

Farewell address
of
Fletcher D. Proctor
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Farewell Address

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

I avail myself of this opportunity to render to you an account of the conduct of the Executive Departments of the State Government during the last two years and to submit some recommendations which my official connection with them suggests.

FINANCES.

The finances of the State are in a satisfactory condition. For the biennial term ending June 30, 1908, the total receipts for general purposes were \$2,094,228.37, leaving a surplus for the two years of \$113,128.62.

All bills are closely paid and there is in the treasury available for general purposes the sum of \$183,758.49. The state has no debt except the Agricultural College Fund Registered Loan of 1910, amounting to \$135,500, and the Huntington Fund, \$211,131.46, which was made a ledger liability by Act No. 54 of the Laws of 1906.

STATE HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

An appropriation of \$10,000 by the Legislature of 1906 has been used in making several minor changes and improvements in connection with the buildings, machinery and equipment of this institution. For the details of this expenditure your attention is called to the reports of the Superintendent and of the Board of Trustees. These improvements will be helpful in economy of administration and do much towards the comfort and welfare of the inmates of the hospital. The entire plant is in excellent condition and the expenses of the institution have been kept well within its appropriation.

Special effort has been made by the Supervisors of the Insane to prevent the care of insane persons not properly state charges being imposed upon the state. On June 30, 1906, the number of patients being cared for at the expense of the state at the State Hospital and the Brattleboro Retreat was 742. On June 30, 1908, it was 728. During the same period the number of private patients being cared for at those two institutions increased from 174 to 211.

There has been during the past few years an increase in the number of so-called insane criminals and criminally insane. Some are acquitted of crime on the ground of insanity and sent to the State Hospital for the Insane, and some become insane after they are committed to our penal institutions and are transferred there. There are now more than fifty of this class at Waterbury and the number is steadily increasing. Very few recover sufficiently to be returned with safety to the penal institutions or to be discharged. Many of them are a source of danger to each other and to those having them in charge, and in case of escape, especially dangerous to the public. The State Hospital at Waterbury was not built or equipped to safely care for this class of dangerous insane. In order that they can be properly and safely cared for and the danger of escape eliminated, it is necessary that provision should be made for making one or more of the present wards more secure or for the construction of a new ward.

PENAL INSTITUTIONS.

The sum of \$30,000 was appropriated by the last Legislature to enable the Board of Penal Institutions, with the approval of the Governor, to make necessary changes and repairs at the State Prison at Windsor. This amount has been expended and all necessary improvements made. All the buildings and equipment at this institution are now in excellent condition and no further appropriations for changes and improvements are likely to be required for many years.

The sum of \$25,000 was likewise appropriated for the purpose of repairing and improving the buildings of the Industrial School at Vergennes. One of the first difficulties that confronted the Board in connection with this institution was the want of suitable water for domestic purposes. The water provided by the city of Vergennes has been condemned by the State Board of Health as unfit for use; and the Industrial School has no suitable water supply of its own. It was decided, therefore, not to make any extensive repairs or changes until a suitable and sufficient water supply was procured. A few minor changes were made in the buildings, such as

providing necessary school rooms, repairing roofs and ceilings, and equipping the buildings with fire escapes; and an effort was made to procure a water supply for the institution by the means of artesian wells. There is every indication that a sufficient supply has thus been secured, but it did not seem best to undertake any general alterations until the amount and quality of the water has been fully tested and determined. Of this appropriation there has been expended only \$7,000.

The Board of Penal Institutions was very fortunate in securing the services of Mr. J.N. Barss as Superintendent of the Industrial School. Mr. Barss has inaugurated a policy of less restraint, placing those committed to his institution to a large extent under an honor system. The results so far obtained are most gratifying. Industrial training has also been introduced, which not only gives the boys and girls practical training and knowledge, but much improves the tone and spirit of the institution.

The last legislature placed the management of the three penal and reformatory institutions under one board, and it has resulted in their better and more economical administration. All three institutions have kept within the appropriations made for them by the last legislature, and in the case of the State Prison and the Industrial School a previous shortage has been provided for out of the regular appropriations. No deficiency or special appropriation for any of these institutions, nor any increase in the regular appropriation for their maintenance, will be necessary.

FURTHER CONSOLIDATION OF THE BOARDS GOVERNING STATE INSTITUTIONS.

It has been urged that further good results would be secured if the penal institutions and the State Hospital for the Insane were under a single management. Such a course would not, in my opinion, at this time be wise. Although the compensation does not begin to pay them for the time and service rendered, it is at present possible to secure some of the best business men of the state for these positions, because of their willingness to contribute some service to the public good. With two boards their members can perform the duties required without seriously interfering with their regular profession or business. If, however, the time and service required were doubled or materially increased the same class of men could not be secured. It would be necessary to either fill these positions with men not so well qualified or to materially increase their compensation; and I do not believe that any practical increase in compensation would secure men whose services would be as valuable to the state as are obtained under the present system. Most of the states subdivide this work more than Vermont. After a careful examination and study of this question, I am strongly of the opinion that it would be a mistake to unite the management of our penal institutions and the State Hospital for the Insane.

BOARD OF VISITORS TO STATE INSTITUTIONS.

Section 6017 of the Public Statutes provides that a board of visitors consisting of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a woman to be appointed by the governor, shall annually and as often as they deem proper visit the State Prison, House of Correction, Industrial School, State Hospital for the Insane, the Brattleboro Retreat and any private retreat or hospital for the insane within the State.

