

Farewell address  
of  
Josiah Grout  
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**Thursday, October 6, 1898**  
**Farewell Address**

*Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:*

About to vacate the office of Governor, I take this opportunity to submit a retiring message.

Under our constitution and laws the Governor has little absolute power over matters of government, and you will not be advised so much of what he has done during the administration drawing to a close, as of what he has seen done by the official establishment of the State.

In directing your attention to such affairs of administration as seem to deserve notice, a few suggestions, intended for the public good, are submitted.

**FINANCES AND STATE EXPENSES.**

These, the most interesting features, in a sense, of the State government, are fully set forth by the reports of the Treasurer and Auditor, from which you can learn the round number sum of money used by the State for all public purposes, as well as the ordinary expenses of each year. The average from year to year is about the same. These public moneys are expended to sustain the State government, its schools and colleges, roads, State institutions, such public improvements as legislative wisdom authorizes; to care for the insane poor, and to do whatever things ought to be done. The affairs of the Commonwealth, so far as known, are economically administered, and if expenses seem large you should ascertain if they are not intended to promote the general progress of the State, and if they do not in some way contribute to its material prosperity. More money is used to-day in a public way than a generation since, but correspondingly more enjoyment is afforded the people. The burdens of government are as light in our State as in any other in the Union, and very much less than in many; and if any share the feeling that we are progressing too rapidly and enjoying more than we can afford, or that we are too great a departure from the economy of the fathers, they may be comforted by knowing that the direct tax upon the people, for what we have of a public character, is less than in those times with which the present is compared. It would take too much of your time to show here how every dollar is disposed of, and it would be scarcely profitable to do so since the reports of the officials entrusted with the disbursement of the State funds are readily accessible and furnish every possible detail of expenditure.

**DOUBLE TAXATION AND REVENUE.**

Revenue should have a basis of levy, the justness of which depends upon equality, which means that every citizen should pay taxes on all his property, thus equably supporting the government that protects all alike.

The ado about double taxation arises from an inequality in this basis growing out of the fact that a portion of the debtor class is taxed on more property than it is worth; a man's worth being the net of his possessions after deducting what he owes. And this is because this class is not allowed to offset debts against real estate.

The exact point of claim in this matter is between the mortgagor and the mortgagee of real estate. The mortgager, in whose name the real estate stands, pays the taxes on its appraised value, while he may have indebtedness over and above his personal property appraisal, which if applied against his real estate would reduce his taxable list. This is not paying twice, but rather paying on what a man does not own, for his property, real and personal alike, in a sense belongs to his creditors until his debts are paid.

The mortgagee presumably pays on the notes which are distinct assets from the reality, and so one tax only is paid by him.

The real plea in this matter is in behalf of that portion of the debtor class who hold real estate, and they would be relieved from this injustice if an offset against real estate were allowed. This class could also be relieved and the real estate values taxed in the State by taxing the mortgage notes in the town where real estate is located, allowing the mortgagor to pay the tax and deduct it from the interest, and also allowing him to offset

his debts against his real estate. This plan would save the grand list of the State from change, while a simple offset against real estate would no doubt materially change the list; but it would be a direct remedy.

Allowing the mortgagor to pay and deduct as suggested would tend to change money from towns paying heavy taxes to those less heavily burdened, but this could be practically avoided by fixing the tax on such notes in all the towns alike and at the average for the State.

These plans are opposed by the money-lender, and his idea of relief is to exempt his notes, bearing a low rate of interest, from taxation. There is a ready objection to this in the fact that such a rule imposes a correspondingly heavier burden upon the taxpaying property, and the debt-burdened taxpayer helps carry it. Therefore, do not exempt from taxes for such reasons.

This case is thus fully stated because it has been so much mooted, and upon such mistaken ground. This, therefore, is to continue the effort of last session to make it plainer as to both complaint and remedy. It seems clear, however, that the trouble complained of is misunderstood or misnamed, and that it would be measurably remedied by either plan suggested; and nothing is plainer than that exemption is too much to the money-lender's advantage. It is fair, however, to say, that upon inquiry among the states, none of them have any plan by which this inequality is wholly corrected; and after investigation, provision for which was requested of your predecessors, and a better understanding of the particular question involved, the opinion is ventured that any conceivable remedy would not fully relieve, and disturb more than it would quiet. It is also believed that strictly speaking there is no such thing as *double* taxation in our revenue system, but that a certain class does pay taxes on more property than it owns and that a certain other class is not thus suspected. It is then deemed good policy to either prove the error of the premises or cease agitation.

#### EDUCATION.

The common schools, under our educational system, which, may we not congratulate ourselves, is firmly established, would undoubtedly be improved by a better supervision. The beneficial influence upon schools of a thorough superintendence cannot be questioned. In matters of property you aim to secure the highest order of care and responsibility. Should you do less for your children during the formative period of their lives?

#### THE COLLEGES.

The colleges at Burlington and Middlebury are evidently making good use of the aid they receive from the treasury. Higher education in this State is upon a better footing than ever before, appreciably because of the assistance found in State encouragement.

