

Inaugural address
of

Levi K. Fuller

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Thursday, October 6, 1892
Inaugural Address

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

Having been elected Chief Magistrate of the State, I assume the office with a sense of the great responsibility resting upon me, realizing my need of the kindly forbearance of all. The Constitution imposes upon the executive the duty of laying before you such information and rendering such aid as may be in his power in determining the various questions that arise in the interests of the State, to the end that suitable provision may be made for the wants of the government, in the enactment of proper laws for the guidance and welfare of the people. I trust I may enjoy your confidence and kind consideration.

Invoking the aid of Him who giveth wisdom necessary alike to all, and without which we may hope to accomplish but little, under his guiding hand we may approach the duties incumbent upon us with reasonable assurance.

In due time, reports of the various State officers will be laid before you, which will exhibit in detail the operations of the different departments of the State government for the biennial term.

Several of these have come into my hands too late for that study which it is desirable should be made by one whose duty it is to write concerning them.

The law which permits State reports to be printed at so late a day, in some instances not until after the legislature meets, affords no proper opportunity for the executive or people to examine the reports or to intelligently arrange for future legislation.

All of these reports should be in the hands of the printer, not later than the 20th of August, and I recommend that the law be changed accordingly.

STATE TREASURER.

An examination of the report of the State Treasurer shows the receipts and disbursements for the two years ending June 30, 1892, to be as follows:

Receipts.

Cash on hand July 1, 1890	\$117,708 74
From State institutions	\$ 33,540 77
Probate and County Courts	114,663 14
Licenses.....	8,470 00
	----- \$156,673 91
Highway and Bridge Account.....	\$ 5,296 69
Income Agricultural Fund.....	16,260 00
Towns, U. S. Deposit Fund for redistribution.....	51,950 51
Sundry sources	5,460 58
	----- \$78,967 78
Corporations, Taxes, etc	\$579,493 20
State tax.....	272, 858 85
State school Tax.....	174, 322 93
	----- \$1,026,674 98
From the United States:	
For the Soldier's Home.....	\$12,018 43
Bennington Battle Monument.....	14,000 00
Agricultural College Endowment	48,000 00
Direct tax refunded	179,407 80
	----- \$253,426 23
Temporary Loans	\$620,000 00

Interest on deposits	2,842 40
Total to be accounted for	\$2,256,294 04

Disbursements.

Extra State Pay to Soldiers.....	\$ 189 74
Bennington Battle Monument and Association income	85 12
General Assembly, session of 1890.....	55,615 40
General Assembly session, (extra) 1891.....	7,672 50
State School Tax paid towns.....	89,103 22
U.S. Deposit money paid towns.....	1,570 35
U.S. Deposit money, redistribution to towns as per last census	50,453 43
Huntington fund paid towns.....	25,319 82
Interest Registered Loan	16,260 00
Auditor's order, July 2, 1890, to July 1, 1892	1,108,122 00
Soldiers' Home, U.S. funds	12,018 43
Bennington Monument U.S. appropriation.....	14,000 00
Agricultural College, U.S. appropriation.....	48,000 00
Temporary Loans	620,000 00
Interest on same	9,447 95
Sundry payments.....	1,098 93
Balance on hand.....	197,337 15
	\$2,256,294 04

Resources.

Cash on hand July 1, 1892	\$ 197,337 15
Due from towns, State tax.....	39,196 12
Due from towns, State school tax	1,462 22
Corporation tax (estimated)	300,000 00
	\$537,995 49

Liabilities.

Due towns, U.S. Deposit money	\$ 14,413 45
Due towns, State school tax	86,681 93
Due soldiers, unpaid balances.....	8,077 63
Balance available for fiscal year ending June 30, 1892,.....	428,822 48
	\$537,995 49

Funded Liabilities.

Agricultural College Fund, Registered State bonds due 1910.....	\$ 135,500 00
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COMMISSIONER OF STATE TAXES.

The legislature of 1890 made a careful revision of the law taxing corporations, the results of which are clearly set forth in the report of the Commissioner of State Taxes. By it will be seen that only one corporation, the Western Union Telegraph Company, seriously objects to the provisions of the law and has commenced a suit in chancery enjoining the commissioner from enforcing the tax or penalties, which suit is set for hearing in December.