On the 10th day of May, 1907, I appointed Mrs. Perley F. Hazen, of St. Johnsbury, a member of this board. Mrs. Hazen has taken a great interest in the work of the board and her advice and counsel have been of great value.

During the biennial term 1906-1908 the board has visited the different institutions as follows:

State Hospital for the Insane, Waterbury	4
Brattleboro Retreat, Brattleboro.....	3
State Prison, Windsor.....	3
House of Correction, Rutland	3
Industrial School, Vergennes	3
Private Institutions	<u>2</u>

It has examined into their condition and management, has heard all grievances called to its attention, and has consulted and advised with the Board of Penal Institutions and trustees and officers of each institution.

BENEFICIARIES.

The Governor is by virtue of his office Commissioner of the deaf, dumb, blind, idiotic, feeble-minded or epileptic children of indigent parents. A sum not exceeding \$20,000 is annually available for the care and education of these unfortunate children. At the present time there are 62 of these children being cared for at the expense of the state. They are divided among the following institutions:

- 11 at American School for the Deaf, Hartford, Conn.
- 8 at Clarke School for the Deaf, Northampton, Mass.
- 1 at Mystic Oral School for the Deaf, Mystic, Conn.
- 8 at Perkins Institute for the Blind, Boston, Mass.
- 32 at Mass. School for the Feeble-Minded, Waverly, Mass.
- 2 at Penn. Training School for Feeble-Minded Children, Elwyn, Penn.

Previous to 1906 there was no special provision for the care and instruction of epileptic children. Under the provisions of Act No. 55 of the Laws of 1906 I made a contract with the Pennsylvania Training School for Feeble-Minded Children at Elwyn, Penn., to take and care for such children as the Governor might designate. Two epileptic children have already been sent to this institution.

The annual charge at each of the institutions where the Vermont beneficiaries are cared for is \$300 annually for each child, except at the American School for the Deaf, at which the charge is \$275 annually.

I have during my term of office visited all of these institutions except the Pennsylvania Training School for the Feeble-Minded. Many of them I have visited several times, and I believe without exception that they all give the best of care, and, as far as I can judge, excellent instruction.

The total amount expended by the state for this purpose during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1907, was \$13,251.70, and the total amount expended during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1908, was \$15,906.14.

Under examination I found that a few children were being cared for and educated at the expense of the state in these institutions that were not properly state beneficiaries. In all these cases the children have either been removed or are now cared for at the expense of their parents or guardians.

There are many feeble-minded children who could be much better cared for in institutions designed and equipped for their care and education than in the public schools. Unfortunate children of this class are in many cases a serious drawback to our public schools, and they get but little good in them. The time will come when a much larger number of these children will be cared for in institutions especially provided for them. Vermont will doubtless have at some future time an institution of her own for this purpose. If these different classes of unfortunates could be cared for to advantage in the same institution it would probably be best for Vermont to consider the erection of such an institution at this time; but as this is not practicable, and as such children can be well cared for at reasonable expense outside the state this is doubtless the best plan at present. All children for whom application has been made who seemed entitled to this assistance have been designated to the proper institution.

COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC PRINTING.

The creation by the Legislature of 1906 of the office of Commissioner of Public Printing charged with the duty of procuring all state printing and stationery supplies was a positive step in the line of economy and good business management. The establishment of this department was at first naturally attended with more or less friction. The differences have, however, largely disappeared, and to all who are to any extent familiar with the conditions as they formerly existed and as they exist to-day the great improvement in results is apparent. For example, a saving of from 15 to 20 per cent. over two years ago, amounting to between \$3,000 and \$4,000, has been effected in the printing of public documents, reports, etc., to and for the legislature.

Among the duties of the Commissioner are the letting of contracts for the printing of the state officers' reports and the oversight of their execution. Many of these reports have usually been much delayed, some of

them so much so that they have been of but little practical value. To be of real value to the legislature they should be available the very first of the session. Heretofore some of them have not been delivered until after the adjournment of the legislature. These reports this year are either already delivered or ready for delivery at this time. This improvement has largely been brought about through the efforts of the Commissioner.

The present Commissioner has displayed great tact and energy in the organization of the department and is entitled to great credit for the better service and economies already obtained. This department should be continued, and such legislation as may be needed to strengthen and facilitate its work should be enacted.

RAILROAD COMMISSION AND GRADE CROSSINGS.

No recent legislation of the State has been productive of greater good or is more heartily approved by the people of Vermont than that creating and defining the duties of the Railroad Commission and providing for the gradual abolishment of grade crossings. The greater authority and responsibility given to the Railroad Commission has worked beneficially both to the public and to the railroads.

When the rights of the people and of the railroad corporations are properly guarded so as to prevent injustice to either, it is better for both that such a commission should have positive power and the ability to enforce such orders as the public good may require. The greater the power given to such a commission the more carefully of course the rights of both the public and the corporations should be guarded, and the greater the care exercised in the selection of the personnel of the commission. The people of the state have a right to expect fair and equitable treatment in rates of transportation, both freight and passenger. They have a right to expect safe and business-like operation of trains, and comfortable and clean station accommodations. We must at the same time recognize that the operation of railroads in Vermont is attended with much difficulty and large expense and with limited earning opportunities. Both the railroads and the public must recognize all of these conditions and duties. Such was the intent of the so-called Railroad Legislation of 1906, and such I believe has been the spirit of the Railroad Commission during the past two years.

