

Inaugural address  
of

Carroll S. Page

As it appears in the

Journal

of the

**JOINT ASSEMBLY**

**BIENNIAL SESSION**

**1890**

## Thursday, October 2, 1890

### Inaugural Address

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The constitution of our State requires the governor to prepare such business as may appear to him necessary to lay before the general assembly.

An examination of the several interests of the State, made with as much care as the limited time at my command would permit, has profoundly impressed me with the magnitude and the importance of the work before you.

Inasmuch as the whole system of State taxation must be readjusted to conform to recent decisions of our supreme court, grave constitutional questions will present themselves for your consideration. The increasing scale of State expenditures, at a time when the leading industry of our State is abnormally depressed, makes it especially incumbent on you to approach the question of taxation with more than usual determination to lighten the burdens of the people. The unsatisfactory workings of our present school law and the largely increased responsibility resting upon you, because of recent liberal grants by the national congress, in aid of the agricultural department of our State University, are both subjects of the highest importance.

Invoking the guidance of Him without whose aid and direction all our labors are vain, let us approach the work of the session with a firm resolve to discharge the great responsibilities resting upon us as the representatives of the people, fearlessly, impartially and faithfully.

#### STATE FINANCES.

By reference to the report of the State treasurer, it appears that the receipts and disbursements for the 23 months ending June 30, 1890, have been as follows:

#### RECEIPTS.

Sundry sources .....	\$	5,461 46
United States government for Soldiers' Home .....		6,544 35

#### LICENSE FEES

Commercial fertilizers .....	\$	2,500 00
Foreign insurance companies .....		7,959 00
Circuses.....		2,000 00
	-----	\$ 12,459 00
Sale of Huntington fund securities.....		14,402 70
On account of towns, highways and bridges, act No. 16, 1886 .....		14,628 94
Interest on bank balances .....	\$	4,895 05
Interest on agricultural college fund .....		16,260 00
	-----	\$ 21,155 05

#### CONVICT LABOR

States prison .....	\$	19,870 50
House of correction .....		8,753 99
Reform school .....		2,675 41
	-----	\$ 31,299 90
Judges of probate .....	\$	25,572 00
County clerks .....		58,273 94
	-----	\$ 83,845 94
Temporary loans .....		333,165 00
Taxes, State .....	\$	353,412 01

“ .....	513,461 61	
	-----	\$ 866,873 62
Cash on hand and in banks, August 1, 1888 .....		88,062 30
		-----
		\$ 1,477,898 26

#### DISBURSEMENTS

Appropriation for Robert’s Vermont Digest .....		\$ 1,600 00
Sundry small appropriations .....		2,840 80
Agricultural experiment station .....		5,250 00
Soldiers’ home .....		6,544 35
Gettysburg appropriation .....		15,880 00
Interest on Huntington fund .....	24,858 79	
“ registered loan, 1890 .....	16,260 00	
“ temporary loans .....	4,803 85	
	-----	\$ 45,922 64
Debentures of general assembly .....		55,442 30
Temporary loans paid .....		333,165 00

#### AUDITOR’S ORDERS

1889 .....	\$ 452,729 54	
1890 .....	440,832 89	
	-----	\$ 893,562 43
Cash on hand and in bank, June 30, 1890 .....		117,708 74
		-----
		\$ 1,477,898 26

The financial condition of the State, June 30, 1890, as appears from the treasurer’s report, was as follows:

#### RESOURCES.

Cash on hand and in bank .....	\$ 117,708 74
Estimated amount of tax due from corporations, 1890 .....	250,000 00
	-----
	\$ 367,708 74

#### LIABILITIES.

Due to towns, U.S. surplus fund .....	\$ 12,916 37
Due to soldiers’ unpaid balances .....	8,367 37
	-----
	\$ 21,183 74

Leaving available for the current fiscal year, July 1, 1890,  
to June 3, 1891 .....

	\$ 346,525 00
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#### STATE EXPENSES.

One of the most important subjects demanding your consideration is the largely increased cost of conducting our State affairs. With the single exception of our Legislative Assemblies, every department shows a growing expense to the State, and yet the growth has been so gradual that it is only by a comparison of biennial periods that the unpleasant fact is brought home to us with proper force.

A comparison of the biennial period ending August 1, 1882, with that ending August 1, 1890, shows that whereas \$568,000 paid the running expenses of our State for the first biennial period of the decade, it took \$951,000 for the last biennial period; and this too, notwithstanding the fact, that in nearly every department of business, the legitimate returns of labor and capital have been upon a constantly descending scale.

I ask your careful attention to the following table which has been prepared with considerable care, and is, I believe, substantially correct; it shows the expenditure in each department in each of the biennial periods as reported by the State auditor comprises only 23 months, I have added one-twenty-third in some cases in order to arrive at correct conclusions:

TABLE.