#### NORWICH UNIVERSITY.

Norwich University differs from any other educational institution in the State, and from the work it has done deserves special consideration. A school in which a Dewey and many others prominent in the country's history were educated should receive more generous support. It has since the civil war labored under great disadvantages, and should not be allowed to continue longer as it has been obliged to, but be given such State recognition as will enable it to enlarge the field of its usefulness and enter upon a new era of prosperity.

The school is based upon obedience, and calculated to develop the best type of citizenship.

#### THE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

Pursuant to No. 20, Acts of 1896, W.E. Hubbard of Middlebury, C.A. Bunker of Peacham, F.W. Pierce of Chester and L.S. Norton of Bennington were appointed, who, with State Superintendent of Education M.S. Stone, constitute the Board of Normal School Examiners, Commissioners and Supervisors, in said act contemplated.

These schools, upon the report of this board, will require your attention, and it is hoped they will be put upon some permanent basis satisfactory to all, so that they may do the best possible work.

#### INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

This is one of the best institutions in the State. Under the management of an able board of trustees and a most efficient superintendent and matron, little if anything about it could be improved. It is a complete school for so many of our unfortunate boys and girls who, by its loving influences, are being shown the way to a respectable life, that you should bear it favorably in mind and provide its every need. In this school the child is taught industry, common school work, religion, love and purity.

#### STATE PRISON AND HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

The prisons are conducted by an able Board of Directors, efficient officials, and, considering our present system, the management is excellent.

Each institution ought to have more farm lands, and the Windsor prison ought to have the warden's dwelling, which has been under consideration so long, and for which an appropriation was once made. Many convicts can be safely employed at farm labor, profitably to the State and to great individual advantage. The improvements at the House of Correction, affording enlarged accommodations, were needed. This prison now has a desirable chapel, hospital and dining room, which allows the prisoners to eat at table instead of in their cells. These changes, with the drill exercise and flower lawns around the buildings, give the establishment a new appearance.

For statement showing expense of improvements see appendix.

#### PRISON REFORM.

There are in this country one hundred thousand criminals, and in this State about four hundred of this number, of the average age of twenty-five years, and confined under average sentences of say three years. Formerly this class had the sympathy of only sentimentalists and cranks, but latterly clear-headed, kind-hearted men have entreated a larger effort in their behalf. The experiences of those who know the most about prison methods prove the wisdom of reformatory work; stern repression being considered a relic of those days when the mills of the gods ground fine. There are many serving behind the bars more from accident than from a criminal nature. Some are there because they know no better, and some from choice. These sub-divisions, though, represent a small percentage of prison life. From whatever cause these fellow mortals are thus unfortunate, the State should endeavor to put them in the straight and narrow way; therefore, in connection with every prison there should be a school in which a portion of every convict's time should be spent in improving head and heart. The average convict upon receiving his liberty, becomes a parent, often of a large family, and instead of calculating how much can be put into the treasury from his time and labor while under sentence, would it not be wiser and more humane as a people to employ ourselves in calculating how much good can be done him and our future citizenship? During this administration court expenses have been \$238,000, three-fourths of which arose from criminal prosecutions.

Education is the foundation of reformation. It is a plant of slow growth, always, however, manifesting its influence in the course of time, and properly directed is sure to convert, elevate, dignify and honor. We should no longer, then, consider our criminals a source of revenue, but as unfortunate men and women with souls to save and characters to rebuild. The inmates of prisons are public wards from whose vicious tendencies and criminal acts society demands protection, and since these wards are continued from generation to generation, is it not as interesting to study a diminution of their numbers as simply to restrain them? Since then repression does not perceptibly diminish this social menace, the influences by reason of which happily we are above it, should be sent into the hearts of those who thus break law and disturb order.

It is recorded, in those days when the mills ground fine, that a duly solemnized family became conspicuous in criminal annals. The parents served the full term of more or less sentences for their misdeeds, and yet found time to plant the seed from which, in two generations, seventy odd grew up into enrolled criminals. In that case the public fenced one side of the field, imagining they had an enclosure.

The people of this State donate annually thousands of dollars to prepare the hearts of law-abiding heathen in foreign lands for communion with the great Heart of Hearts, but we give nothing to lift up the hearts of an unfortunate class we always have with us, called criminals.

The courts that try and dispose of these cases do the best that can be done from the standpoint of their observation, No man, however at the outset, can determine the most advisable treatment for a convict who starts on a long term of prison service; each case should be watched, trusted and encouraged according to the progress observed. Few absolutely unimprovable cases will be found, and they can be put down for stern repression.

Whatever along this line of thought is now done for the convict becomes a part of the Governor's work, and unless you desire to continue the course at present pursued in this State with this class of our people, you should authorize the board of directors to ascertain deserving cases, as they appear from prison discipline and in the school work of the prisons, which you should also authorize, and to recommend these cases for such conditional executive clemency as may seem advisable; and a board of prison supervisors should be created charged with the duty of knowing, through the sheriffs and other police officers of the State, the faith with which such convicts keep the terms of their release, and to finally recommend full pardon to all whose lives prove them worthy of restoration to citizenship. Such a board, acting in conjunction with the executive, will relieve him of much hard work which does not belong to that office, and render a much needed service of which the State in due time will be proud, and under which our society cannot fail to improve, and because of which court expenses will gradually decrease.