The grade crossing law was certainly a positive step along progressive lines. On January 1, 1907, there were 924 railroad highway grade crossings in the state, which shows the need of this life saving legislation. Under its operation the Commission has during the past two years already abolished or provided for the abolishment of 40 of these crossings. The distribution of the burden of expense was, I believe, fair. The administration of the law has been attended with but very little friction. The public and the railroads accept it as right, and have undertaken its execution in a most commendable manner.

The commission recommend a few minor changes to harmonize the Railroad Commission and Grade Crossing laws and to facilitate their administration. These, as far as I can judge, should receive favorable action on your part. I do, however, strongly urge against any radical change in our railroad legislation. It is fair by the railroad corporations and much better for the people of the state that changes along these lines should not come too frequently, and certainly not until conditions make it evident that they are most desirable and necessary.

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE ASSEMBLY ROOMS.

A joint resolution was adopted by the last legislature directing the State Board of Health to consider the ventilation of the House and Senate assembly rooms, and if the means of ventilation now existing were found to be insufficient, the Sergeant-at-Arms was empowered, under the recommendation of said Board and the direction of the Governor, to make any necessary alterations and additions in pursuance of the purposes of the resolution.

The State Board of Health carefully examined the State House, taking into account the present inadequate system of ventilation and what would be necessary not only to improve the ventilation in the House and Senate assembly rooms, but to provide much needed ventilation of the offices and committee rooms. Expert engineers were employed to make plans and furnish specifications covering a system of ventilation which in their opinion would meet the requirements. It was agreed that any system of ventilation should embrace the entire building and that there should be a new and improved plumbing system installed in connection with such a ventilating system. Then too, any system of ventilation now put in ought to provide for a possible enlargement of the State House, which is likely to be necessary in the near future.

The resolution providing for this improvement was so limited in its scope that it seemed to all having authority thereunder that it would be much better to defer any action until the matter could be more fully considered by this legislature and fuller authority given for the work. In the meantime the Sergeant-at-Arms has made some minor changes which it is hoped will materially improve the ventilation of the House of Representatives. I commend to your attention the report of the State Board of Health relative to this subject, made to me under date of May 18, 1908.

SAND BAR BRIDGE.

By the passage of Act No. 253 of 1906, entitled "An Act to free the Sand Bar Bridge from tolls and establish a culvert," the State assumed, in my opinion, a greater burden than the legislature at the time realized, and it is necessarily a continuing one. This bridge has been owned and maintained as a toll bridge by the Sand Bar Bridge Company under a charter originally granted in 1841. The opening of the Rutland Railroad through Grand Isle County greatly reduced the travel across this bridge and correspondingly reduced the tolls received. As the tolls decreased, the Company had less to expend, and the bridge has gradually deteriorated so as to require a considerable expenditure to put it in a safe and proper condition.

The maintenance of the bridge is of great advantage to the people of Grand Isle County, and, under present conditions, there is no other course for the state to pursue than to properly maintain it. The provisions of the act whereby the state assumed this bridge have been complied with, the culvert constructed, and the repair and maintenance of the bridge assumed by the State Highway Commissioner. Besides the \$3,000 appropriated for a new culvert, the State Highway Commissioner has already expended \$1,306.49 to make the bridge safe and passable for the present. It will be true economy to spend at once such further sum upon the bridge as will be necessary to place it beyond danger of greater loss through the action of the wind and water and at the same time make it a safe thoroughfare.

Your attention is particularly called to the report of the State Highway Commissioner covering this matter.

HIGHWAYS.

Act No. 111 of the Laws of 1906, "To improve the public roads and to establish a state highway commission," was certainly a step in the right direction, and has very generally met with the approval of the people of the state. It enlarged the authority of the State Highway Commissioner, placing him upon a salary which contemplated that he should give his entire time to this important work, provided for the appointment of county supervisors, and made an annual appropriation of \$50,000 towards the construction of permanent highways in towns making a special appropriation of from one to three hundred dollars annually for that purpose. It has secured a better supervision of the expenditure of the state highway tax and tended to prevent its diversion to the repair of the ordinary highways. Sections of highway to be permanently improved have been selected with a view to their eventually forming continuous or trunk lines throughout the state. In towns that have had a competent road commissioner very satisfactory results have been obtained. The state has now many sections of excellent and relatively permanent highway, but, what is infinitely more important, the people of the state are realizing what can and should be done to further advance this work, so vital to all the people of the state and to its material growth and prosperity.

Under the act per diem and expenses of the county supervisors and the expenses of such road engineer or expert as may be employed are paid out of the \$50,000 appropriated by the act. As the towns vote their appropriation at the town meeting the Commissioner ought to be able to fully apportion the state appropriation early in the season. He cannot, as the law now stands, do that, as it is impossible to determine until late in the season what will be necessary to meet the expenses of the county supervisors and expert assistants. These expenses should be paid out of the general fund of the state, and the entire appropriation for the permanent improvement of highways be allotted to the towns before the work of the season is undertaken. These expenses during the past two years have been about \$6,000 annually, and if paid out of the general treasury of the state the amount available for the allotment to the towns would be increased to that extent.

To further encourage and more rapidly advance the construction of permanent highways there should be an increase in the state's appropriation for this purpose. The present condition of the finances of the state fully

warrants making a substantial increase in the appropriation devoted to this work. If the appropriation is increased, section 8 of the act should be so amended as to properly conform to the increased appropriation.