I do not believe it wise in the midst of litigation to attempt to disturb or revise the law, but you may correct with safety the double deduction of the value of real estate shown to exist in connection with trust companies.

The amount of taxes assessed for the biennial term is shown by the report to be as follows:

Total taxes assessed against corporations	\$572,672 96
Total license taxes assessed	8,537 00

STATE AUDITOR.

Your attention is invited to the report of the State Auditor concerning the expenses of government. Retiring after a faithful service of fourteen years, his suggestions, the result of ripe experience and a keen sense of the needs of the State, cannot be lightly passed over. It is your especial privilege, as it is your duty, to investigate the particular matters to which he refers with a view of reducing the expenses of government.

The tax paid by the people of Vermont for the support of local and state government is felt by many to be a hardship from which time should bring reasonable relief. The inventory law passed in 1880 was a step in advance to secure better returns of property with greater equality, and an increase in property values; it shifted the burden of taxation from the poor to the rich in a sensible degree; but this relief was soon dissipated by increased calls, both local and general, upon the public revenue.

The enactment of the corporation tax law in 1882, was a measure well calculated to raise the hope that a direct State tax would not much longer be needed, but the increasing demands of the times have gone far beyond its ability to supply the money necessary for State expenses, although it has been revised until its revenues to the State have nearly doubled.

There are different ways by which a change can be effected. We can search for new sources of revenue, turning the old screws down a little tighter, although this will require special skill, knowledge and patience, but sometimes a well worn thread snaps asunder. Or we can take the short road, which all can travel, and which consists in spending *less money*. This latter method may not be popular with some, but it will be easier for all. I do not advocate neglect of any public interest or a course of false economy; indeed parsimony is sometimes a calamity, in causing at a later period what then appear to be extravagant expenditures.

The House of Correction is of modern type, the Prison has been rebuilt, the Reform School is well equipped, the Soldier's Home secured, the new asylum completed to admit one-third its proposed capacity, and fully occupied, and all of these will require constant repair and possibly future enlargement, but their maintenance only is imperative applying the thoughts and suggestions that naturally arise in this connection. I believe it possible to secure such a reduction of expenses as to satisfy all reasonable expectations. An even temperature in monetary affairs is conducive to financial health.

INSPECTOR OF FINANCE.

From the report of the inspector of finance, it appears that our savings banks are in a healthy condition.

For the two years ending June 30, 1892, there has been an increase in deposits of	\$5,344,176.84
Total deposits June 30, 1892.....	\$24,674,741.76
Increase in number of depositors	14,981
Number depositors resident in the State	72,635
Total number depositors	80,740

The great care and prudence with which these institutions are managed gives increasing confidence to our people, inducing them to retain their savings at home rather than to adapt the more hazardous course of sending them to distant points with all the attendant risks. I especially call your attention to that part of the report which refers to the omission in the law requiring returns to be made under oath, also to the necessity of trust companies carrying a portion of their profits to surplus. Several of the savings banks have so large a surplus that they may deem it prudent to declare extra dividends; the present law for computing the same is so complicated that it becomes imperative that depositors be divided into classes covering different periods of time. With the vicissitudes incident to losses in business, by depreciation of securities or otherwise, it would seem that in cases of this kind a more prudent measure would be to increase the surplus, from ten per cent of the deposits to fifteen

per cent of the same. The time should be changed when the inspector is required to make the report. To this end the date ought to be fixed from which the fine begins to run against savings banks for failure to make reports to the inspector.

The various financial institutions that now make reports to the inspector, and receive from him an acknowledgement or copy of a statement, use that document precisely as if it were a legal license to transact business with the endorsement of the state government to solicit funds from our people, for investment or speculation abroad.

I recommend that a change be made in this matter in such a way that the pocket document will be eliminated, and this means of temptation to our people avoided. The State does not endorse or recommend these institutions, it simply says to them that if they do business here, they must file a statement showing their standing. Beyond this the state should not be made to appear to be a party to any of their transactions.

EDUCATION.

The recent legislation affecting the schools of the State has borne fruit in the greater interest shown in educational matters, and in some respects a more satisfactory state of affairs now exists. While it is unwise to change our system too frequently, I think you have a further duty in devising ways and means to elevate the standing of the schools of the State. I believe that the school district having supervision under a single head, should be made as large as possible. In many places the town system will give the best educational results, provided proper school machinery, with which to work, is furnished; but in some of the smaller districts situated in the more sparsely settled communities this undoubtedly will work considerable hardship.