Trusting you will thoroughly investigate and carefully consider this most important subject, it is committed and commended, hoping, in the interests of humanity and the welfare of society, for your favorable action upon some plan in your judgment best suited to public demands in this behalf.

#### PARDONS AND CONDITIONAL DISCHARGES.

One person only, in this administration, has been granted a pardon, whose name appears in the appendix. The conditional discharge is so generally mistaken for a pardon, and so much misunderstanding prevails as to its economy in prison service, that an explanation may not be unprofitable. The prisoner released conditionally under the *statute* is still a convict and continues such until pardoned under the *constitution*. The conditional discharge does not interfere with the sentence of the court, except as to liberty, locality and labor of the convict; these conditions are important to a free man, but by no means all of life. The conditions of such a discharge require the released to deport according to the exactions of good behavior, and report monthly to Governor and Sheriff. Thus assisted, making life successfully a satisfactory period of time, the executive can remove the disabilities remaining under the sentence and restore the highest privileges of life. The discharge then simply suspends certain features of the sentence, puts the convict on good behavior, watches, and finally treats him according to his deserts. The sentence thus suspended remains over the person to whom it relates indefinitely, and when thought best he can be pardoned, or failing in conduct, be returned to prison. In case if misconduct these released convicts can, easily, without adding to court expenses, be returned to custody. The conditional discharge, then, is a wise provision, and properly used cannot fail to conserve the best interests of all concerned.

During this administration one hundred and twenty-seven applications for clemency have been carefully considered, and forty-eight have been conditionally released: seven of this number because far advanced in disease, some of whom have since died. The average portion of sentence to each thus released is two years, and remember all these cases are still convicts out on trial, under political and social disabilities, calling for the co-operation of every true citizen in conducting them to respectability and usefulness; and many of them already report interesting progress.

#### EXPENSE OF COMMITMENTS.

The State has paid during the present administration for commitments to the house of correction \$10,080.70, of which a portion is worked out and returned to the treasury by the convicts. If the 722 commitments had been made by a warden from the prison, which in the opinion of the superintendent could have been done without additional force, a saving would have been made to the treasury from five to seven thousand dollars, depending on number in a committal. This showing relates to the house of correction, and if extended to the State prison would be somewhat larger. For a better understanding of this matter see statement in appendix.

I recommend that you consider and act upon it in the interest of a more economical public service.

## THE WATERBURY ASYLUM.

It is easy to say this institution is under excellent management and its inmates all well cared for. Little more can be said in this connection without repeating the details of the superintendent's report, to which your attention is directed.

The investigation of two years ago resulted in a radical change of administration, which in many respects must be considered an improvement.

It is pleasing to no longer see bars at most of the ward windows, and to know that rarely any of the unfortunate inmates are restrained. Another way, easier, gentler, kinder, has been devised, and suggests a humanity in the treatment and care of such cases that our people expect.

During the present administration a cottage, neat and tidy, to accommodate the convalescent female patients, has been opened, and serves a good purpose, allowing improvables, in an improving condition, to be cared for apart from the others.

There are in this institution from thirty to fifty old, demented people, which number are not, strictly speaking, insane, but most decidedly not fit in mind or body to remain in any of our town or city communities, for lack of conveniences to properly care for them. These should be separated from the violent class, and an annex or cottage, similar to the one above referred to, should be added for them.

The Asylum is sadly in need of grounds upon which the patients can be exercised. It also needs more farm territory, upon which the labor of many of the inmates can be utilized, greatly to their benefit and the advantage of the State. These would not be expensive additions, and whatever they might cost, their practical value to the institution and its occupants would be more than an equivalent for the price paid.

Of the changes in State institutions in the last two years, none are more satisfactory than those seen at the Asylum.

## BRATTLEBORO RETREAT.

Few establishments of the kind in the country are superior, in location, equipment, surroundings and management, to this one. It is indeed a retreat, abounding in conveniences and comforts. The State has about one hundred patients in this institution, and the counties of Windham, Windsor, Bennington and Rutland are authorized to send all cases arising within their jurisdiction to this asylum. This arrangement was made because the Waterbury Asylum was in a crowded condition, and the Retreat is used to accommodate the overflow, the understanding being that whenever there is room at the State institution it shall be occupied by these cases.

## THE SOLDIER'S HOME.

No expense incurred by the State serves a better purpose, or is more cheerfully met, than the allowance to this institution. Since its establishment the State has expressed its gratitude to the indigent veterans of the civil war in a willing maintenance of this home. The record already discloses that its need is growing less from year to year as the numbers dependent upon it are one by one mustered from the service of time into that of eternity. No Vermont Legislature will ever need be told the wants of the Soldier's Home. At the session of 1898, as at all former sessions since it was founded, a generous support will be accorded.