Act No. 110 of the Laws of 1906 required the selectmen of a town to cause all trees and brush, with certain exceptions, within the limit of the highway to be cut and removed in the months of August and September. The removal of trees and brush is often necessary from the standpoint of safety because of the increased use of our highways by automobiles. Their removal is in some cases helpful to dry sections of road that would otherwise be excessively wet, while on the other hand, some sandy and naturally dry roads are helped by a reasonable amount of shade. Oftentimes proper trimming would accomplish all that is necessary either from the standpoint of safety or for the improvement of the road. The law has been so administered in some sections of the state as to work genuine harm to our highways and materially mar their beauty. It should either be repealed or very carefully safeguarded.

In general, the highways of the state will improve as the towns realize their opportunity and their responsibility. Under our system of government we cannot as a rule improve in these matters faster than the people see the need and insist upon the improvement. The work must to quite an extent be educational. This all important problem, however, of the construction and maintenance of permanent highways some of the towns are not meeting as they should. They do not realize sufficiently that it has to quite an extent become a state question; that the state is making very liberal appropriations, and that she must insist upon rigid compliance with all the provisions conditional upon the town's receiving any share of the state's appropriation. Through the untiring efforts of the State Highway Commissioner, the standard has been raised, and I urge upon you the importance of giving him all authority necessary to further raise the standard and make that higher standard universal.

STATE HATCHERY AT ROXBURY.

The State Hatchery at Roxbury has not during the past few years been entirely successful. A large number of brook trout fry have died, thus reducing the output of the hatchery and making the showing much less favorable. Mr. Thomas, the Fish and Game Commissioner, has used every effort to discover the cause of the trouble, securing from the Bureau of Fisheries at Washington expert examination and opinion; but no satisfactory reason for the loss has as yet been found. If the State Hatchery is to be continued, the unfavorable conditions must be discovered and remedied, and a sufficient appropriation should be made for its necessary repair and improvement. I think, however, it would be better to discontinue it. The National Government through its highly equipped Bureau of Fisheries is successfully carrying on the work of fish propagation throughout the country and is conducting some of its work in this state. It has skilled employees, equipment and experience necessary to accomplish the best results. We have not been, and I do not think can be, equally successful. A thorough enforcement of our laws for the protection of trout in our streams and such re-stocking as can be done with fry furnished by the National Government without expense to the state ought to sufficiently replenish our streams.

TUBERCULOSIS COMMISSION.

The principle duty of the Tuberculosis Commission, created by Act No. 142 of the Laws of 1904, and continued by Act No. 167 of the Laws of 1906, has been to conduct a campaign of education throughout the state regarding the best methods of preventing and curing tuberculosis. The Commission has done excellent work, has held public meetings, and through them and otherwise has aroused considerable interest. It is expected that the Vermont Sanatorium at Pittsford, besides its service to individual patients, will accomplish much along educational lines; but there is need for further work such as has been done by the Tuberculosis Commission. It is very difficult to secure competent men who can give the time necessary to make the work effective, and in my opinion the time has come when this work can be more satisfactorily done by the State Board of Health, and in connection with public meetings held throughout the state for other purposes, such as agricultural and educational meetings. The preparation and distribution of literature can also be done under its direction. I recommend, therefore, that the Tuberculosis Commission be discontinued and that its duties be committed to the State Board of Health.

COMMISSION ON SYSTEM OF STATE AUDIT.

Act No. 20 of the Laws of 1906 provided for the appointment by the Governor of two persons, who with the Auditor of Accounts, were constituted a commission to examine into and install a system of bookkeeping and accounting in the office of the Auditor of Accounts. The state was most fortunate in securing the services of Joseph A. DeBoer of Montpelier, and Olin Merrill of Enosburg Falls, to perform this service with the Auditor.

This commission made a very careful examination of the conditions in the Auditor's office, considered the best systems in vogue in other states and institutions, and gave much thought to practical conditions and requirements as they exist in Vermont. Their report is in every respect very complete and should be carefully read by every member of the legislature. Their recommendations in every instance as far as our statutes permit, have been put in force and are now in full working order in the Auditor's office. A few changes in our statutes as recommended by the report, are necessary to make the system complete and in full accord with the recommendations of the commission, and they should be enacted.

I especially call your attention to the recommendation of the commission that an adequate appropriation be made for sufficient clerical service in the Auditor's office, and that the Auditor of Accounts and every one connected with his office should devote their entire time to the work. With the necessary increase in the state's business and the attendant increase in the number of departments in our state government, the Auditor of Accounts is a most important official. In my opinion good business requires that he should devote his entire time to this work, and that the salary should be sufficient to secure and retain the services of a thoroughly qualified man.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

The State Board of Agriculture now consists of the Governor, the President of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, ex-officio, and three members appointed biennially by the Governor. Their principal duty consists in holding public agricultural meetings throughout the state, though considerable clerical and general office work devolves upon the Secretary. One competent man can do all the work now performed by the Board better than five. There should be a Commissioner of Agriculture appointed by the Governor. He should be a man of executive ability, competent to do such office work as is required and to arrange for the public meetings, securing such local or outside speakers as might be most efficient to make them a source of real practical help to the farmers of the state. The tendency in other states has been to reduce the number on boards of agriculture, and wherever that has been done it seems to have resulted in greater efficiency and better service. While the saving in expense may not be large, I believe results would be better and the administration of this department more business-like.

CATTLE COMMISSION.

During the biennial term ending June 30, 1908, the state expended on account of tuberculosis in cattle \$98,825.74. Of this amount \$79,626.35 was paid to the owners of cattle slaughtered by the order of the Cattle Commissioner. As far as I have been able to ascertain no other state expends as large an amount for this purpose. Many states limit the appropriation and in the case of most state the amount has been very much less than that expended by Vermont. Our statute does not limit the amount that may be expended and the Cattle Commissioner has no discretion in the matter. It is his duty to respond to all calls that may be made to test cattle within the state.

