals of both the House and Senate. I would ask you to make careful examination of that report, and would suggest the appointment of a committee at this session on the same subject. The figures give the State expenses for the years 1860 and 1876, but a comparison with 1878 would, I fear, be even more unfavorable:

	1860	1876
Court Expenses	\$65,570.24	\$133,583.92
Salaries and Expenses of State Officers.....	5,413.31	13,228.13
Printing.....	2,053.07	7,563.58
Care of Deaf, Dumb, Blind, Insane, etc.....	12,474.17	28,212.02
Agriculture	1,832.45	2,635.98
Militia.....	2,787.00	15,759.12
Education	6,879.13	17,954.97
Fish Commissioners.....		751.67
Library.....	1,420.40	1,749.22
EXPENSES SESSION.		
Debentures of General Assembly	28,328.40	48,833.00
Secretaries, Clerks and Reporters	1,075.00	2,700.50
Legislative Printing.....	6,518.51	22,593.86

The Auditor's report for 1878 was received too late for careful examination. At my request, however, the Auditor has furnished me the items which show an increase of court expenses in 1878 above 1876 of over \$35,000.00.

I am assured that often the entire sum of the verdicts of a term of court fall far short of the expenses of the term to the State. *No further comment on court expenses is needed.* I have omitted in the foregoing tables, some items of extraordinary expenses, and other having no bearing on the general question; but the grant total gives the State expenses for 1860, \$142,982.48, and for 1876, with the expense of a session of the Legislature added, \$326,726.96; without the session expenses, \$244,954.73.

Dividing the expense of a session, as they are now biennial, and adding one-half to the other expenses for 1876, gives \$285,840.84, or \$124.12 less than the double expenses of 1860, which included the entire expenses of a session.

The State tax for five years preceding the war averaged sixteen and one-fifth per cent., and this included large appropriations for building the State House. I think the State expenses ought to be so reduced that a tax of twenty cents will be ample, and still do all we are now doing, and more if required, for our public charities, schools, and all objects worthy of our attention. I do not mean to say that all of this increase of expense is unnecessary, by any means. Some of it is called for by additional duties and responsibilities thrown upon the various departments; and in other cases it is manifestly just and reasonable. But quite a part of it has come from the general tendency of the time towards liberal expenditures which has pervaded all public, as well as private affairs. It would transcend the proper limits of this communication, to attempt discussion of special methods of retrenchment. The whole matter is in your hands, and the means of any further information you may desire, at your command.

The greatest single item, that of court expense, is in my opinion, of sufficient importance to warrant the attention of a Special Committee to that point alone.

I am glad to refer with approval to the discussion of the subject of trials by jury and referees in the first message of my predecessor. If parties were compelled to bear a larger share of the expenses of jury trials, it might diminish the amount of petty litigation, and lead to more references under the Statute, and do no violence to the cause of justice. Possibly, if no satisfactory remedy is found, it may be advisable to appoint a commissioner, who shall investigate the whole subject of court expenses and report at the next session, recommending such changes of the Statute or Constitution, as the case demands.

ASSESSMENT OF TAXES

“Every member of society hath a right to be protected in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property, and therefore *is bound to contribute his proportion toward the expense of that protection.*” To secure this result of equality of taxation to the utmost possible extent, is the plain demand of this clause of the Constitution which I have quoted.

To rehearse the evils of our present system, or rather, what is worse, of our administration of it, would be to repeat what my predecessors have often said, and what every citizen has seen and felt. Not the least among these evils is the corrupting influence of constant evasions of law. You understand the subject fully, and the responsibility for failure to apply a remedy must rest with you. Several measures have been proposed to secure a just and equal assessment. At the last session a bill passed the House, (House bill No. 271,) requiring each tax-payer to swear to his list. The laws of Massachusetts and Connecticut have a similar provision. The reduction of State expenses and the direct payment of any special taxes to the State will so far, but only to a limited extent, remove the object for undervaluation as between different towns, but would have no effect to relieve the inequalities among the tax-payers of the same town.

The law prescribed that the assessment of the road-bed of railroads shall not exceed \$2,000 per mile. I am informed, that in at least one case the equalizing board raised the valuation of a town, where the listers had set the road-bed at the limit of \$2,000, and that the railway company will contest the validity of the list on this ground. If there is a defect in the statute, it should be remedied.

SAVINGS BANKS.