In many instances the furnishing of books and supplies bears heavily upon the parent. A working man with a large family, having to pay from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per annum for books for each child, will be induced to remove the child from the school at an earlier age than he would if the books were furnished by the town or district. In places where it has been tried, this expense has been reduced so low for each scholar per annum, that this feature alone should commend it. A careful estimate of the saving to the people of the State, based upon what has been done, convinces me that more than \$300,000 per year can be saved to the people who now have to bear this expense. The objection, if any, that will be raised against it, is likely to come from property interests and the manufacturer and dealer in school books; but is not the duty of the State to the children greater than their obligations to these?

The reports of the various County Examiners, together with the recommendations of the Superintendent of Education, point out ways in which further inquiry can be made.

If it is possible for you to devise any additional means of improvement in any direction it will be welcomed by all.

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

This venerable institution, originally chartered in 1791, has been the recipient of the fostering care of both the State and national governments. At the present time there are practically four allied schools; the Academic, Medical, Mechanical and Agricultural, the practical operations of which are clearly set forth in the report of the trustees. More than usual interest attaches to this institution at the present time, from the fact that a thorough investigation into the workings of the various departments was made at the last session of the legislature, when it was sought to separate the Mechanical and Agricultural departments from the University.

I have made several visits to the institution to acquaint myself with the progress that has been made in the improvement of facilities and methods for furnishing to the youth of the State all those opportunities which their ambition covets, near at home and at a cost within their reach.

I am favorably impressed with the present appearance of the institution, as well as the hopes, expectations and ambitions of the faculty. An institution of this kind cannot be established without a large outlay of money, years of growth and the confidence of the public.

An examination of the course of study shows that there has been a tendency in the direction of the elevation of the standard instruction and the broadening of its scope to keep pace with the demands of the times, as fast as means at command would allow.

The Mechanical department has received additional impetus by the construction of new buildings, filled with standard machinery of the best models.

The announcement is made that benevolent gentlemen have already signified their intention of erecting other buildings, which will greatly convenience and promote the usefulness of the institution.

A new farm has been purchased adjacent to the University, new agricultural buildings have been erected thereon and the Agricultural Department established upon a modern basis having the latest facilities. I think it can be said that the agitation that has taken place has been of great benefit to the school, in that its wants have been sharply called to the attention of the benevolent, and that the trustees, alive to the demands upon them, have provided liberally, to the extent of boldness, in making provision from the funds of the institution for the wants of the school.

I am satisfied there is sufficient enthusiasm with the faculty to cause them to meet the new conditions with an earnest purpose to give the student the very best they can devise, and believe that what has been accomplished warrants the continued fostering care of the State. It certainly would be a public calamity for any harm to befall the institution.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

The attempt to maintain an Agricultural Bureau in Vermont has always received scant support from those most interested and therefore small and inadequate appropriations have been made.

I think it good business policy for the State to increase the opportunities, responsibilities and duties of the Board of Agriculture. There can be committed to this board with advantage the collecting of information in connection with unoccupied or uncultivated land, putting in statistical form all information that can be gathered concerning the same, and promoting in this way any desirable change in ownership; they might be charged with inquiry concerning the forests, a matter too much neglected and about which a variety of opinions are held; they might be charged with the furnishing of information concerning better roads, how to make them and the best kind for any particular locality. They could assist in the formation of farmer's clubs, in the employ and management of expert assistants for our dairy interests, and in the reestablishment and promotion of agricultural affairs in many new ways.

Four years ago an attempt was made to induce Swedish immigration upon some of the abandoned farms of this state. Such inquiry as I have been able to make concerning this experiment reveals the fact that the usual result followed, and that the young gradually leave and go to business centers, leaving the older people to care for the farm.

This is not because of the class of people that come, or because they became dissatisfied with the land, but is incident to our modern civilization, without a full recognition of which, we cannot hope to obtain the best results in any attempt to maintain the supremacy of our State.

It would be a good investment to furnish the bureau of agriculture with suitable means to continue this inquiry.

One of the things that this State lacks at the present time, in industrial and agricultural affairs, is precise data and information which can be secured with very slight expense if attended to yearly; this can be gained and put in suitable book form for preservation, giving us ready means of comparison to know whether one policy is better than another.