This work should be continued, but the state is not at present receiving benefit commensurate with the large expenditure she is making for this purpose. Under the law the state pays 75 per cent. of the appraised value of cattle condemned, \$50.00 being the limit at which any animal condemned to be slaughtered can be appraised. The owner of condemned cattle should bear a larger proportion of the loss, and greater care should be taken to safeguard the interests of the state in the appraisal of cattle. Then, too, the present system of testing cattle only when requested to do so by the owner is not the right one. It may reduce the number of tuberculosis cattle in Vermont, but the disease can never be eliminated until testing is compulsory. The untested herds are a continuing source of contamination and to a great extent nullify the large expenditure made by the state. The cattle commissioner should, at least, be given discretion to require suspected herds to be tested.

SAN JOSE SCALE.

Section No. 283 of the Public Statutes provides that "The Governor may use such means as in his judgment are necessary to exterminate the San Jose Scale and the Gypsy and Brown Tail Moth wherever and whenever they may appear in the State."

I secured the services of Professor William Stuart, Horticulturist at the Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Vermont, who has made careful examination wherever any suspicion of the existence of these pests has been reported. Professor Stuart has found only two localities in the state where any serious trouble existed. The first was an orchard in Charlotte, where the San Jose Scale existed to quite an extent. Mr., Emerson, the owner of this orchard, voluntarily destroyed at his own expense such trees as were to any extent infested with the scale, and also provided for the careful spraying of other trees. A few months ago a report came to Professor Stuart that a young orchard belonging to the Kurn Hattin Homes at Westminster was affected with the San Jose Scale. An examination of the orchard showed it was quite seriously affected. The authorities at this institution promptly destroyed all infested trees at their own expense. Upon a later examination Professor Stuart found another orchard belonging to this institution in a very bad condition as a result of this scale. This orchard has not been destroyed, but it is expected that the authorities will take the same course with reference to it as they did with the orchard where the difficulty was first discovered. A few weeks since some of the San Jose Scale were found in a few trees of mountain ash in the town of Charlotte. These trees were immediately destroyed by the owner. This covers all of the San Jose Scale that Professor Stuart has been able to discover.

Reports have come to us of the existence of the San Jose Scale and the Gypsy and Brown Tail Moth in other places, but investigation by Professor Stuart has failed to work very careful attention, investigating either by correspondence or personal visit all suspicious cases. The entire expense of this work to the state for the biennial term has been only \$46.00. In the opinion of the Attorney General the law does not provide for the reimbursement of owners for the destruction of their orchards.

Fruit growing is decidedly on the increase in Vermont, in some sections of the state being the principal agricultural income. The number and size of orchards are increasing; care and study are producing better results; and it is a growing source of income to our people. The state should encourage the extension of fruit growing within her borders, and to this end it is of the utmost importance that provision should be continued for guarding against these pests.

From time to time new pests to trees are appearing, and I recommend that section 283 of the Public Statutes be so enlarged as to cover any destructive pests to fruit or shade and ornamental trees. I believe also that the duty in this regard now put upon the Governor ought in the first instance to be entrusted to the Forestry Commissioner or Board of Agriculture, with authority in the Governor to limit or control the amount of expenditures therefore according to the emergency.

FORESTRY.

Approximately 60 per cent. of the area of our state is forest or wild land, and this vast area ought to be made more productive and of greater value to its owners and the people. Large tracts of former pastures or even tilled fields are now gradually being reclaimed by nature and are growing up to young trees. While this has been a source of regret and apprehension in the past, and has led to much discussion as to what should be done with our so-called abandoned farms, we are beginning to realize that it may all be turned to a source of profit to the owners and to the state. If this land were reclaimed and brought back to a state of cultivation, it could not compete agriculturally with the vast areas of more productive agricultural land. With the increasing demand for timber, with our greater knowledge of forest planting, cultivation and management, these waste but natural forest lands wisely managed will become a source of continuing profit to the owners and a substantial asset and great source of prosperity to the state. Under present industrial and agricultural conditions it is an inevitable law of nature that the territory in Vermont devoted to forest growth should increase.

Besides the question of making the land of greater value to the owners, there is also involved the preservation of our water supplies. If we neglect our forests and cut them without judgment our water powers will be seriously impaired, not only the larger ones so necessary at manufacturing centers, but also the great

number of small powers scattered throughout the state which are or ought to be of great value to their respective communities. If we strip our hills and mountain sides and do not take proper care to replace their forest growth the danger of floods in the springtime will be greatly increased, causing damage to small mill properties and seriously destroying bridges and injuring highways. In the end the domestic water supplies of our villages and cities will also be seriously affected.

Thus both directly and indirectly proper forest encouragement and management is necessary to the best interests of all of the people of the state. It is no longer a theory or simply an aesthetic question, but a very practical one. Vermont has already begun to recognize her duty in this regard. In 1904 the legislature provided that the Governor should designate one of the members of the Board of Agriculture to act as Forestry Commissioner and that the first selectmen of each town should take measures to control and extinguish forest fires. It also exempted from taxation for ten years uncultivated lands planted with timber or forest trees under certain conditions. The legislature of 1906 appropriated \$500 annually for five years for the purpose of aiding in the establishment and maintenance of a nursery for the propagation of forest seedlings of useful varieties at the Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station. The Commission on Taxation in their report recommend changes in the taxation of timber lands for the purpose of encouraging their cultivation and preservation.