These institutions are assuming important proportions in our State, holding now over eight millions of deposits. The amount in 1860 was a little over one million. They have been so well managed, that during the last few years of financial trouble, while some of the neighboring States have suffered severely from the reckless and dishonest management of these institutions, our savings banks have all stood firm, and none of them have suffered serious loss. This result, however, is due more to the honesty and skill of their direction, than to our legislation. They are all acting under special charters, differing considerably in their provisions. They are not to any extent restricted as to *where* they may make loans. All of them loan part of their funds on mortgage. Some of them have made these loans on real estate at the West. These, so far as I can learn have been carefully made and have yielded larger interest than could have been realized from other sources. The fundamental idea of a savings bank is absolute safety, though at some sacrifice of interest and dividends. It seems to me unwise and unsafe to lose sight of this in our legislation. We cannot always depend upon having honest and capable men in charge; and even such men, unless restricted by law, will be more liable to mistakes. We know what wide-spread disaster the failure or even suspension of a savings bank would, cause in its vicinity, and among a class who have earned their money by years of hard labor and close economy, and who would all the more keenly feel its loss.

I recommend a general law placing all savings banks under the same general provisions and restrictions, and repealing so much of their special charters as conflicts therewith, but requiring no change of investments already made. Then in granting future charters little would be necessary except to name the bank, its corporators and location, – referring to the general law for its rights and duties. This policy of a general organic law is being adopted by other States, and I would refer you among others to the new law of Massachusetts, passed at the session of 1876, also to the law of New York of 1875, both of which embrace some wise provisions, which the costly experience of those States had shown to be necessary.

Such legislation would ensure uniformity and the greatest measure of safety, for if the general law were found to be defective, it would be corrected; but few look for defects in a special charter unless to take advantage of them.

Some charters have no restrictions upon investments, except that “the deposits shall be used and improved to the best advantage.”

I will not express an opinion as to whether a general law should allow loans on Western mortgages; but if they are permitted, the banks should be required to report the amount of such loans separately from home loans on mortgages, so that depositors could know precisely the nature of their investments. Of course in case of a panic or *run* upon a bank, money could not be realized upon these remote mortgages as readily as upon home loans, nor would any showing in regard to them pacify importunate depositors like an exhibit of securities in their own neighborhood, which they would know, or could readily learn all about.

Any laws you may see fit to enact in regard to savings banks should be carefully considered, and with a view to promote and extend their usefulness, and to strengthen the public confidence, to which they are now so well entitled by their honest and judicious management.

The inspector of finance seems to have made a thorough examination of these institutions. He reports that in a few instances directors of national banks are trustees of savings banks, in violation of section thirty-seven, chapter eighty-six, General Statutes, and that some banks have exceeded the law in the character and location of some of their investments, or in loaning to their officers. It is not probable that any of these violations have been with wrong intent, and no loss, so far as known, has resulted from them, but they ought not to be allowed to continue, and I have requested the inspector, if they are still in violation, to report the facts in each case.

The inspector recommends a direct tax of not more than one-half of one per cent. on deposits, in lieu of all other taxation. This is in accordance with the system commonly, if not universally, adopted in other States. It is a matter for your careful consideration, and I commend the remarks of the inspector on the evils of the present system to your attention.

SPECIAL LEGISLATION

It may, at first view, seem unimportant in our state to object to this class of legislation, but it is only by a stern exclusion of every minor evil that we can attain to the symmetrical whole of a well regulated State. It is our plain duty and no injustice to our constituents, where the objects they seek can be obtained under the general law, to require them to use it.

The mere habit of listening to the appeals of private interests is a pernicious one in legislation. Where the immediate case carries no direct harm with it, it may still be an entering wedge, or precedent for what will prove a positive wrong. We have a general railroad law. If this is not ample for the promotion of every legitimate enterprise, let us make it so. We have a general enabling act allowing towns to aid in the building of railroads. If this is to remain the settled policy of the State, is it not the part of wisdom and prudence to fix upon the limit to which this aid may be granted, and then adhere to it? We have also general laws for the organization of corporations, changing names, and the like, to which those asking private acts for these purposes can be referred, and if the general law is inadequate, its provision can be extended. We have already made progress in this matter. Compare the Session Laws of 1872, 1874, and 1876. The latter year-book has only 207 pages of private acts against 481 in the former, or less than one-half. At the session of 1874 over fifty bills of this character were rejected, which if passed, as had been the previous custom, would have made the volume as large as that of 1872. The mere cost to the State of printing this private matter is no inconsiderable item.