I trust that no false modesty growing out of a fear that an actual statement of facts might uncover a condition of things unpleasant to see or know will deter you from doing your full duty in this matter.

It is to be hoped that you will see your way clear to enlarge the powers of the Board of Agriculture and to increase that appropriation to an adequate amount.

The increasing magnitude of the dairy interests of the State warrants the giving of more attention to this industry. In this connection it is proper to note the work of the Dairymen's Association as important and growing, and it should receive that encouragement which it demands.

PROHIBITORY LAW.

Public sentiment sustains the rigid enforcement of the prohibitory laws of the State to a commendable degree. We ought to see to it, therefore, that nothing is done to retard its healthy growth or bring ill repute upon our good intentions.

Sentences for crime ought to be in proportion to the offence committed. No one will pretend that violation of the prohibitory law deserves a life sentence, but by the operations of the mathematical rule of cumulative sentences under the present provisions of the law, the legal period may reach far beyond the natural life of the prisoner, in which case the severity of the law that compels such a cruel sentence would be held up as an argument against its proper enforcement and would appeal so strongly to the sympathy of the general public that repeated instances of this kind might set in motion a wave of unhealthy agitation that would sweep away the work of years.

Would it not be well in imposing sentence for non-payment of fines in liquor cases, that a period be fixed beyond which the sentence could not extend, say three or five years, no matter the amount of the fine imposed? If it could be shown to the court that the respondent was destitute of property from which he could raise the money to pay the fine, it might be well, in first offences, for the court to impose a sentence to the extreme limit of the law, and at the same time repose in the court power to collect a certain amount in money and then to take a bond for the remainder. This should be valid and enforced if the respondent is ever guilty of a second offence. Would not the giving of such a bond operate as a restraining influence upon the offender to keep him out of the liquor business? As it is, there is too much temptation for him to try to recoup himself by increased sales. Certainly there should be no letting up of the pursuit of the rumseller; every avenue should be closely guarded, and the pressure gradually tightened until he abandons the business or flees the State.

REFORM SCHOOL.

The report of the trustees of the Reform School shows that there were on the 30th day of June, 1892, 10 girls and 54 boys on furlough from the institution, and that there were 13 girls and 71 boys present at the institution.

Total expenses for the biennial term have been.....	\$32,168.65
Total receipts from the operations of the school have been,.....	3,107.92
Leaving a net expense to the State of	29,060.73

The per capita expense per annum for supporting the inmates of the school has averaged \$163.36. For the board, clothing and schooling of children where so high a standard is attempted and attained this price is not high, although I commend to you a careful study of the scope and purpose of the school.

Some of the children there give little hope of future usefulness, while many are greatly benefited and will become good citizens.

With ample means it would be wise to attempt a more thorough classification of the inmates but as it is I think the best interests of the State will be subserved if the school is kept as small as possible. The re-enactment of the law charging towns fifty cents per week for each child committed will readily effect this.

I cannot speak in too high terms of the excellent discipline that prevails and of the healthful influence of the officers and teachers, and the beneficial results attained at this institution.

HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

An examination of the report of the officers of the House of Correction, shows the number of prisoners

June 30th, 1890	55
Committed during the last two years	611

Total	661

Whole number discharged	578
Remaining June 30, 1892.....	83
The expenses of the institution have been	\$18,991.67
Receipts have been	5,855.93

Net expense to the State.....	\$13,136.74

It appears that the earnings of the institution for the past two years amounting to 46,788 days' work, have been applied to the purchase of the working plant and supplies necessary to keep the prisoners employed, to an amount of \$13,383.08, as shown by the inventory. In estimating the cost of maintaining the House of Correction, it is proper that this sum should be treated as an appropriation for permanent improvements.

The discipline of the institution is not of the highest order; one of the prisoners has been sent to the State Prison for an aggravated assault upon one of the officers, which adequate management of the institution should have avoided.

I call your attention to the remarks of the Superintendent concerning short term imprisonment for violation of the liquor law.

The trustees ask for an appropriation of \$6,000 to build a wall around the rear of the institution. At present there is a wooden stockade, as good now as in the past, which if painted would continue for some time to do service and not be unsightly.

STATE PRISON.