All this has been in the right direction, but it does not go far enough. Vermont should have a distinct forest policy of her own. That this may be successfully inaugurated and carried on we should have a State Forester educated and trained along the most advanced and approved lines, who shall give his entire time to the study of forest conditions as they exist in Vermont, with a view to their practical and permanent improvement. This policy has been adopted by many of the states, and it is most successfully pursued by the National Government in the territories and national preserves under its jurisdiction. Such a forester should carry on a publicity and educational work, freely advise with individual owners, w supervise our forest fire laws, which ought to be strengthened and made more efficient, eventually take charge of the state nurseries for forest seedlings, and in a general way formulate and conduct a policy so vital to the true prosperity of the state. While this will entail some expense, I believe the state can undertake no work nor assume any equivalent expense that would yield to her people greater returns than an advanced forestry policy wisely and progressively conducted.

COMMISSION ON TAXATION.

A joint resolution of the Legislature of 1906 provided that a commission composed of six persons especially well versed in matters relating to taxation should be appointed by the Governor to thoroughly investigate the subject of taxation. This commission, composed of Orion M. Barber of Bennington, John H. Senter of Montpelier, George W. Pierce of Brattleboro, Leighton P. Slack of St. Johnsbury, Ernest Hitchcock of Pittsford, and A. Allyn Olmstead of South Newbury, has performed this duty in a most painstaking manner, and its full and comprehensive report has already been very generally distributed as required by the resolution. The information and statistics which the commission has gathered will be invaluable to you and the people of the state in the consideration of the subject of taxation. Upon so mooted and controverted a question it is not surprising that the members of the commission have not been able to agree in their recommendations with respect to changes in the principle of our taxation laws; but they point out some flagrant administrative evils and unanimously recommend their correction. Whatever you may do with respect to changes in the principle of our taxation system, the unanimous recommendations of the Commission for the correction of administrative evils I commend to your favorable consideration.

I endorse their recommendation that listers be elected by ballot for a term of three years so that there will always be two experienced men on the board; that taxes be required to be paid in the first instance to the town treasurer without discount with a penalty for delay, and that a State Taxation Commission with extensive powers be created; but I advise that it be thoroughly considered whether its work could not be committed to the Commissioner of State Taxes without additional commissioners.

SAVINGS BANKS AND TRUST COMPANIES.

The number of our savings banks and trust companies and the amount of their deposits have materially increased during the past few years. On June 30, 1908, there were 49 institutions and their total deposits amounted to \$60,458,653.41. This was an increase in deposits of \$8,368,954.33, or 16 per cent. during the last

two years. These institutions care for the savings of the great mass of our people. 146,888, or nearly one-half of all the inhabitants of the state, men, women, and children, were on June 30, 1908, depositors in them, with an average deposit of \$349.91 each. The responsibility of the state to her people for the wellbeing of these institutions and the safeguarding of their deposits is one of its most important duties.

Savings banks and trust companies should be inspected most carefully and at frequent intervals, and should constantly be under skilled supervision. It is not only the neglects and errors which the Commissioner may be able to find and correct, but the knowledge that these institutions are under constant watchfulness will do much to keep their trustees and officers alert to the best performance of their duties. The time has come when the Bank Commissioner should be required to give his entire time to the duties of his office, and the salary should be made sufficient to secure the entire time of a competent, skilled man in every way qualified for the work. The present policy of apportioning the salary and expense of the Bank Commissioner among the savings banks and trust companies should be continued. The increased expense to them would not be large and they could not use the money more advantageously for their depositors.

The laws regulating the investments which may legally be made by our savings banks and trust companies should be revised. They have been enacted at different times, often to permit some particular investment, and are inconsistent. They permit, for example, investment in counties, towns and cities in Wisconsin or Minnesota only under certain conditions, but in Michigan or Iowa without limitation; they permit investment in the stocks of any national bank in St. Paul or Minneapolis without restriction, but in much latitude and variety of investment as the laws of neighboring states, for example, Massachusetts and New York. I suggest that the laws regulating investments by savings institutions be carefully revised to conform better to present conditions, in some cases being limited and restricted and in others probably enlarged.

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS.

This board, which consists of five members, is doing a very important work. It gives advice upon request to the trustees and librarians of public libraries and in connection with the establishment of new libraries. It has held public meetings where library questions are discussed, and also has entire charge of the traveling libraries. These traveling libraries, which reach the smaller villages and communities, are a source of real help and pleasure to their people and often prompt the establishment of small local libraries. The commission is doing much to awaken a general interest in all library matters.

There is in the state an opportunity and need for the extension of this work. The members of the commission serve without compensation and render the state a valuable and unselfish service. The appropriation for its use has at no time been large. At present the amount which the Board may expend annually for necessary expenses in connection with the discharge of its duties, including the transportation of the traveling libraries, is limited by law to \$1,400, and the amount which it can expend annually for the purchase of books for these libraries is limited to \$500. The Commission's report should have your most careful attention, and the appropriation available for its work ought to be increased.

COURT OF CLAIMS.

The Court of Claims was created by an Act of the General Assembly in 1902, to hear and determine claims presented against the state, the payment of which is not otherwise provided for by law, and claims referred to it by the Auditor of Accounts or the General Assembly. Previous to the creation of this court such claims were heard by the Committee on Claims of the General Assembly, being practically their sole work, and their recommendations were reported to the General Assembly for its action. The Auditor of Accounts usually sat with the committees for the consideration of these claims, giving them such advice, legal or otherwise, as they might desire.

