

Inaugural address
of
Paul Dillingham
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Friday, October 13, 18654 Inaugural Address

*Gentlemen of the Senate
and House of Representatives:*

After the anxiety and agitation of four years of bloody war waged by the Union for the preservation of national existence, we are permitted again to meet, in the calm of peace, to discharge those duties imposed upon us by the Constitution, and demanded by the best interests of the people we represent.

During the past year it has pleased Almighty God to grant us great and signal mercies; for this let us join in rendering Him our humble thanksgivings, while we sincerely implore His aid and guidance in the discharge of all our official and personal duties.

FINANCES

From the Treasurer's report, herewith submitted to you, it appears that the balance of cash in the treasury, September 5, 1864, was	\$424,096 56
That the receipts into the treasury from all other sources during the year to September 5, 1865, were	\$1,585,172 95 -----
Making in all the sum of	\$2,009,269 51
That during the year there has been paid out and disbursed the sum of	1,996,772 50 -----
Leaving in the treasury, Sept. 5, 1865,	\$12,497 01
The funded liabilities of the State, Sept. 5, 1865, amounted to \$1,650,000 00, consisting of outstanding State bonds.	
The present current liabilities of the State are	\$207,575 56
The current resources, including the balance in the treasury, Sept. 5, 1865, are	\$23,411 60 -----
Making an excess of current liabilities of	\$184,163 96
The estimated expenses for the current year, are:	
For interest on bonds and loans,	108,750 00
For all other State expenses,	175,000 00 -----
Making to be provided for,	\$467,913 96

The grand list of the State is about one million of dollars, and a tax of fifty cents on the dollar will probably raise money sufficient to cover the current liabilities of the year.

We are not to forget, however, that we have a large funded debt which will be burthensome to meet, if none of it is provided for before it falls due. The close of the war, and the return of our soldiers, has very greatly diminished our current expenses, and at the same time our agricultural, and all the other industrial interests of the State, were never in a more prosperous and healthy condition; and I feel confident that any amount of taxation, demanded by the best interests of the State, will be met cheerfully by the people, and its payment will not be felt as burthensome.

The Treasurer estimates that a State tax of sixty-five cents, on the grand list of this year, would raise \$150,000 above the current expenditures, to be applied in purchasing in outstanding State Bonds; and that for the next six years a tax of forty cents on the dollar of the grand list, yearly, will raise a sum sufficient to meet

the current expenses of the State, and leave a yearly surplus of \$150,000, to be used in buying the State Bonds as they come into market. Should this be done to that extent, in 1871 but \$750,000 of our funded debt will remain unpaid; a sum that can easily be provided for as the bonds fall due.

Our State Bonds are now selling at a discount of four or five per cent., and should gold continue to command a premium, as it will be likely to do for a considerable time yet to come, this, with the fact the general government and most of the states are paying a higher rate of interest than is paid on our bonds, will probably depress their market value to a still lower point. If the State is in funds to go into the market as a purchaser with others, it will be able to make a positive gain on its purchases, beside stopping the accruing interest.

Connected with this subject of raising money by taxation, we are to remember that all our property, no matter by what name called, except such as is expressly exempted by positive law, should bear its equal proportion in the burthen of taxation. If our laws produce that result now, then all is well on that score; but if they fail to accomplish that end, your scrutiny should lead you to their proper amendment.

SALARIES AND FEES

By our present law, the state's attorneys of the several counties are salaried officers. Compensation in this mode is made more to depend upon the population of the several counties, than on the labor done and service rendered to the State; and I submit to your judgment whether this mode has not a natural tendency to diminish watchfulness over the public interest by those officers. As far as my own personal observation extends, I am induced to believe that crime, now, is not so thoroughly ferreted out, and the criminal so certainly brought to trial, conviction and punishment, as when these officers were paid for what they did, and for nothing more. If this be the fact, our present law is defective and unwise.

JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Permit me, gentlemen, to call your attention to that class of the rising generation denominated juvenile offenders. This class embraces children of both sexes, and their number is very sensibly on the increase. To reform such, while they are undergoing restraint as a punishment, should be our unceasing endeavor. Very few crimes committed by this class are punished by confinement in the State Prison, and though confinement there is somewhat reformatory, yet the stigma of having been in State Prison is almost forever ineffaceable. Far the greater number of juvenile offenders are, of necessity, punished by confinement in the county jails, where they are most generally associated with old and hardened criminals, who at once devote themselves to teaching these children the art and mysteries of crime; so that, when discharged, instead of being reformed, they are more likely to be thoroughly corrupted.

Would it not be for the true interests of the State to establish a home, or house of refuge, where this class could be confined, under such regulations as would be likely to minister both instruction and reform, in connection with a just and merciful punishment?

COMMON SCHOOLS.

The report of the Secretary of the Board of Education shows, upon the whole, an encouraging state of our common schools. The efficiency and success of these schools, which are the nurseries of our coming men and women, cannot be over-estimated.

It seems that teaching in these schools is gradually passing from male to female hands, with an apparent proportional improvement in the schools. This is flattering to female teachers, but speaks poorly of the other class. I fear that the better class of male teachers leave the State for other localities, where their services command a better remuneration, - leaving the less competent and accomplished teachers to polish our home jewels.