The management of the State Prison appears to be of a high order. The reports shows the institution to have been

Debited with.....	\$ 45,946.98
To have been credited with	34,848.52

Leaving a debit balance of	\$ 11,098.45
The amount paid under the act to aid discharged convicts was.....	2,416.00

Balance, expense to the state for operating the prison for the biennial term ending June 30, 1892	\$ 8,682.45

Our penal institutions represent certain legal and moral obligations to society. We cannot escape that obligation nor avoid the expense. Quite likely the avenues for profitable labor will diminish with time, but for the present the trustees are able to furnish employment for the prisoners that brings to the State a reasonable income. It is desirable to make them self-supporting were it possible, but we may not expect so favorable a turn in affairs.

There is little prospect, it would seem, of doing much better, and therefore we must turn our attention to a careful and economical management of the various institutions.

I have no sort of sympathy with the mercenary view which seeks to get long term prisoners to save expense. It is better that we have empty walls than that this spirit should seize hold of us; the good of the community requires that the wrongdoer be not allowed to go unwhipped of justice but when this is accomplished, we must return the prisoner to society.

INSANE ASYLUMS.

For the condition of the various insane asylums of the State I refer you to the report of the trustees and of the supervisors of the insane.

Brattleboro.

From the Supervisors' report we learn that the average number of patients at Brattleboro for the biennial term has been 428; that 185 have been removed to Waterbury and that there remained in this asylum on the 30th day of June, 1892, 348; of this number 199 are supported by the State.

By the removal of these patients to Waterbury there are now at Brattleboro vacant rooms for a large number of inmates. This removal gives this asylum an excellent opportunity for the erection of new and commodious buildings for the better care of certain classes of patients and I believe it is in contemplation to carry these improvements to completion at no distant day.

Waterbury.

The completion of a portion of the State Asylum at Waterbury and the removal to it of a large number of patients marks a new era in the treatment of the insane in this state. By the building of this asylum, devoted to the care of the insane poor of the State, new responsibilities attach, that will for some years call for considerable appropriations for building purposes, as the wants of the State demand, without any of the financial benefits that accrue to the old asylum by reason of its private character.

The new asylum is conveniently and pleasantly located, with ample grounds. The plan of the buildings appears, from such examination I have been able to make, to be well adapted for the purposes for which they were originally designed but there are some doubts as to the adequacy of the heating and ventilating facilities.

The Supervisors call attention to the overcrowding of the new asylum the buildings already erected were originally designed, I am informed, for about 150 patients; but at one time, however, the number reached 207.

The number present on the 30th of June was 193. The reasons given for this overcrowding do not commend themselves to my judgment; questions of this kind should not be decided on mercenary grounds, or from pressure from any source.

The kitchen, laundry and store-rooms are temporarily in the basement; although it would seem that quarters could have been arranged in temporary buildings in the rear at about the same expense, greatly conducing to health and comfort. An appropriation will be asked to complete the erection of the remaining buildings provided in the original plans.

A portion or all of the administration buildings may be necessary, but the silent testimony of the vacant wards in the old asylum does not point to any immediate or pressing need for dormitory facilities.

INSANE POOR.

Your attention is called to the laws relating to the insane poor. Under the legislation of 1886 the burden of supporting the insane poor has been shifted from the town to the State without adequate means for enforcing good faith, under the provisions of the law, so that there are confined in the various asylums the poor and feeble who are the proper wards of relatives, or towns, and ought not to be a charge upon the State; provision should be made that the relatives of the party and the selectmen of the town should be examined under oath and the State's Attorney or other suitable person obliged to make a careful investigation; and after the person is confined in the asylum inquiry from time to time should be made as to the ability and duty of others to participate in the support.

It is believed that there are those now confined in the asylums, who have had property fall to them or who are, of themselves able to pay, this being concealed or property withheld, or who have relatives who by law should contribute their share. There is no power at the present time adequate to reach these and other cases, believed to be improperly charged to the State. It might be well to enlarge the duties of the supervisors of the insane so that an order from them would compel the State's Attorney to prosecute a claim of this kind; but a more effectual way of reaching this is by compelling the towns to share in the expense of supporting their insane poor.

The amount paid by the State for the support of this class of patients appear to have been \$122,403.87 for the biennial term, to which is to be added the cost of maintaining those transferred to Waterbury.

ROADS.