The creation of this court in some instances gave this class of claims a fuller judicial consideration and afforded claimants an opportunity to present their claims at other times than during the session of the General Assembly.

These are advantages, but they do not warrant the expense incurred, and can practically be secured otherwise. For the biennial term ending June 30, 1906 the total amount of claims considered by this court was

\$8,496.36, the amount allowed, \$3,381.78, and the expense of the court was \$1,539.65. For the biennial term ending June 30, 1908, the amount of claims considered was \$6,323.27, the amount allowed, \$3,495.45, and the expense of the court, \$1,362.74.

While the work of the Court of Claims has in all respects been well conducted, in my opinion there is no good warrant for its continuance, and it should therefore be abolished. The Auditor of Accounts should be charged with the duty to hear such claims, He should be given powers with respect thereto similar to those now possessed by this Court, without however, rendering final judgment, but reporting his findings of law and fact to the General Assembly. He is well qualified to perform this duty and could do so without additional expense to the state. The average of such claims is small, and a hearing before the Auditor could be managed with less inconvenience to claimants than under the present system. The payment of claims would not be delayed, for at present judgments of the Court of Claims cannot be paid until appropriated for by the next legislature. Any reference to this Court by the General Assembly or Executive, now authorized by sections 471 and 472 of the Public Statutes, could be made to the Auditor of Accounts or the Attorney General or both, according to the nature of the case.

EDUCATION.

The policy of skilled supervision through the voluntary formation of supervisory districts, begun two years ago, has been most successful, and has already accomplished for the public schools of Vermont all that its most sanguine advocates predicted. During the first year of its operation twenty districts were formed, and now there are twenty-six districts in the state under the immediate charge of skilled educators. These districts embrace 43 per cent. of the towns, cities and incorporated districts of Vermont, 53 per cent. of all the schools in the state, and 58 per cent. of the children in school. It was wise to provide that the formation of these districts be voluntary, and that policy should continue for the present, at least for the next biennial term, but finally school supervision should be made compulsory throughout the state.

Under the present law no district can be formed with less than thirty schools. This should be changed so that a district can be formed containing not less than twenty-five schools. Where schools are much scattered and it is necessary to travel long distances to visit them twenty-five schools are all one person can satisfactorily supervise.

The office of county examiner should be abolished and provision made for the examination of all teachers by the supervisors. The supervisors are so generally scattered over the state that a plan can easily be worked out for them to do this work.

One of the greatest needs of our education system to-day is the establishment of a high grade normal and industrial school. While our normal schools have been conscientiously and in general ably conducted, many conditions exist to prevent their doing the character of work now needed in Vermont. Their buildings and equipments are in many respects not up to date. Some of them are so situated that it is impossible to secure a sufficient number of pupils for a practice and training school. The best work cannot be done for normal students without an opportunity for training in sufficiently large practice schools. We cannot bring our educational system into the high point of efficiency at which we are aiming unless we provide more well trained teachers. To provide these teachers we much have normal schools that are thoroughly up to date in every way equipped to do high standard work.

None of the present plants are owned by the state, and the state cannot do with them as she could and should do with property of her own. This whole question is fully and ably set forth in the report of the special commission appointed to examine into the condition of the normal schools. This report is the result of a careful and impartial examination and should have your very careful consideration.

While the building and equipment of a normal school means expenditure of considerable money, it must come sooner or later, and as Vermont is to-day earnestly striving to advance the standard of her public schools she should at once provide for the location, building and equipment of a state normal and industrial school. Nothing can so immediately and surely awaken and sustain the educational interests of the state as such an institution.

PERMANENT SCHOOL FUND.

In the report of the trustees of this fund is a full statement of its present condition and investment and of all legislation for the creation of the fund. The Permanent School Fund is an important factor in our advanced public school policy and it should gradually be increased. Vermont has wisely and justly inaugurated a policy providing for the equalization of educational opportunity and educational burden. If we are as a state to advance educationally this policy must continue. There can be no better guaranty for the continuance of that policy than a growing permanent school fund.

Section 1078 of the Public Statutes provides for the payment to the trustees of the Permanent School Fund of such surplus as there may be in the State Treasury at the end of any fiscal year until an amount equal to that part of the Huntington Fund heretofore converted into cash by the State Treasurer shall have been so transferred. There was such a surplus June 30, 1908, but the Attorney General is of the opinion that there should be additional legislation before it can be paid to the trustees and by them invested as a part of the permanent fund. Such legislation as may be necessary for that purpose should be enacted.

TEMPERANCE.

Under the present law whereby one-half of the license fees granted in a town go to the town itself there is a tendency on the part of some towns, especially the smaller ones, to vote for license for the sake of the revenue accruing therefrom. It is not in the interest of temperance and is wrong in principle and practice to permit pecuniary interest to influence the voting of any town on this question. In some smaller towns where no one could afford to pay the license fee, if dependent for his income upon the inhabitants of the town, licenses have been granted because the close proximity of a larger town or city voting no license makes a license profitable. This condition works a great wrong to such neighboring towns or cities.

I recommend that the local option law be so amended that all income from the granting of licenses shall be paid directly into the treasury of the state. Then towns and cities can vote upon the question of license strictly upon its merits and uninfluenced by any financial consideration. The whole license fee might fairly go to the state for the duty and expense of enforcing the local option law, and the indirect expense of the liquor traffic largely falls upon it. The municipal and other court expenses and the expense of maintaining jails and other penal and reformatory institutions are borne by the state. When a town or city votes license the result is a larger number of criminal causes, and only a small proportion of the expense occasioned by this increase in criminal causes is borne by the town or city.