DEPARTMENT.	BIENNIAL PERIODS.				
	1881 – 2	1883 – 4	1885 – 6	1887 – 8	1889 – 90
State Institutions	\$164,715	\$136,176	\$127,901	\$151,242	\$216,554
Special Appropriations,	25,896	16,793	33,312	62,812	172,330
Courts,	93,728	89,417	130,543	107,935	147,188
Salaries,	96,967	99,118	107,076	109,465	113,782
Debentures of the General Assembly,	64,080	54,035	54,181	48,500	55,424
Legislative expenses,	50,185	34,392	40,836	46,145	43,648
Militia,	24,694	37,487	36,548	48,713	57,884
Edctnl expenses,	27,069	18,407	19,488	47,647	46,475
Official expenses,	10,661	11,962	12,942	28,015	29,787
Highways & bridges,		7,000	10,337	56,950	28,932
Sundries	10,194	11,464	17,147	32,754	39,762
	<u>\$568,189</u>	<u>\$583,261</u>	<u>\$670,321</u>	<u>\$720,218</u>	<u>\$951,766</u>

To legislate with that wise discrimination which will do no injustice, and at the same time fearlessly cut off every extravagance in whatever quarter it may exist, is a labor to which the people of Vermont look to you to devote yourselves, always keeping in view the ability of the people as a whole, in their present condition, to bear the burdens imposed upon them.

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS.

The tendency of each succeeding Legislature for the past ten years has been to guard the treasury with less and less care against the demands made upon it in the interests of special objects.

The entire sum paid out on acts of special appropriation for the two years ending July 31, 1882, was only \$25,895.77, while the special appropriations made by the Legislature of 1888, or paid during the last biennial term under former acts, make the unprecedented aggregate of \$192,330.25, as appears by the following detailed statement:

Middlebury College .....	\$ 4,800 00
Gettysburg Monument .....	15,880 00
University of Vermont and Experiment Station .....	17,250 00
Grand Isle Bridge .....	20,000 00
Soldiers' Home .....	26,544 35
New Insane Asylum .....	100,000 00
Miscellaneous .....	7,855 90
	<u>\$192,330 25</u>

In the general statement of total expenditures, the item of special appropriations for the last biennial period includes \$100,000 for new insane asylum, which, although exhausted by contracts already let, has been only in part paid over to the contractors.

The time will never come when a multitude of patriotic and charitable objects may not properly appeal to us for assistance, and I should regret to see any evidence of a disposition to withhold needed support. The present tendency is, however, toward prodigality, and I urge that you scan carefully every bill, asking for an appropriation for special and extraordinary purposes, giving your approval to such only, as clearly appear to you to be demanded by the honor and welfare of the State.

#### TAX ON CORPORATIONS.

The supreme court of Vermont has decided that our statute, taxing earnings of transportation companies, received from interstate traffic, is in violation of the constitution of the United States. It will therefore be your duty to enact a law by which these corporations may be legally called upon to bear their share of the public burdens. The satisfactory solution of this problem will demand the exercise of the greatest care, in order that the courts may not again decide unconstitutional such a law as may be enacted.

To no other subject considered in this message, have I devoted so much thought, but inasmuch as the honorable commissioner of State taxes has given the subject an exhaustive investigation, I conclude to offer no definite suggestions at this time. I visited Commissioner Martin at his home where he was confined by sickness, and received from him assurance that he would, early in the session, submit for your consideration a bill which he believes will avoid the constitutional objections which render our present law inoperative.

Having settled the constitutional question, it will be your duty to consider whether the amount which corporations have been paying under the existing law is their equitable proportion of the public burden. Taxation should be just and equal, bearing upon each industry and each class of property alike, considered with reference to its ability to pay. Since the passage of the corporation tax law in 1882, the amount to be raised annually by taxation for State expenses has been continually increasing, while the ability of the farming lands of Vermont to pay, has been constantly diminishing. I submit that a re-adjustment is only a matter of justice to the end that the arbitrary rate, established in 1882 under favorable conditions, be made to conform to the present largely increased measure of expenditure. Railroad corporations now pay from two to five per cent of their gross earnings; transportation, steamboat and car companies two per cent; express, telegraph and telephone companies three per cent; savings banks and trust companies six-tenths of one per cent on their deposits. I think these corporations can be asked to contribute one-fifth more than they now pay without doing them an injustice.

#### DOUBLE TAXATION.

When the burdens of taxation are not equitably apportioned there is just cause of complaint. The taxation of real estate and at the same time of the mortgage indebtedness thereon imposes a double tax which is clearly unjust. Equity demands that the mortgagor and the mortgagee should be taxed according to their respective interest in the land,

I have been unable to formulate to my own satisfaction any statute by which it is practicable to effect the needed change in our present law, but it seems clear to me that, if some method could be devised to remedy the evil, it would lift a burden from the real estate of Vermont which can be removed in no other way.

You should consider the question in all its bearings under the light of such full discussion as the importance of the subject will doubtless command.

#### COURT EXPENSES.

This is a subject which the State auditor has considered so fully in his report, which you will have before you, that he has practically exhausted it. The unpleasant deduction from the figures given by him is that this branch of State expense for the past two years has been \$147,000 as against \$107,000 for the biennial period ending July 31, 1888. The average annual expenditure in this department for the first four years of this decade, 1880 to 1884, was only \$46,000. The auditor points out specifically the causes for this increase.