As an example of how readily improper provisions in special acts escape notice in their passage through the Legislature, I will cite one act passed at the last session. Three savings banks were incorporated, and all of the charters contained the same restrictions as to the investment of their funds, substantially as follows: "All deposits shall be managed and improved by loaning on mortgages of real estate, except to an amount not exceeding one-half the amount on deposit, which said sum may be invested in the purchase of stocks of the United States, or any of them in bank stock of any bank in this State, or in any city or town bonds of the New England States, or in undoubted personal security." But in one of these acts the words "*or otherwise* as the trustees shall direct" are added, thus destroying entirely the force of the limitation.

Governor Peck, whose judicial training enables him to detect, at a glance, an improper provision, sent to the House during the one session of his administration four veto messages – all upon acts of incorporation. The people of Illinois found it necessary in 1870 to forbid, by constitutional provision, all ordinary classes of special legislation, and to declare that "where a general law can be made applicable, no special law shall be enacted." New York and Pennsylvania have since followed this example.

Every man who has a conscientious regard for pure and safe legislation would regret to see us take any step backward in this matter, and there is still room for progress in the right direction.

STATE REFORM SCHOOL

The good management and general success of this institution are so well known to the people of the State, that no special mention is needed. The land (about 130 acres) is of excellent quality, but was not in good condition when purchased. Much has been done, and is being done, to improve it, the boys doing all the labor under the direction of the farmer. I think, however, still more of the boys' labor might be employed in improving and bringing it to a high state of cultivation. The labor yields but little (about fifteen cents per day) on the work of seating chairs, and it would be economy for the State to make the farm a model of cultivation and production. No industry will exert so good an influence upon the wards of the State morally, mentally and physically as farm labor. None will stand them in so good stead in after life.

The Superintendent has frequently asked that machinery be introduced to carry on some complete manufacture. This would be much better for the boys, as it would teach them some trade, and ought to prove more profitable for the State. But a mistake in this direction would prove expensive, and before any action is taken the matter should be thoroughly investigated by sagacious business men, acquainted with various industries, who will gather the experience of similar institutions in other States, and present facts and figures, on which the State can act understandingly. More room for the boys' department is asked for. An appropriations was made two years ago for a new barn, and also to afford the additional room required for the boys raising the roof of the old gun-house. But, I understand, that after building the barn, the amount remaining was not sufficient for the contemplated changes, and was used for enlarging the house occupied by the girls. Additional

room for the boys would certainly be desirable if the number is to continue as large as at present. Whenever made, it would be true economy to do the work in a substantial manner, with due reference to safety from fire, and to have plans submitted, with bids for the material and construction complete, before making the appropriation.

The Superintendent reports the cost for the past year at \$117.29 *per capita*, which figures compare favorably with those of similar institutions in other States.

STATE PRISON

The reports of the Directors and other officers will show you in detail the affairs of this institution.

The officers seem to have discharged their duties faithfully. The Directors ask for an addition to the main building; and it is true there is not sufficient cell room for the prisoners now there. A new wing was built three years since, which was designed to be large enough to give all the room that would be required for many years to come.

The number of prisoners has increased rapidly in the last four years, –in 1874 it was 85; in 1876, 117, and in 1878, 176. We are no worse off than other States in this respect, as the prison statistics of the country show that the number of convicts in the higher prisons has nearly doubled in the last six years. We may, then, with some reason hope that the time is an exceptional one, and look with a revival of business for a decrease of crime. The Directors, in 1872 and 1874, in their reports oppose the policy of sentencing convicts for minor offenses and short terms to the prison, and their view is obviously correct.

The work house has seventy-eight cells for males, and might keep some more in less secure quarters – about one hundred in all. This will relieve the prison somewhat, and if there is no increase in crime, perhaps sufficiently.

The prison grounds embrace about three acres of land, and a large part of this is covered by the buildings. From their location and arrangement with reference to each other, any plan for an addition needs to be very carefully matured, and with the greatest possible foresight as to the probable future policy and requirements of the State, with reference to the prison.

In this connection, and at the risk of being charged with trenching upon ground outside my proper limits, I must refer to the pernicious and growing custom of filling many State offices, and especially those having charge of these State institutions, from among the members of the General Assembly. Such choice is wisely forbidden by the constitutions of some States. The evils which result from this course *here* during the session can be readily understood and appreciated without mention, and I will refer only to those lesser ones affecting the institutions themselves and the expense of supporting them. They are great business enterprises, costing the State a large sum yearly, and should be conducted in a business way. We need in their management the best judgment, technical knowledge and experience that the whole State affords, and to fill these offices in any other way is an expensive mistake. They are, however, too often distributed as personal or political rewards. We sometimes change all the officers at the same time. Every new set of officers wish to mark their term of office by some departure from the course of their predecessors.