I also recommend that some reasonable restriction be put upon placing a licensed saloon on or near the borders of town voting no license.

The appointment of license commissioners was intrusted to the assistant judges of the county courts with the hope that a better class of men would thus be selected for commissioners and that their selection would be less influenced by those directly interested in the sale of intoxicating liquors. This method is doubtless better than to have the commissioners elected by the towns or appointed by the selectmen as the original law provided. There is, however, in counties where a considerable number of towns are likely to vote license a tendency to introduce into the selection of assistant judges the question of their probable action in the appointment of license commissioners. This does not tend to prove the selection of assistant judges and the appointment of license commissioners is usually so controverted a question that however wisely made it does not tend to strengthen the judicial position of such judges. The confidence of the people in those who have any judicial function to perform must not be impaired in any way. I recommend the appointment of a State License Board consisting of three members, to be appointed by the Governor, in which shall be vested all the power and authority which the local license commissioners now have.

SPECIAL CORPORATION LEGISLATION.

The granting to special charters to private corporations, to villages and to savings banks and trust companies unnecessarily takes the time of the legislature and does not produce uniform results. For the reasons stated in my inaugural message to the last legislature, I again recommend that the law for organization of private corporations be thoroughly revised, and when so revised that applicants for charters, except in extraordinary

cases, be required to avail themselves of its provisions, and that a well considered law for the organization of savings banks and trust companies and for the voluntary incorporation of villages be enacted.

TRUSTEE PROCESS.

I also renew my recommendation that the statutes be so amended that wages or compensation due the principal debtor for work and labor performed by him in person should be exempt to the amount of \$10 and that wages only in excess of that amount should be liable to the trustee process.

STAFF.

Section 5025 of the Public Statutes provides that the Governor shall appoint a surgeon general, with the rank of brigadier general, and an inspector of rifle practice and four aides-de-camp, each with the rank of colonel. While this provision does not entail large expense upon the state, I believe that it is unnecessary, unbusiness-like and unmilitary. Any staff duty which the Governor may require should come from a detail of officers of the National Guard. This service is in the line of their duty, it is in proper recognition of their services as officer in the National Guard, and fills every requirement which the Governor may have.

JUDGE-ADVOCATE-GENERAL.

I also think that with our limited militia system the office of judge-advocate-general is unnecessary, and should be abolished. Any legal advice required in the military department could be and most likely would in any event be sought from the Attorney General.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

The number of different department in the state government and the extent of the state's business have materially increased during the past few years, and with it has necessarily come a large increase in the responsibility and detail work which must center in the Executive Department.

It is important that the executive correspondence should be well and promptly conducted and that a complete and accurate record of all official business transacted should be kept and preserved in accordance with the best business methods for future official use. In some instances the Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs has not had the same residence as the Governor; the salary has been such that he has been obliged to have other permanent occupation, and of necessity the Governor has been compelled to do much work himself that should properly be done by a secretary. The highest interests of the state cannot best be served by such conditions. Unless the Governor is so situated that he can call to the performance of executive work assistance not provided and paid for by the state he must either neglect much of the routine work of his office or else undertake it himself at the expense of more important matters, and in either case, the state's business must suffer. It is not in my opinion a question of more salary for the Governor, but a question of providing him with proper executive assistance.

A sufficient salary should be provided for the Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs so that the Governor could command practically the entire services of a man competent to conduct much of the detail correspondence of his office and keep and preserve its records in proper condition for his successors.

CONCLUSION.

While our country has during the past year been passing through a period of financial unrest and business depression, in which Vermont was a part of this great nation must to some extent share, our general condition is encouraging. There has been on the part of the people of the state a genuine awakening, a demand for actual advance along lines essential to the real upbuilding of a commonwealth. It is not simply that our recent legislatures have enacted laws looking to advance in matters pertaining to education, highways, public health, railroads, and other conditions vital to the welfare of the state and its people, but the people of the state with great accord endorse this action and demand further progress along these and other important lines.

You should with great firmness hold fast to the advances already made, and further legislation along these lines should be progressive but always carefully considered and practically suited to our conditions. In the reports of the state officers now before you they render an account of their stewardship. These reports should

all have your careful attention. In no better way can you prepare yourselves to intelligently undertake the work of the session. You should avoid as much as possible increasing the number of state officers and commissions. All state officers should receive reasonable compensation and should be held to strict business methods and accountability. The greatest danger lies in special legislation and in special appropriations for causes not essential. Your legislation should be of a character to make special legislation unnecessary and all demands for special appropriations should be most closely scrutinized. It is not likely that the state's income will materially increase during the next few years. Some of the corporation taxes will be less because of the temporarily depressed business conditions. This must be carefully taken into account in considering appropriations, and such income as may be available should be used along the lines of those great essentials which alone can make for the prosperity and permanent betterment of the state.

To be chosen by the freemen of Vermont to here represent them is indeed an honor. Vermont's truest and wisest sons have preceded you in these halls. Remember that you represent a constituency unexcelled for good sense, high ideals and sturdy patriotism. Your opportunity and your duty are alike great. To meet them as your constituents have a right to expect, you must bring to the performance of every duty your best thought, your utmost effort. This assured, and Vermont will continue to move forward and be the better because of your services here.

FLETCHER D. PROCTOR.

Montpelier, October 8, 1908.