## FISH HATCHERY.

The Hatchery at Roxbury is doing a good work stocking the streams and ponds of the State with trout. Tables in the appendix will show how generally this work is being conducted, and no comment is required to demonstrate its efficiency or benefits. The Hatchery deserves well at your hands.

## STATE GEOLOGIST AND CURATOR.

The official in charge of this branch of the service, Mr. George W. Perry, has been and still is seriously out of health and unable to suitably complete the work contemplated by Act No. 7 of the acts of the last session. Resigning his office, Prof. George H. Perkins of Burlington was appointed to fill the vacancy, and gives assurance that he will have ready, sometime during the session, a report of his work.

## RAILROADS AND RAILROAD COMMISSION.

In the past two years there have been forty-eight fatal accidents in connection with the railroad service of the State, which fact presents a subject for your investigation and consideration.

The electric roads are becoming such a factor in the carrying service as to deserve your careful attention.

The better opinion seems to be that these roads should be put under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission.

This commission continues its work and is coming to be all the more acceptable to both people and roads.

At the last session the pay of the members of this and the other State boards was changed, and while the law accomplishing the change was in the main well advised, yet you are requested to consider if the pay of this board is what it ought to be, and if it should not be restored practically to the old basis. Upon investigation you will find the duties of the railroad commission different from those of the other State boards.

## STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

The importance of this organization cannot be over-estimated. Food, water and other health conditions of the State are subjects legitimately under its control. Laboratory work, as necessary to the physician as the compass to the mariner, conducted at Burlington by Dr. Linsley, under the auspices of this board, should be enlarged and more liberally assisted. I trust your interest in this feature of our government will be commensurate with its value to health and life. The State must aid the laboratory work, or it must cease. Consult then its true relation to the dearest interests of our people, and deal with it so as to promote the civilization of which we boast.

## STATE BENEFICIARIES.

This State appropriates, each biennial term, for the education of indigent, feeble-minded, blind, deaf and dumb children, the sum of twenty-two thousand dollars. The statute makes the Governor commissioner of this fund and its application, and requires the towns, through the county clerks, to keep him advised of the number of these unfortunates in the State. These required returns are not made according to law, so, for the purpose of knowing whether all such of our children are being educated, a recent canvass of the several towns was instituted, revealing that twenty-one are not considered. This number, and the thirty-three receiving benefits, makes fifty-four of this class in the State. It was thought you might wish to know how nearly existing provision covers this field of duty. The most of those at school are improvables and improving. Some have graduated, making room for others, but about the number of twenty scattered over the State are subjects for your further consideration in this direction. If the appropriations were in one general sum instead of a given amount to each class, and the commissioner allowed to apportion according to applications, regardless of classes, the work intended would no doubt be more satisfactorily accomplished. See report in the appendix.

## THE NATIONAL GUARD.

This organization won golden opinions on public occasions, including the muster at Chester. Its efficiency was all that could be desired, except as to physical ability, which, for lack of interest in the membership, appeared in the ranks among the officers to an objectionable extent. This in future organization should be carefully guarded against.

Soon after the muster at Chester, Capt. Herbert E. Tutherly of the regular army, who had served acceptably four years in connection with the National Guard, returned to his regiment, and Major Stephen P. Jocelyn, 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry, was detailed by the War Department to continue the service from which, under Capt. Tutherly, the Guard had realized so much benefit. Maj. Jocelyn's work opened auspiciously, and the War Department has been requested, upon a re-organization of the Guard, to return him to his detail in connection with it.

Early last winter the old pattern guns were exchanged for the new model; the buzzacot and other camp conveniences were ordered for the several companies.

In March last, war threatening, requisitions were made for munitions, tentage, clothing and blankets necessary to fully equip the regiment, which were not honored for want of property. Had these requisitions

been filled a regiment of the size of the old Guard ready for active services could have been sent to the front on twelve hours' notice.

The discipline of this body as then organized was excellent when it volunteered as one man, in response to the President's calls for troops to serve in the war with Spain. From this ready action it was easier to tender full quotas under the President's requests for an army, which was done on the day of his first proclamation.

Mobilization of the regiment awaited orders from the War Department, and it rendezvoused on the permanent camp ground at Burlington, where the physical fitness of officers and men being determined, it was raised to 1008 officers and men, mustered into the United States service, and immediately, under orders from the War Department, proceeded to camp of instruction at Chickamauga Park. The War Department early, by orders to that effect, signified its purpose to assume all expense of the regiment accruing after acceptance by the government, thus absolutely leaving the State no opportunity to do anything in this regard.

Upon muster-in all army property in the State was required by the government for use in clothing and equipping the regiment, which being insufficient, it went away only partially supplied in these respects, but with the assurance that the deficiency would be furnished at Chickamauga as the necessary property could be manufactured. Upon arrival at Chickamauga the executive was advised from time to time by its officers and others that the regiment was comfortably provided for and being equipped as rapidly as possible; and from such advices, not able to learn of anything needed which it did not have, no expense after it left Camp Olympia was incurred by the State, except to grant request for tactics at a cost of about \$100.