You will examine this matter, with that care which its importance demands, and I trust that with the data found in the auditor's report, and such personal information and assistance as he will be able to give you, you may find some way to check this alarming increase in the cost of our courts without impairing their efficiency.

## OFFICIAL SALARIES

I recommend that you give this branch of State expenditure a thorough investigation, and if you find that salaries have been raised from term to term, without a corresponding increase in the labor or responsibility attached thereto, you should reduce them fearlessly, and without favoritism, whether the incumbent affected thereby be the governor or the doorkeeper.

Service for the State should receive the same pay which like service is able to command in other departments of labor where the same degree of ability and responsibility is required, and when the remuneration of any official becomes so attractive that the position is sought after by many because of the salary attaching thereto, the salary should be reduced.

### STATE'S PRISON AND HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

The discipline seems to be excellent at both these institutions. At the State's prison, both the total and per capita expense has been diminishing since 1880 until the last biennial period, which shows a marked increase over the two just preceding. Since 1884, the average annual expense of maintaining each inmate at the State's prison has been \$68.46; at the house of correction, \$27.01. The difference in favor of the latter is owing to the fact that the fines and costs received at this institution are used to reduce the net cost to the State.

I append the following details of cost of support of the inmates of the State's prison for the past ten years:

	23 MONTHS				
STATE'S PRISON.	1880 to '82	1882 to '84	1884 to '86	1886 to '88	1888 to '90
Officers' salaries . . . . .	\$ 13,791 43	\$ 12,045 32	\$ 12,137 68	\$ 12,829 03	\$ 12,464 32
Subsistence of Prisoners . . . .	8,949 88	6,318 22	5,152 74	5,970 71	5,663 79
Fuel and lights. . . . .	4,028 10	5,447 84	5,323 24	6,073 38	5,644 23
Board of officers and guard. . .	6,157 36	5,961 44	4,409 97	4,248 01	4,188 68
Clothing. . . . .	1,287 67	1,617 98	1,162 63	1,356 91	1,539 45
Improvements and repairs. . . .	18,658 48	1,908 40	824 97	1,644 30	733 64
Sundry expenses. . . . .	<u>4,365 61</u>	<u>4,435 32</u>	<u>3,250 27</u>	<u>3,325 93</u>	<u>3,042 17</u>
Total expenses. . . . .	\$ 57,238 53	\$ 37,734 52	\$ 32,261 50	\$ 35,448 27	\$ 33,276 28
Less received for visitors fees and convict labor. . . . .	\$ 20,110 27	\$ 20,272 62	\$ 20,353 00	\$ 23,675 50	\$ 20,056 60
Net expense for each biennial term. . . . .	\$ 37,128 26	\$ 17,461 90	\$ 11,908 50	\$ 11,773 77	\$ 13,219 68
Average number inmates. . . . .	120	88	85 1-2	98 5-6	86 3-4
Average annual per capita expense. . . . .	\$ 154 70	\$ 94 21	\$ 69 64	\$ 59 56	\$ 76 19

	Total Expense	Total Receipts.	Net Expense.	Av. No. Inmates	Av. Annual Ex. Per Capita.
1881 and '82	\$19,772 03	\$14,329 30	\$5,442 73	78 3-8	\$34 82
1883 and '84	16,851 12	12,400 31	4,450 81	57	39 04
1885 and '86	19,222 97	15,390 65	3,832 32	81 1-2	23 51
1887 and '88	18,226 99	14,433 62	3,793 37	69 4-7	27 26
1889 and '90	16,324 02	12,501 64	3,822 38	63 1-8	30 27

The following table shows a comparison of the receipts and expenditures at the house of correction for the past ten years:

Your attention is called to the reports of the officers of these institutions, which will give you such information touching their management as you may require. It does not now occur to me that any legislative action in their behalf is needed.

#### REFORM SCHOOL.

It is unpleasant to communicate to you any facts which seem to indicate an unwarranted measure of expenditure in the management of any institution drawing its support from the State treasury. But in my opinion, one of the highest duties incumbent upon the executive is to carefully ascertain all important facts touching the management of our State institutions, and communicate them unreservedly to you, whether such facts are pleasant or unpleasant.

I have made as careful computation as the figures at hand would permit and find that the not expense, including the expense of trustees, for each scholar cared for at the Reform School has grown from \$115 in 1880 to \$187 in 1889.

The exact figures are as follows:

1880 .....	\$115 80
1881 .....	119 00
1882 .....	207 10
1883 .....	208 23
1884 .....	123 51
1885 .....	165 36
1886 .....	139 86
1887 .....	137 36
1888 .....	142 13
1889 .....	187 53

The extraordinary expenses incurred in 1882 and 1883 were for permanent repairs. I am pleased to be able to say that the figures for the current year will show a reduction of something more than ten dollars per scholar as compared with 1889.