A wiser system would secure greater economy, better discipline, and a more permanent and continuing policy in our administration of these institutions.

WORKHOUSE

The site selected by the Commissioners contains eight acres, and is in every way adapted to the purpose.

The act of 1876 required that persons convicted of certain offenses after September 1, 1878, should be sentenced to the workhouse. The cells are not dry enough for use, and are not likely to be until about the first of December next.

The courts are in session in several counties, and I would recommend an immediate change of the law, whereby such sentences may be imposed as can be carried out.

I would also recommend that a careful examination of the laws be made, to see what, if any, changes are necessary to adapt them to the new workhouse system.

A small appropriation will be required for furnishing the workhouse. The general aims and purposes of the workhouse system are deserving of all commendation; and I believe this our first trial of it, if well managed, will give beneficent results in the diminution of crime and save expense to the State.

THE PARDONING POWER.

The Constitution vests this entirely with the Governor. Under the old theory of the divine right of kings, a crime was an offense against the King alone – the Sovereign – and he alone, of course, could pardon. It was an act of personal grace and forgiveness, and an essential prerogative of kingly power.

From this source it has come to us; but in my view, the changes conditions necessarily change the whole theory of it. Under our form of government the people are sovereign. The crime is committed against them, and a pardon can only properly be granted, as an act of justice on their part, to the criminal, and with all the safeguards which surround judicial proceedings. It is a reversal of the judgment of the courts, and should never be granted to *defeat* the intention of the law, but to give it effect: as where new evidence comes to light, which if produced at the trial would have changed the verdict or sentence; or where the law, by reason of its generality or imperfections, reaches cases which would have been excepted if foreseen.

The free exercise of this power encourages crime by robbing punishment of its terror. The certainty that a just measure of punishment will follow conviction is necessary to inspire transgressors with a wholesome respect for law.

Most of the State now modify, and regulate the pardoning power of the Governor, in some way; associating others with him in its exercise, requiring public notice of such applications, the opinion of the court that sentenced the criminal, and other provisions calculated to give the proceedings the weight, publicity, and freedom from all suspicion of weakness or undue influence which characterize a judicial decision. Such provisions, too, would give a healthier tone to public feeling in regard to criminals, and do away with much of the sentimental philanthropy so often displayed.

Calling your attention to the excellent remarks of my predecessor on this subject, in his closing message, I submit to you the question, whether it is not the part of wisdom to regulate the method of the Executive exercise of this power, so far as you can under the Constitution. This course may inaugurate some better system, which can be hereafter engrafted upon the Constitution, with such modification as experience may dictate.

INSANE ASYLUM

The Commissioner says, in commencing his report, that he has not complied with the law, and that it is impossible to do so, “without you pay your own expenses.” The pay has not been reduced, nor the duties increased, since he accepted the office. He seems to have made full report of many matters of detail. Some of his suggestions are very sensible, and worthy of attention. I must, however, differ with him in his recommendation to enlarge the duties of the Commissioner, by giving him the oversight of all the insane in the State. It would, in my view, be creating a roving commission, with powers and duties which, if warrantable, can be better entrusted to local authorities, and one the ultimate expenses of which we cannot estimate.

I call your attention to the increase in the number of “public” patients, and consequent increase of expense to the State, as given in the report of the trustees. The number was 233 in 1871-2, and 295 now, while there has been a corresponding decrease in the “private” class from 273 at the former period to 164 at the present time. These figures are certainly suggestive, and I recommend a careful examination of the subject of State aid to see if its privileges are not abused. It is in accordance with our general policy, and manifestly the part of wisdom not to assume duties and obligations which can be properly left with the towns.

The commission appointed by Governor Fairbanks not having yet made their report, I will not at this time make any suggestions upon matters likely to receive their attention.

EDUCATION

I am glad to call your attention to the able report of the Superintendent. The weight of authority which his experience gives him, as well as the importance of the subject, should insure a careful consideration of the ten specific recommendations which he makes. The third seems to be a proper safeguard against unlawful payments of public money. Whether the fifth, sixth and seventh would produce in all localities the beneficial results sought for may admit of question. Whatever action you may take on the subject of education, it is desirable to give, as much as possible, a character of permanency to our policy.

DIVORCE

I call your attention to the Statutes regulating divorce. The family relation is an institution upon which rests the moral and political wellbeing of a people, and should be stable and permanent in its character. Under our present Statutes, a party who claims to have suffered by a breach of the marriage covenant in other governments or in distant States, may come into this State and, after a brief sojourn, sue for a divorce; and often causes for divorce are alleged which would be unavailing in the jurisdiction where they occurred.