Some of the States sent fully equipped regiments because they had uniforms and guns used in connection with their Guard organizations with which to do it, and it is to be regretted that this State did not give a National Guard organization large enough to allow the same thing to be done by its regiment. Such not being the case, the Vermont soldiers had to leave the State partially equipped, about 700 in uniform and 300 citizen's dress; not, however, until the best that could be done for them in this regard was done.

Such organizations, upon acceptance by the government, being in the United States service, were entirely under national control and no State had a right to equip such soldiers without the consent of the War Department, which consent, as already stated, was at the outset withheld. Then the matter of equipping the regiment before it left the State, a thing so much desired by all, stood as follows:

1<sup>st</sup>. That no chance to uniform being presented before muster into the service, requisitions thereto requesting having been refused; and after acceptance such work being exclusively assumed by the government, the State was thus precluded from any part therein.

2<sup>nd</sup>. Under the circumstances the State could not have uniformed the regiment without overriding the authority of the government, which was regarded an insurmountable difficulty.

3<sup>rd</sup>. When suddenly and unexpectedly the regiment was ordered South, a three days' delay of the order was secured, to allow better preparation for departure and final adieus; also to see if still further delay was desired, that further effort might be made to uniform and arm before going; but the executive was informed by many of the officers and men that it was a general desire of the regiment to go at once and not wait for full equipment.

4<sup>th</sup>. It was repeatedly and no doubt correctly reported by the officers and others, including soldiers, that the government kept its assurance and completed the equipment of the regiment as speedily as possible, and under the circumstances with commendable dispatch; and also that no unnecessary hardship was imposed upon the men while at Camp Thomas, and that it suffered from nothing more than the unavoidable inconvenience of camp life and consequent sickness, which, while considerable and greatly to be deplored, was much less than in many other regiments in the war with Spain and very much below the average, for a similar period of regiments from this State in the civil war.

When peace was assured, the War Department was requested to move the Vermont regiment from Chickamauga to Camp Olympia and muster it out of the United States service when no longer needed for war purposes. A thirty days' furlough and a muster-out at company headquarters were also requested. These



requests were granted, and when muster-out is complete it will be the First Regiment, National Guard of Vermont, under No. 5 of the Acts of the Special Session.

Thus in outline you have the part Vermont took in a most remarkable war, which demonstrates a patriotism and soldiership of which the State is proud, suggests the anxious love that went with and welcomed the return of our soldiers, and places beyond dispute the advantage of an efficient militia so organized as to be always ready for an emergency; and looking to such an institution, I recommend a Guard organization sufficient in numbers to constitute a maximum regiment for the United States service. Such an organization will need be twice as large as now authorized by law, excluding the battery; to maintain which, under the conditions of our population, the companies will have to be small, probably no larger than authorized by existing laws, and twice as many, properly distributed over the State, which would give two regiments of same size to the present one. These two regiments, upon call for troops from the State, could easily be consolidated into one, retaining the officers according to seniority of rank, provision for which should be made in the law authorizing such a system, which would be notice to all participating, and friction would thus be avoided in case of consolidation.

The battery property has been turned over to the government, and in such legislation as you may provide for reorganizing the militia the battery should be omitted. Perplexities were encountered in preparing the First Vermont Volunteer Infantry for service, and it was compelled to go in an incomplete condition because of inadequate organization. The contract for enlistment should be such as to render the men enlisted under it liable to the call of the President without further enlistment, and possibly the organization should be in connection with a national Statute, which would render it more a feature of the regular army than it has been. A change in our militia system, that will accomplish a more practicable organization, is of the utmost importance; and if the State does not feel able to maintain some such militia or guard organization, it better do without. It has cost from \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year to maintain the present system, which was sufficient for parade purposes, but did not prove equal to the requirements of actual service, not because of quality, but owing to an insufficient organization.

#### EXPENSE OF MOBILIZING THE REGIMENT.

Exclusive of the seven dollars a month extra pay to the enlisted men, the expense incurred by the State in preparing the regiment for the United States services was about \$20,000, all of which becomes a claim against the general government.

#### SPECIAL SESSION.

After fully considering the exigencies of the service, a special session was summoned to meet May 5, last, at which an extra compensation was granted the enlisted men of the regiment, which generous action was everywhere received with great favor and more than appreciated by the men and their families.

This gratuity was a willing testimonial in the State's gratitude to the valor, patriotic sacrifice, patient service and unquestioned gallantry of its brave regiment, which though not employed in battle, none the less performed its full duty and returns to as warm a welcome as heart can express.

#### PERMANENT CAMP GROUND.

The camp ground near Fort Ethan Allen, consisting of about fifty-three acres, and which was in an unfinished condition at the beginning of the present administration, has been equipped for permanent use. It is enclosed by a suitable fence, has convenient buildings, is well watered, sodded, and by reason of its proximity to the range upon the government reservation, is one of the most desirable camp grounds in the country. The State, for the consummation of this result, is indebted to contributions from public-spirited citizens, a list of whom can be seen in the appendix. To the sum of \$2015 thus donated, about a thousand dollars was added from the treasury.