By reference to the report of the superintendent it will be seen that more than 58 per cent of the entire number of girls were of the ages of 13 and 14 years at the time of commitment, and more than one-third of all commitments over eleven years of age were for gross lewdness. Statistics show that in these cases reformation is effected in only a small proportion of the whole number. With no suitable facilities for separating the girls according to their offences, it seems evident that the result of this intermingling, viewed from a moral standpoint, must be harmful. The superintendent informs me that he does not see how this association can be avoided with the small number to be provided for, without, incurring, unreasonable expense. The highest average number of girls ever in the school was 21 in 1889. There were 17 in 1885; 15 in 1887, and 12 in 1889; very likely one-half of these girls might have been cared for quite as well at home, and the remainder could be more satisfactorily provided for at some other institution, even if located out of the State. The superintendent gives it as his opinion that the expense per scholar, in the girls' department is now nearly or quite double that in the boys' department, or nearly one dollar per day for each girl cared for.

I recommend that a careful investigation be made into the system upon which this school is conducted, to the end, that the expenses thereof may be lessened, if it can be done without interfering with the welfare of the scholars; and unless a better method can be devised for caring for the girls, I believe you will deem it advisable to abolish this department of the school.

#### SOLDIERS' HOME.

The directors of the soldiers' home will lay before you a detailed statement of the condition of this institution. I see no reason for anticipating an outlay on the part of the State in excess of \$100 per annum, for

each inmate of the home, as the United States government divides with the State the expense of supporting our veterans there until such expense reaches \$200 per annum.

I do not recall any other institution in Vermont receiving State aid, whose directors do not receive pay for their services from the State. This institution, however, is managed by a board of Vermont veterans, who appear to take sincere pleasure in its management for no other reward than the consciousness of having performed a patriotic duty; and I am unable to observe any evidence of less judicious management than is bestowed upon those institutions whose board of direction are paid.

I am led to make these suggestions, not because I would have the State parsimonious in dealing with her public servants, but because it occurs to me that we establish many commissions which could be filled by a class of our best citizens who, having their expenses paid, would be pleased, without remuneration and purely as a matter of patriotism and State pride, to give the State the benefit of their judgment and experience.

I believe no better institution of the kind exists in this country than the Vermont Soldiers' Home.

#### THE NEW INSANE ASYLUM.

The Poland pauper law of 1886, so called, with amendments thereto since made, has operated to change the burden of support of many paupers from the town to the State. Under this law it is only necessary for overseers of the poor to prove that their idiotic non-compos, and demented paupers are dangerous, to enable their towns to relieve themselves of the burden of support, by sending them to the State insane asylum.

The State's attorney of each county represents the State in these matters, and, presumably investigates carefully all applications for commitment of this class of persons. But as a matter of fact investigations are often practically exparte and the towns, with the shrewdness proverbial in such cases, too often find, little or no difficulty in making such a showing as will secure the commitment of its paupers to the asylum.

The supervisors of the insane are supposed to correct the evil growing out of this tendency to shift the burden from the town to the State: and, to their credit be it said, they have been faithful defenders of the treasury, an a large number of the paupers, improperly committed, have been returned to the towns from which they were sent. It is however undoubtedly true that a large number of the inmates of the asylum would be cared for at home were it not for the fact that by sending them to the asylum the towns avoid the expense of their maintenance.

I am not prepared to say that, from a humane standpoint, it is not right that many of these unfortunate persons be taken care of at the asylum rather than, at home; but unless some additional safeguards are provided, we must squarely meet the only alternative, to wit, the expenditure of a half million dollars within the next five years in the building and equipping of an asylum capable of caring for five or six hundred patients. This unpleasant fact was brought to the attention of the legislature of 1888, an appropriation of \$100,000 was made for the purpose of building and equipping a new asylum.

Under the act of 1888, a site was selected at Waterbury, and a contract let for the erection of the buildings, the aggregate cost of which, including the site and, architects' charges, has been in round numbers, \$98,000. An additional appropriation will be immediately required to heat, light and furnish this new asylum, the estimated expense thereof being \$50,000. When the \$50,000 shall have been expended the institution will be in condition to care for from 125 to 150 patients.

After consultation with the supervisors of the insane and the trustees of the asylum at Brattleboro, it seems clear to me that no further addition to the new asylum should be made during the next two years. They are of the opinion that the relief, which the new asylum with its present capacity will afford, will enable them to care for such patients as shall be properly cared for by the State until the legislature of 1892 can make further provision therefor. I therefore recommend that a sum not exceeding \$50,000 be appropriated to finish and furnish the new asylum, and if, at the end of two years, it is deemed expedient to make further appropriations for the purpose of enlarging the institution it can then be done.

The annual expenditure on the part of the State for the insane was in round numbers \$20,000 in 1875, \$30,000 in 1880, 34,000 in 1885, while the bill just paid to the Brattleboro asylum for the support of the insane the past year is \$72,697.