I commend this subject to your careful consideration, and submit to your judgment whether the interests of the people would not be subserved by making the marriage covenant indissoluble except for those grave and flagrant crimes which necessarily put an end to the sanctity and purity of the marriage relation. Whether a decree of *separation* should not be granted for sufficient causes, which should regulate the custody of children and the apportionment of property; and whether a longer residence should not be required, and greater safeguards provided against fraudulent divorces.

AGRICULTURE

I should speak of our agricultural interests, and the operations of the board, if time permitted, but your understanding of the whole subject is so complete as to render it unnecessary.

MILTIA

The militia force of the State consists of one regiment of infantry and one battery of artillery, the units of organization of these arms of the service. The force is in a high state of efficiency in every respect, and there can be no question that the interest of the State require that it be kept so. Besides the necessity for a small force in every State, we owe some duty to the general government, which has contributed so liberally arms and munitions, to hold ourselves in readiness to respond to her call if required. The State bears in reality but a small part of the expense. The heavy share falls upon the members themselves, and much has been borne by private contributions, or has come from other sources than taxation.

REVISION OF THE STATUTES

The question of a revision of the Statutes will, no doubt, come before you. They are now much scattered, and to bring them together without revision, would make a book altogether too unwieldy. The work cannot be long postponed, and it may be well to provide for it at the present session.

UNITED STATES SENATOR

The national law requires that you proceed on the second Tuesday of the session to the election of a United States Senator, for six years from the fourth day of March next, at which time the term of one of our senators expires.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

The earnest efforts of our national executive to remove the civil service from the arena of politics; to secure a better administration of the business affairs of the nation; to establish a higher sense of official duty, and to insure the same standard of conduct in public which governs men in private life, must be productive of much good. This course cannot fail to accomplish great direct results; to exert a salutary influence upon all state and municipal governments, and to give a healthier tone to the whole political atmosphere. In support and approval of such beneficent measures, all true lovers of their country can heartily unite.

The sons of Vermont rallied to the defense of the nation in her hour of need. We thought the country worth preserving at any cost of life and treasure. The lives were freely given, and now we shall not shrink from the

full discharge of every other obligation. Vermont will not lower her standard of honor, nor under a delusive hope for present ease, sacrifice future financial stability.

The present state of affairs is the necessary result of the war with its attendant inflation and extravagance. The doctrine that a return to the *causes* of our present ills, will *cure* them, needs no refutation. There is no other remedy but retrenchment and rigid economy in national, State, municipal and individual expenses. But it is a mistake to suppose that the evils of hard times fall upon any one class or condition of men, and pass by others.

Let no man, then, seek to build up class distinctions which have no real foundation, or to excite a fancied conflict of interests. I say *fancied*, for no real one exists, or can exist among us. It is a time above all others to learn the lesson of our mutual dependence. We cannot legislate universal prosperity, though unwise laws may greatly retard its coming. Honest labor, and that” firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality,” which our State constitution enjoins, are the best remedies for the evils of the hour.

Our gratitude for the continued blessings of health within our own borders is tempered with sorrow for the affliction of our fellow men at the South. We have differed with them in the past. We have felt their prowess on many a hard fought field, and returned blow for blow. We see them now in their present fearful trial display a fortitude and devotion which command our admiration and enlist our sympathy. They are our countrymen. No matter now what our past strifes have been, the more earnest we were in contention, the quicker and stronger will the manly heart be touched at their calamity, and the more promptly come to their relief. Let them receive our deep sympathy and such continued material aid as they may need, and let our petition join with theirs that the deadly march of the pestilence may be staid.

IN CONCLUSION.

Gentlemen, let me earnestly request you to prepare an introduce your measures early, in order that they may be properly matured. In the hurrying hours at the close of a session there is no opportunity for this, and many measures fail for want of time to consider and perfect them. The growing evil of frequent adjournments for two or three days is every way reprehensible. It not only costs the State a large sum in the direct loss of time, but it distracts attention and breaks up the current of business. The same faithful attention to our duties here which we should give to our affairs at home or require from those in our employ, is the only rule to apply. Avoiding then, every unnecessary delay, let us exercise a diligent spirit in the dispatch of business, and at the same time, shun that undue haste so dangerous in legislation.

And in all our efforts let us reverently acknowledge our dependence upon the Supreme Author of all law, and seeks His guidance, that the result of our deliberations may accord with the immutable principles which He has laid down, without which our labors will be in vain.

REDFIELD PROCTOR

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Montpelier, Vt., Oct. 3, 1878. }