#### ROADS.

Better roads are so undeniably desirable, that all sections of country have become interested in securing them. Some of the States have provided means and adopted practical ways for permanent road work, some are

still discussing the subject, while this State distributes among the towns \$87,000 of State money annually, raised for permanent roads and in some instances for ordinary town purposes.

For generations in this State we put toward a half million each year on roads;--not into them, but upon them—and the roads were from year to year the same poor ways, over which a patient public jounced and stumbled. A few years since, only, our eyes opened and the need of better roads gradually became a conviction which six years ago ripened into a five per cent. State tax, authorized to carry on permanent work. A State commission, with authority to suggest as to the character of this work and application of this tax, was created, and though it had rendered a valuable service, and it is believed accomplished much good, it was dropped two years ago, leaving the fund thus dedicated to permanent road work entirely to the town road commissioners. There should be a State supervision of its expenditure, or the fund, which is in the nature of a trust, created for a given purpose, should cease.

Permanent road building is not accomplished by ordinary highway work, but by constructing roads that will take care of themselves for a reasonable period of time. Permanency should be considered with reference to locality, travel and other kindred conditions, and should not be made too expensive. Extravagance is a danger to be avoided as one that will imperil the whole enterprise. We should regulate our progress in this respect by practical economy.

The roads of the State have been noticeably improved within the last decade, and if we wisely push forward the work so well begun, a greater improvement will follow in years to come. Massachusetts has probably made greater progress in permanent construction than any other State, and expends toward a million of dollars annually in aid of this work on a plan it might be well for you to consider.

The better you make the roads, the more your farms will be worth, and all the more will summer tourists come within our borders.

If you should raise the State tax to twelve per cent. and expend every dollar of the probable \$200,000 such a tax will annually command under competent State supervision, the State would enter upon an era of prosperity that can be afforded and would be enjoyed. Remember it requires money to make roads. Do not bond, pay as you go, but get permanent roads as rapidly as can be considered consistent with our financial ability. See appendix.

#### PROHIBITION.

Prohibition continues to be one of the most interesting features of our State government, more vital to the welfare of our society than any other, and deserves your most careful, earnest consideration.

Two-thirds of the criminal class attribute their downfall to the use of alcoholic stimulants, and an equal percentage of the insane and paupers can ascribe their misfortunes to the same cause.

The prohibitory law is well enforced in the rural sections, fairly well enforced in a few of the larger towns, indifferently enforced in some of them, and openly disregarded in others. The prohibitory cause in this State is substantially in the same condition as two years ago. The law is as well enforced now as then, possibly better, but this does not meet the situation. Some localities, but few, however, to our credit be it said, persist in flagrant violation—a fact well known to the officials whose duty it is to enforce. There is law enough, there are officials enough, and we will never be a self-respecting people until enforcement of the prohibitory law is triumphant. After two years official experience, please note the opinion that the law *can* be enforced, as well one law as another, in all sections of the State alike, when complainant, prosecutor, witness, judge, jury and citizen cooperate in so ordering.

The State's attorneys hold the key to the situation and the judges of the courts turn it when they allow certificate of pay. Great power for weal or woe to our people rests with the judges who hold our county courts.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

Between forty and fifty thousand dollars has already been expended in attempting to subdue this disease. Certain indications only are given by which the course of the work for its extermination may be known, while its progress is susceptible of self-registration.

An individual who would undertake the extinction of as volatile a quantity as pulmonary ailments, or any kindred susceptibilities among stock, at a probable cost of a hundred or more thousand dollars, work four years and expend fully half that sum, knowing his progress only by the rule of guess, would be counted fit for guardianship. Yet this is what the thorough-going business man would say the State of Vermont is doing. A record of all stock in the State subject to this disease, with power to test as fast as recorded, would soon determine the whole undertaking and afford an opportunity to know more of the thoroughness of the work already done. From a business standpoint there can be little question about this proposition, and it is as clear that the present haphazard way of testing will lead to nothing definite and cost as much, if not more than a compulsory, systematic plan.

A man should be allowed to do according to his mind, if it is right, and should be compelled to do what he ought, if he will not do it of his own motion. If it is right to test that portion of the stock of the State voluntarily offered for that purpose, it is also right to test the balance, whether the owners are willing or not. If it is right to test three-fourths, it is all the more right to test the other fourth. The three-fourths tested have a right, in self-defence, to demand a test of the balance. A compulsory test, with an accurate record, would soon furnish our State with something for the money it has expended in this direction, and the farmer would soon find it to his advantage to have a public record of the sanitary condition of his stock.

## CORPORATION LEGISLATION.

This State tenaciously adheres to the vicious practice of granting legislative charters. Most matters can be incorporated through the office of the Secretary of State under existing laws, and every whit as good a charter can be thus obtained.