## STATE BENEFICIARIES IN FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS.

During the past two years the State contributed to the support of its beneficiaries at foreign institutions. \$12,829.61, as follows:

American Asylum for deaf and dumb, Hartford, Conn. ....	\$5,106 13
Clark Institution for deaf and dumb mutes, Northampton, Mass .....	1,040 88
Perkins Institution for blind, Boston, Mass .....	6,147 82
Massachusetts School for feeble minded, Boston, Mass .....	534 78
	<hr/>
	\$12,829 61

The aggregate of our expenditures for these different classes of unfortunates varies but little from year to year, the largest expense during the last fifteen years being \$7,193.99, in 1882, the smallest \$4,991.16, in 1876. The average cost per year for fifteen years has been \$6,303.02.

I know of no reason why the policy of the State with reference to the support of these persons should be changed. We cannot afford, to practice economy in this direction, and yet good business, prudence may suggest to you the propriety of at least a biennial inquiry as to the reasonable of the prices paid for maintenance, and whether the, beneficiaries are not persons whose other means of support are such that the State should be relieved therefrom.

## AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FUND.

In 1865 the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College became the recipient of an annual income of \$8,130, from what is known as the State Agricultural College Fund. In 1887 the National congress passed what is known as the Hatch bill, by virtue of which the State agricultural college has since received annually, for the benefit of the experiment station, the sum of \$15,000. In August of the present year another bill, introduced, by our own senator, Hon. J. S. Morrill, was passed by the National congress by which the State is to receive the further sum of \$15,000 annually, this sum to be increased \$1,000 each year until it reaches \$25,000.

The spirit of these various acts of appropriation clearly is that these sums, amounting in all to \$38,130, to be increased as above to \$48,130 annually, shall be used for the purpose of building up an industrial and agricultural school, where those who desire to engage in agricultural or industrial pursuits may obtain as nearly free from cost as possible, a higher and more distinctively agricultural or industrial training than can be had at our ordinary schools.

I urge upon you the necessity of careful and earnest consideration of the needs of the agricultural department of the university. It seems to me that the cause of Agriculture in Vermont should receive a wonderful impetus from the wise expenditure of the munificent sums which will hereafter come to us by virtue of these several grants.

I know of no body of men more competent than the present legislature of Vermont, composed as it largely is of practical farmers and business men, to consider and mature wise plans calculated to secure the important ends which are attainable under these most liberal appropriations. It is a matter which should receive your immediate and careful attention, to the end that ample discussion may be had before the hurry of the closing days of the session shall divert your attention to matters of infinitely less importance.

In the development of any project, connected with this important subject, even a larger sum than will come to us under present grants is necessary, it should be remembered that legitimate and judicious expenditure in the cause of agricultural education is wise economy in a State like Vermont, whose material welfare is largely dependent upon its agricultural prosperity.

I hope that in what I have said I shall not be understood as reflecting upon the University of Vermont. It is an institution which stands deservedly high in the affections of every lover of higher education in our State, and to President Buckham as its honored head, the State is in large measure indebted for its high standing at home and abroad. For Professor Cooke, as the head of the experiment station, I have received from leading

agriculturalists, with whom I have been in correspondence and consultation, only words of highest commendation for his thorough and conscientious devotion to the work he has in charge.

### EDUCATION

The school law of 1888 effected a radical change in our educational system. It was to be expected that in putting the new machinery in motion there would be more or less friction. After trial of but a little more than a year, it would seem unwise to pass judgment upon the practical working of the new system, or to hastily condemn a law which in its general features has proved so successful and beneficial in other States. We cannot conceal the fact, however, that in many portions of the State the system is regarded with disfavor. Its unpopularity undoubtedly grows out of the additional expense which it involves the effect of the law has been to raise the standard of qualifications and, as a result fewer teachers of the required standard have been obtainable, and these at largely increased wages. While a poor teacher at any price is undoubtedly poor economy, still the greater increased pay which teachers demand under the new law makes a burden which falls too heavily upon the small districts in our agricultural communities. A tax of 75 to 100 per cent, of the grand list for the port of schools in addition to other taxation will not be cheerfully borne by any community.

I should very much regret however, to have these suggestions construed as advocating a return to the old system. Our present school law is, without question, a step in the right direction. While economy should be our watchword in most branches of our State administration, we should not forget that reasonable liberality is the only true economy in matters of such vital importance as that of education. Our schools are not better than they ought, to be; but such an adjustment of the burden of their support should be made, as will enable the poor to enjoy their blessings without being taxed beyond their ability to bear. The law as it now stands should be so amended as to still further equalize, the burdens of taxation for the support of schools in town where the district system is still adhered to. The report of the State superintendent of education is full of valuable suggestions on this subject. You will: also have for your guidance the reports of the several county supervisors, and your legislative committees will get from consultation with the State superintendent and the county supervisors much valuable information touching this matter, In this connection I earnestly urge the enactment of a statute which shall provide for the furnishing of free text-books. I know of no single item of expenditure, which, in my judgment, would yield a greater measure of good for the limited outlay required.