Should not the character, learning and aptness to teach, on the part of those offering themselves for examination, be more thoroughly ascertained before they receive a certificate; or, if this is not practicable, could not something be done, by requiring graded certificates, distinguishing between the candidate of a low class of qualifications, and the one who is a thorough scholar and apt to teach. This might serve to stimulate those

proposing to teach to greater improvement, and also aid the school committee more easily to ascertain the fitness of those offering to teach.

DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND.

The expense of our State pupils, deaf, dumb and blind, who are now receiving instruction at the institutions designated by law, has very much increased, so that an increase of the standing yearly appropriations for these unfortunate classes of our citizens should be made. There are now twenty-one deaf and dumb pupils at the Asylum at Hartford, Connecticut. Until the past year, the expense of each pupil yearly was \$125; but last year the price was raised to \$200, of which notice was given to the Governor of the State. He, however, believing that it would not be in accordance with the humanity of our people to withdraw any of our pupils for this cause, permitted them to remain. Their expense will exceed present appropriations for the year. I therefore recommend an appropriation to meet the deficiency, of a sum not exceeding \$1000. The New England institution for the instruction of the blind also raised their charges from \$200 to \$250 per year. I therefore submit to you the propriety of increasing the annual appropriation for the deaf and dumb to a sum not exceeding six thousand dollars; and that for the benefit of the blind to a sum not exceeding thirty-five hundred dollars.

SOLDIERS' NATIONAL CEMETERY AT GETTYSBURG.

In December, 1863, the committee having that matter in charge, estimated the whole expense of that cemetery, including a monument, at the sum of \$63,500, and \$25,000 of this was designed for the monument. On that estimate, the proportion of Vermont was \$1,260, which, under the appropriation of the last session, has been paid; but, immediately after those estimates were made, a great rise in the price of labor, and materials of all descriptions, took place, so that the estimate falls short of the actual expenses, by about fifty per cent. Everything connected with the cemetery is completed, except the monument. The corner stone of that was laid July 4, 1865, and the work is in an advanced state of completion. The balance of our State proportion of the whole cost is \$630, which has already been drawn for on the Executive, but its payment awaits an appropriation by the Legislature. I hope it may be promptly made, as the faith of the State is pledged for our proportion.

MILITARY

War has ceased; the great rebellion, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, which purposed no less than the destruction of our nationality and the death of our Union, while it made permanent and forever perpetuated the abominable institution of negro slavery as an American institution, has been overcome, conquered and beaten down; and, in the merciful providence of an overruling God, slavery and the rebellion came to an end together. They both died at the same time, and we may well hope that neither will ever have a resurrection. In their place, Freedom and Peace are assuming their benign and rightful sway. Our prayers may well be, that of their dominion there shall be no end.

The Adjutant and Inspector General's very valuable report will fully advise you as to the number of men furnished by the State for the late war, and to what extent they have been discharged and mustered out. It also gives you the needed information as to what has been done in arming, uniforming and organizing the militia of the State, during the past year.

During the war since 1861, it appears that Vermont has furnished thirty-four thousand five hundred and fifty-five men; thirty thousand seven hundred and fifty-five of these were volunteers, and three thousand eight hundred were drafted men, and substitutes furnished. From this it will be seen that, during the war, about one-ninth of our entire population served as soldiers. This is a bright and glorious record for Vermont. And such soldiers, too! bravest among the brave; none better ever adorned the history of any state or nation. We owe to these noble men, living or dead, an imperishable debt of gratitude, love and honor. This debt should be recognized by such marks of respect and justice as legislation only can furnish.

Since the war closed, our troops have been mustered out from time to time, till, on the first of October, 1865, we had in service only the Seventh Regiment, numbering five hundred and eighty-two men; and four companies of the Ninth Regiment, numbering three hundred and eighty-eight men; total, nine hundred and seventy.

Since that date an order has been issued for mustering out the four companies of the Ninth Regiment, and I am informed, that it is the purpose War Department to muster out the Seventh Regiment during the present fall or coming winter. When this is done, our State expenses for pay to soldiers and aid to their families will entirely cease.

If other subjects come to my notice during the session, demanding your action, I shall communicate them to you without delay. I am not unaware, gentlemen, that the whole field of legislation is open to you, and that your own experience and vigilance will doubtless lead you to all proper legislation, while your prudence will prevent all that is unnecessary.

OUR STATE

The fundamental law of our State declares, “that all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and inalienable rights, among which are the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.” Our motto is “FREEDOM AND UNITY.” Our laws and institutions are all based on the principles so early avowed. In the face of the law, we are all equal; at the ballot box, in our courts of justice, and in all our institutions of learning, our rights are the same, no matter what is our color, or what our race. On this basis of equality we have lived and prospered. From its effects we have not felt or feared social degradation. Our people are intelligent, frugal, industrious, enterprising, prosperous and happy; and we cannot but hope that the equality, which has so blessed us, may yet, and speedily, become the primary law of every state in our Union.

I close this communication by the expression of an earnest hope, that you, gentlemen, in all your deliberations, may be guided by an earnest desire so to legislate that your labors shall tend to increase the material interests of the people, and add lustre and honor to our beloved State. May the blessing God rest upon your labors, and crown them with happy results.

PAUL DILLINGHAM.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, }
Montpelier, Oct. 13, 1865. }