Repeated but unsuccessful efforts have been made to change this practice, and while some charters are granted under general laws, yet at the last session 129 corporation acts ran through the legislative hopper, and also 67 called miscellaneous, but relating to corporations or charters, making 196 acts in all of a private character, occupying three-fourths of the book containing the acts of that session; and these against 142 public acts. It is fair to estimate that three-fourths of the time and expense of legislation in this State goes to private benefit. And this is not the worst; nearly all this work is rushed on to executive approval *by title only*. It will bear repeating that three-fourths of our legislation is for private account, in which the State has only a paternal interest. From a full canvass of the States upon this subject you are advised that only a few of them do the like, and they regret their neglect to have cast off the incubus. Some of the States avoid all private legislation by constitutional inhibition; others regulate it by legislative enactment; so that nearly all escape the folly in which we persist.

The granting of charters is a source of revenue in all the States issuing them under the general law, ranging from a few hundred, along the way of several thousand, to the round sum of three hundred thousand dollars annually in the State of New York. Instead of realizing for the treasury from these favors for private gain, we expend thousands every year to offer them indiscriminately in large numbers, many of which are never used, and in a way which shocks legislative practices. Seven sessions has this farce been observed by an eye-witness, and belief has become firm that it should give way to the original intention that our government should not subordinate its legislative prerogatives to private behests.

Charters generally, even those including questions of eminent domain and condemnation proceedings, can undoubtedly be authorized by general legislation, for which a reasonable fee should be paid into the treasury. If constitutional difficulties embarrass, make exceptions to suit cases, but remember any power that has time and patience to read through at least once the charter it grants, is in better position to confer a safe instrument than the Vermont Legislature.

You have some of the facts and reasons bearing upon this matter. It is then in your hands, and the people look to you for deliverance.

#### THE CAUCUS.

The caucus is a root factor in the nomination, and, where a nomination is equivalent to an election, is of the utmost importance. This institution is regulated in most of the States by law, and it should be in this State. It has been allowed to run wild long enough. House bill No. 1 of last session, which would have received prompt executive approval had it not been strangled by some unfriendly influence, was well enough as far as it went, but a broader law, regulating the caucus from start to finish, with penalty provisions, is what the people are waiting for, and it is the general impression that this session should enact a law by which caucus jumping and convention raiding will be prevented for all future time. Control the caucus as completely as the election; require check lists; put all the meetings at the same hour; have every choice by ballot; keep the boxes open a reasonable time; exact an honest count, so that a delegate's credentials will signify purity of process, independence of choice, and certify an honest result.

#### ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

This State ought to have an Attorney-General. Such an officer would assure a better administration of the criminal law, and save the treasury a very considerable sum of money every year. His services are needed by the Governor often, and at times it is awkward to be without them. It will take from the local attorney lucrative assignments, but what he loses the public will gain.

Aware of the general prejudice against more offices, I yet trust you will not allow this longer to outweigh substantial reasons in favor of an office so much needed, the creation of which will promote the public weal, and not only cost nothing, but accomplish an actual annual saving.

#### PATRIOTISM.

Love of country, next to love of home, is the sheet anchor of society. A people established in patriotism are strong individually, and when associated for political purposes suggest great possibilities.

Patriotism has figured conspicuously in setting the standard of Vermont character, and school children should be taught the lives of the country's founders and defenders, that purity, principle and justice may continue to predominate in affairs of State. Study Washington and Lincoln until the deeds of their noble lives are reflected in the conduct of coming generations.

Put the flag over the school house by legislative act and defend it against thoughtless desecration as you would against the enemy. Respect the flag and you will respect the country.

#### PURE FOOD.

The food consumed by the people should be pure. Adulteration, substitution and imitation are active enemies of such a product. These gilded arts have assailed health and so far sophisticated business and morals as to intimidate honest men in efforts at honest transactions.

The States cannot alone fully regulate this subject, but perhaps Congress can, by either controlling it directly or authorizing the States to do so. If after all is said and done interstate rights or repugnancy to constitutional prerogatives are lions in the path, amend the national constitution so as to remove this barrier to honesty, behind which rascality intrenches and from which our industries are assaulted. If you should memorialize Congress for the regulation of this matter, you would reflect a sentiment sure at no distant day to assert itself against these giant frauds.

#### INSPECTOR OF MILK TESTS.

The creameries of the State are public conveniences. Most of them receive and account for milk according to some kind of a test, and since many farmers realize their principal income from the milk hauled to these public places, why should not a public guaranty be given of both accuracy and honesty? Our farmers, delivering each to the creameries from a few thousands to 300,000 pounds annually, are awaiting patiently the

pleasure of an introduction to an inspector of milk tests, and the hope is you will soon accord them such an opportunity.

#### FIRE PROTECTION.

Of the losses by fire in this State, a large number can be traced to incendiarism, and also a large number remain unknown. In the year 1895, the incendiary lighted forty-three fires in the State, and ninety-one were of unknown origin. The property losses by fire that year were \$621,071, of which insurance companies paid over \$400,000. Sound public policy demands that more be done to discover the unknown and to extinguish the incendiary's torch.