### MILITIA .

Your attention is invited to the biennial report of the quarter-master-general and the adjutant and inspector general. They give the necessary details to enable you to judge as to the expenditures required to maintain the militia. There can be no question that the condition of the National Guard of Vermont has been materially improved during the past ten years, and now compares favorably with the favorite regiments in the larger states. The people of Vermont have reason to be proud of the organization, but just how far they are willing to go in its support is for you to decide. I make no recommendations. The question is rather one of State pride than of State necessity. The expense of militia for each biennial period during the past ten years has been as follows:

1881—2 .....	\$24,694
1883—4 .....	37,457
1885—6 .....	36,448
1887—8 .....	48,713
1889—90 .....	57,884

### SAVINGS BANKS.

You will have before you the report of the inspector of finance, giving a full detailed statement of the condition of each of the institutions under his charge, together with valuable facts touching the workings of our savings bank laws. The information which he gives us, "That the tendency to send money west and south has reached its climax," will I am sure, be exceedingly gratifying to you; and yet we are confronted with the unpleasant fact that the investments in mortgages out of the State have increased from one and a quarter millions in 1879 to seven and a half millions in 1890. The inspector's suggestions that "Investments in foreign real estate certainly ought not to go beyond the limit now fixed by law," meets my hearty approval, and I am of the opinion that the interests of the State as well as the interests of the depositor, would be better subserved if

the amount which any savings bank could invest in western mortgages was limited to 40 per cent of the entire assets of the bank, and I recommend a statute making this limit. I endorse all he says with reference to school savings, and hope some action may be taken to encourage thrift among the children of Vermont.

I would call your special attention to his suggestions concerning the inspection of western land companies. I believe the law of 1888, making the examination of these companies a duty of the inspector, has not resulted beneficially to our State. I have no doubt that the inspector has been as faithful in his examination of these institutions as the limited time at his disposal would permit, but from the very nature of the case, the value of these brief examinations must depend largely upon the integrity of the officers of the institutions examined. Expert bookkeeping on the part of unscrupulous officials makes it possible for all loan companies, both good and bad, to come into our State armed with a certificate of good character from the inspector, and we have only to examine the columns of the State press to see how quick these institutions are to avail themselves of this advantage. One western company advertises itself as "A banking corporation under the jurisdiction of inspector of finance of Vermont, and examined by him yearly," and it is well known that the agents of these corporations quite generally claim this for their institutions, I submit that the State cannot afford to stand as sponsor for the soundness of institutions over which it has no jurisdiction, and thereby open up new avenues through which the money of our people, so much needed to develop our industries at home, may find its way out of the State.

The savings banks and trust companies of Vermont are the custodians of more than \$19,000,000 of the peoples' money. They should be a bulwark against financial stringency upon which our people may securely rely, and the tendency to a smaller measure conservatism in carrying actual money is to be deprecated. I recommend the passage of a law requiring them to carry not less than five per cent of their assets in cash or in some approved depository in Vermont, New York or Boston, with the further requirement that not less than one-half of this sum shall be carried in cash or in Vermont banks.

#### RAILROAD COMMISSION.

You will read carefully the report of this commission, to the end that you may judge as to the advisability of conferring upon it additional powers. While it is questionable whether the people of Vermont have received that substantial benefit from this commission which was anticipated when it was created, still I should regard it as a step backward to abolish it. I believe it rather to be your duty to give to the commission a measure of vitality which it does not now possess.

Its expense to the State is something more than \$4,500 per year, and unless additional powers and a higher measure of responsibility is conferred, I believe a less expensive board will meet the requirements of the State. Should you, conclude to enlarge its powers, an examination of the report will suggest to you the direction in which such enlargement should be made. For instance, touching upon local passenger fares, they speak first of the greatly reduced rates—two cents per mile—afforded to many citizens of the State by the purchase of mileage tickets or books, and then add as follows: "But there is a large class which includes those who, for want of pecuniary means, and for other good and sufficient reasons, are unable to share in the benefit of these reduced rates, but are compelled to buy a single ticket and pay therefor three to four and one-half cents per mile—a rate of fare almost equal to the stage coach rates of fifty years ago. It is needless, perhaps, to remark that this latter class includes all who are the least able to pay. It (the board) entertains the hope that all the railroad companies will see their way clear at an early day to make such reductions in local passenger rates as to remove this alleged inequality, and this in the interest of their patrons who are, for reasons above stated, unable to avail themselves of the present reductions."

The point may be raised that the regulation of the railroads of Vermont should not be in the hands of a commission, but experience shows that the practical workings of a law permitting the commission to stand between the public and the railroads has not been found to work unjustly in those States in which the commission is clothed with power to give vitality to its suggestions.

We confer upon these corporations valuable franchises, and in return they should extend to all the people of the State reasonable rates of transportation; and I know of no more equitable manner of reaching an adjustment of these matters than through a railroad commission clothed with reasonable powers such as are given them in many of the other States of the Union.

## RAILROAD PASSES.

In February 1887, the congress of the United States passed what is known as the inter-state commerce law, which provides substantially that in commerce between States, railroads shall not receive from any person or persons, a greater or less compensation for the transportation of passengers or property, than it receives from any other person or persons for the same service under similar conditions. The act is suitably guarded by proper exceptions.

At the risk of quoting too liberally the views of another, I take from the first annual report of the inter-state commerce commission—a commission including among others, an honored son of Vermont, Hon. Aldace F. Walker—giving its views of the statute above referred to, after having observed its workings. Speaking first of favoritism in the transportation of freight, they then proceed in the following emphatic language:

“The evils of free transportation of person were not less conspicuous than those which have been mentioned, concerning freights. This, where it extended beyond the persons engaged in railroad service, was commonly favoritism in a most unjust and offensive form. Free transportation was given not only to secure business, but to conciliate the favor of localities and of public bodies; and, while it was often demanded by persons who had, or claimed to have, influence which was capable of being made use of the prejudice of the railroad, it was also accepted by public officers of all grades and of all varieties of service. In these last cases, the pass system was particularly obnoxious and baneful; for if any return was to be made or expected of public officers, it was of something not theirs to give, but which belonged to the public or to constituents. A ticket entitling one to free passes by rail was often more effective in enlisting the assistance and support of the holder than its value in money would have been, and in a great many cases it would be received and availed of, when the offer of money, made to accomplish the same end, would have been spurned as a bribe. Much suspicion of public men resulted, which was sometimes just, also sometimes unjust and cruel; and some deterioration of the moral sense of the community, traceable to this cause, was unavoidable while the abuse continued. The parties most frequently and largely favored, were those possessing large means and having large business interests.

The general fact came to be, that in proportion to the distance they were carried, those able to pay the most paid the least. One without means had seldom any grounds on which to demand free transportation, while we wealth he was likely to have many grounds on which he could make it for the interest of the railroad company to favor him, and he was sometimes favored with free transportation not only for himself and family but for business agents also, and even sometimes for his customers. The demand for free transportation was often in the nature of blackmail, and was yielded to unwillingly, and through fear of damaging consequences from a refusal. But the evils were present as much when it was extorted as when freely given.”

It is difficult to understand why the provisions of the inter-state statute above referred to should not be adopted in Vermont. But it is unnecessary that I add to the arguments of the inter-state commerce commission any of my own. I have conferred with the presidents of the leading roads in Vermont, and am assured that with such conditions as should properly be made, such a law would probably meet the hearty approval of every railroad manager in the State. I earnestly hope that you will not conclude the labors of this session without placing upon our statute books a law substantially that quoted from the United States statute.

## TEMPERANCE.

An attempt will be made at the present session to disturb the long established policy of the State on the question of temperance.

I do not deem it necessary to multiply words upon this subject. The people of Vermont are not ready to legalize the sale of intoxicating liquors in public saloons, and all legislation should be in harmony with this idea. If you find the present law defective, correct those defects; if you find any part thereof a dead letter on our statute books, repeal it; if over-zealous friends of temperance have secured the passage of laws which tend to imperil the entire prohibitory system of our State, modify such provisions to the end that the law may more and more command the respect and support of all good citizens, never forgetting that the policy of prohibition is too firmly entrenched in the hearts of the great body of the common people, to allow your seriously entertaining any proposition of repeal.

My predecessor has devoted to this subject a vast amount of thought, and has given you in his retiring message the results of his labors. I heartily endorse his recommendations, based as they are upon an extensive experience in liquor prosecutions and coming as they do from one whose warm interest in all matters pertaining to temperance entitles him to voice the sentiments of its friends in Vermont.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

The senate may make proposals of amendment to the constitution at the present session.

Changes in the constitution should be made only when the public good clearly requires it. The practice now prevalent in most of the States of holding the freeman's meeting on the first Tuesday in November and the general assembly the winter following has strong arguments in its favor. It would obviate the necessity of an additional election every presidential year, and bring the session of our legislature at a time when our farmers have greater leisure than at the busy time of harvest.

Unless some objection which does not now occur to me can be urged against the change, it seems to me that the good of the State would be better subserved by conforming to the general custom.

#### CENTENNIAL OF VERMONT'S ADMISSION TO THE UNION.

Our State was the first to be added to the original thirteen, and the one hundredth anniversary of her admission to the Union on the fourth day of March next. It will be for you to say in what manner event shall be celebrated. Until recently it has been understood that the Bennington battle monument would be dedicated in 1891 and it has been suggested that if you deemed it expedient, the centennial anniversary might be celebrated at the same time. A prominent member of the monument association has recently advised me, however, that the monument is so far incomplete that its dedication the coming year may not be thought advisable. I will not therefore make any recommendation at this time but presume that before the close of the session the monument association will offer definite plans for your consideration.

#### AUSTRALIAN BALLOT SYSTEM.

The privilege of every voter to cast his ballot without fear, and subject to no improper influence or espionage is one of the most sacred rights of American citizenship. That the Australian system protects this right of the voter more fully than any other yet suggested, is conceded. Wherever it has been tried it has become popular. The only important objection to its adoption, that I have heard expressed, is that of expense. For the purpose of carefully investigating this objection, I have corresponded with the smaller towns in Massachusetts where the law is in operation and learn that the cost is too small to be worthy of consideration, being from five dollars to twenty dollars in places corresponding in population to the large majority of Vermont towns.