Vermont should have a Fire Marshal, or some equivalent official, paid by the insurance companies, through the State treasury, as the Inspector of finance is paid, and similar officials in many of the States; whose duty it shall be to establish, if possible, the origin of every fire that occurs. Reducing hazard in fire risks reduces rates, and in this way, if in no other, the people get the benefit of such an office.

This is the fourth time the executive has called legislative attention to this matter, and you should stamp it a message joke, or accord it the serious attention it deserves.

#### STATE HOUSE IMPROVEMENTS.

It is pleasant to note the improvement since last session in the system of lighting this building, and the State will enjoy this change more than any other that has been made in State property for years.

The old gas system of lighting was insufficient and unhealthful. The Sergeant-at-Arms, the Honorable Truman C. Phinney, deserves the thanks of the State for making the change.

#### ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS.

In 1884, an appropriation was voted for the much needed new part to this building, and since it has been occupied the wonder, almost equal to any of the seven great ones, has been how we existed, or rather kept along without it.

The State needs as seriously now as then an addition to the Capitol that shall accommodate the Speaker, clerks, the Auditor, provide an office for the executive, and a place for public documents, papers and books that are now tucked away in damp, dark by-places, where mildew and destruction are already at work.

This can be accomplished at moderate expense, but, cost much or little, such an improvement is needed, and what the State of Vermont needs it can afford.

#### COMPOSITION OF STATE BOARDS.

Women upon boards of charity have served, in many instances, an excellent purpose, especially in institutions where both sexes are represented, and a great many think you will elevate the public service by providing a place for them upon such boards in this State; and such thought seems the better opinion upon the subject.

#### PARIS EXPOSITION.

Upon the invitation of His Excellency the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, this State was represented at a joint meeting of the Massachusetts State Board of Trade and State of Massachusetts, and at a banquet to the Governors of the New England States, and invited guests, on the twenty-second day and evening of March last, for the purpose of harmonizing a plan under which the New England States can as one body be represented at the Paris Exposition in 1900. Nothing was definitely agreed upon except that it would be desirable for the six states to exhibit their products as one organization. This subject claims your attention, and it is hoped you will, by special committee, investigate its merits, and after conferring with the other New England Governors, more particularly Governor Wolcott, you will act advisedly in the premises.

In this connection it may be said that at the request of the Commissioner General for the United States to the Paris Exposition, through the agency of the schools in America, popular contributions are contemplated for a fund to erect a suitable memorial in honor of Lafayette, whose remains rest obscurely in the city of Paris. It is

proposed to unveil and dedicate a monument on the fourth day of July, 1900, to the memory of this noble patriot, of which America and France will be equally proud; which ceremony will be, perhaps, the most conspicuous historic feature of the world's coming Exposition.

Your able Superintendent of Education is canvassing the schools of the State, in aid of this significant and beautiful international event, and has been requested to report results, that you may fittingly memorialize.

#### EXECUTIVE OFFICE.

The executive department should be provided with an office at the State Capitol and also a secretary whose entire time shall be given to the duties of his appointment.

The desirability of this cannot be successfully questioned.

#### INSURANCE COMMISSIONER.

The office of Insurance Commissioner has been suggested by those who have opportunity to know its advisability, and you will no doubt seasonably hear more upon this subject and have an opportunity to pass upon its merits.

#### FUTILE LEGISLATION.

At the last regular session one hundred and fifty sections of the Vermont statutes were amended and repealed. Each session some way seems called upon to correct a very considerable portion of the work of the preceding session, while fact carries its own explanation. Do not feel under any obligation to make new laws. Your best service is liable to be in preventing new enactments.

#### THE LAST NIGHT.

During the closing two days of the last regular session the executive signed more than one-third of the enacted measures of the entire session, and it is hoped he approved them. This fact speaks for itself, and will continue to so speak until the work of the sessions is more judiciously arranged and executed, and until our legislators keep better faith with their sense of duty in this particular.

#### CONCLUSION.

The unique government of our unique little State has become historic. Vermont character is everywhere at a premium. The proud acts of our men are the envy of ambition. Good government, our perennial boast, depends upon guarding well every interest of the people. To the best of my ability have I as opportunity offered, discharged this duty to my State. I have told you what has been left undone in years of the past that ought to have been done, and what has been done as best it could be during the last two years for the welfare of our Commonwealth, and as I retire from public life, with which I have been honored more or less for the past twenty-six years, I desire to thank the people of the State I love for their confidence and uniform kindness. I desire also to thank my friends, from the deepest gratitude of the heart, for their support and counsel in time of trial. About to cross the threshold of a new century, in which the art of human government and composition of citizenship will have greater possibilities than ever before, let us look to God for courage, love and humanity, that shall keep Vermont in the national constellation of States the bright star that shall never set.

Thanking you for the courtesy of this occasion, I bid you a final adieu.

JOSIAH GROUT.