Vermont cannot afford to be tardy in the adoption of any system having for its end a purer ballot, and believing that no better method has yet been devised to accomplish this, I earnestly urge its adoption.

#### COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURAL AND MANUFACTURING INTERESTS.

You will have before you the report of the commissioner, in which is given an exhaustive survey of that most important subject, the re-occupation of our unoccupied farms. Governor Dillingham has given much attention to the working of this commission, and devotes a large part of his retiring message thereto.

For the purpose of informing myself as to the class of people who are being brought to Vermont through the exertions of the commissioner, and the character of the farms they are occupying, I visited the Swedish settlements at Wilmington and Weston and while anything I might add to what has already been given you on this topic, by the governor and the commissioner, would be unnecessary repetition, I wish to emphasize what they have said in two important particulars.

First, There is, in my opinion, no better class of men coming to us from foreign countries than the Swedes. They are intelligent, fairly educated; frugal, industrious and honest. In a word they are just the material out of which desirable citizens are made.

Second, it is clearly for the interest of Vermont that we induce these people to come to our State, and locate upon our unoccupied farming land if it can be done without unreasonable expense.

I believe the commissioner has given to the performance of the important and arduous duties devolving upon him, a measure of energy and conscientious devotion which few men would have bestowed upon it. He has been animated from the first, as it seems to me, by a desire to perform a patriotic duty.

It only remains to add, that the entire scheme is an experiment, the success or failure of which, it is yet too early to predict.

Whether these Swedes will cling to their farms, and by their success thereon, attract others to our State, or, failing of success, shall desert the lands they have purchased, and go to other fields, time only will determine.

I am inclined, after a somewhat careful survey of the field, to recommend a moderate appropriation for the continuance of the commission another two years.

#### THE WORLD'S FAIR,

The four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, which is to be celebrated by a world's fair Chicago in 1893, may require some action on the part of this Legislature. Dr. H. H. McIntyre, of West Randolph, and Hon. B. B. Smalley, of Burlington, have been appointed commissioners for Vermont by Governor Dillingham. They have recently returned from Chicago, and will undoubtedly lay before you plans enabling you to give the matter intelligent consideration a prominent sheep breeder in Vermont informs me that no proper representation of this industry can be made, without at least a year's preparation, and strenuously urges action at this session. Very likely exhibitors of stock of other kinds may take the same view of the matter. I believe some action should be taken by you at this session to the end that our State may be creditably represented at the exposition.

#### WEEKLY PAYMENTS.

Observation and experience confirm me in the conviction, that both corporations and individuals employing help in large numbers, should pay their employees weekly and in money; and if demanded by the laboring men of the State, I believe it is your duty to grant them statutory protection with reference to time and manner of payment, similar to that in force in neighbor states. The employees in most of the manufacturing establishments of the State are so liberally treated that, although not paid weekly, they are nevertheless satisfied and express no desire for legislative action in their behalf. I have not been able to make sufficient investigation to fully satisfy myself as to the extent of the abuses claimed to be practiced upon employees in this particular. No one can have better information touching this subject than you who come direct from the people.

You will take such steps touching these matters as you may deem wise. Your action should not be hasty, nor should you unnecessarily interfere with the business arrangements of our manufacturers, unless you find a real abuse, and one that is so generally prevalent as to demand relief at your hands.

#### TEN HOUR LAW

The most of the New England States have found it advisable for the protection of operatives in their manufactories to pass a law regulating the hours of labor. There can be no doubt that the drift of public sentiment is strongly in favor of the enactment of laws to improve the condition of the laboring classes, and I recommend as a step in the right direction, that a law be enacted prohibiting the working of females and, minors for manufacturing corporations, more than ten hours per day. I have corresponded with the managers of several of the large manufactories in New Hampshire, where a statute, applicable to all mill operatives without regard to age or sex, has been in operation two years or more, and the replies are uniformly to the effect that the law works no injury to the manufacturer.

#### FORESTRY.

New Hampshire is solving the problem of deserted farms by attracting from the large cities those who would make their summer homes upon her hillsides. Vermont may well follow her example and by planting trees along our highways and in our villages add largely, not only to our own comfort, but to the general attractiveness of the State. Another important feature of the subject of forestry which will press upon us for

consideration within a few years, is the wholesale destruction of our forests now going on. Serious injury to the physical interests of the State will eventually result therefrom, and I know of no subject of so great importance to the State, which receives so little attention.

#### REVISION OF THE LAWS.

It has been the policy of the State for sometime to make a revision and compilation of the statutes at the beginning of every decade. It will be incumbent on you to make provision for this work.

#### UNITED STATES SENATOR

It will be your duty on the second Tuesday of the session to elect a United States senator for six years, from the fourth of March next.

#### CONCLUSION.

Again I would impress upon you the importance of the work at hand, and urge the necessity of taking up this work at once and pursuing it diligently to the end. We come here as the representatives of the people, whose servants we are, and who may rightfully look to us to bring to the discharge of our duties here that same degree of industry and careful consideration which we would devote to our own private affairs.

CARROLL S. PAGE.