The legislation of 1880 which removed from the towns the responsibility for having good roads, has in many cases caused neglect of ordinary obligations and fostered abuse. With the tendency of the times to shift financial burdens from the town to the State Treasury, towns are tempted to set forth their own neglect in some instances as a reason why the State should aid in the support of highways in their communities.

If the state is to assume supervision of the highways, then a State road commission should be formed to take the whole matter in charge; and even if the State is simply to co-operate with the different towns in cases of excessive hardship on the main lines of travel, then it should be made obligatory upon the State's Attorney of every county, to attend in person every hearing and protect the interests of the State.

Good roads are of the greatest importance. An objection against the present custom is, that it is without system or order, with a total lack of uniformity, so that the results to a considerable extent are seen and known by the people only when the biennial report of the State Treasurer is published and the demands upon the treasury, after the money has been spent, are made known for the first time. Large sums have been spent, as it appears by the State Treasurer's report, during the biennial term, upon the public highways.

Your attention is called to the omission of the law to provide for any suitable publication of the conditions, circumstances or localities where this money has been expended.

RAILROADS.

The act of 1886 creating a board of railroad commissioners was in direct response to the public demand. There has been considerable criticism by reason of what might be termed the inadequacy of the legislation. Each year the commissioners have reported the results of their doings and all have had an opportunity to study the same to know the effect of the working of the law.

The contemplation of the law is that the public may be able to reach and influence the action of the railroad corporations through the board, to the end that justice may be done without litigation.

By reference to the last report of the commissioners we are informed that:

“All complaints made have been acted upon by the board, and that there has been no refusal on the part of the railroads to comply with their recommendations.”

There has been considerable reduction in freight rates, whether equal to the requirement of the condition of our people or not I have no means of knowing, but all the people of the State who have any complaints to make against the railroads, or find it difficult to secure those privileges which they believe are reasonable, should freely communicate with the commissioners. The statement of the commissioners above quoted warrants this confidence.

Since the act went into operation nearly all of the railroads in the State have very largely reduced passenger fares for single tickets and made mileages good to bearer.

Some of the roads entering or operated from without the State have failed to comply with this demand of the public; I invite your attention, therefore, to the recommendations heretofore and now made by the board, tending to strengthen their hands, to the end that none may escape from or fail in the performance of their duties to the public.

By operation of the interstate commerce law the use of free passes has nearly ceased. I believe that the time has arrived when a law completing their abolishment would be cheerfully accepted.

Wise legislation to prevent abuse is better than sumptuary laws to remove the same.

MILITIA.

There is provision in the organic law for the maintenance of a well-regulated militia. The wisdom and necessity of this has been shown on many occasions. When Sumpter was fired upon, it was four weeks before Vermont put a regiment into the field; when the St. Albans raid occurred it was a still longer time, but since that

time the State has kept a small force available at all times. Constantly recurring events admonish us that this cannot be neglected with safety.

The National Guard of Vermont consists at the present time of a brigade formation with three batallions of four companies each, organized as a regiment, armed with 45 calibre Springfield rifles, and one battery of light artillery, armed with four 3.2-inch S. B. L. rifles. The gray uniform has been changed to the blue of the regular army, which looks more business-like and is very serviceable. This expense will not have to be incurred again for some years, lessening to that extent the annual expenditure.

The troops are well drilled and in every way a credit to the State. The various reports filed with the adjutant and inspector general and printed with his report, will furnish complete and detailed information concerning their present standing.

An attempt will be made the coming year to secure the attendance at Chicago of the troops of all the States, together with the regular army of the United States.

If you deem it best to grant the necessary permission, you can, by omitting the drills required in the State for the year, secure this without any increase of expense. The members of the national guard bear with you the burdens of government, giving from one to four weeks each of their time per annum, without remuneration. They do not ask for or look with favor upon increased expense. I say this as an impression gained from an intimate association with them of many years, but you can grant with propriety, to veterans of ten or twenty years of honorable service, upon their retirement, exemption from further jury duty.

There is a failure in the law to provide for the muster of the men who serve in the national guard. Suitable officers should be designated to administer the oath.

I do not look with favor upon any proposition to increase the number of infantry or artillery, but should patriotic citizens be found who would organize a company of Vermont cavalry and support the same without expense to the State, it would be well to encourage it.

The Roster of Vermont Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion, prepared under the direction of the adjutant and inspector general, is an excellent example of careful and painstaking work, reflecting credit upon the office; it will be of value to the State.

SOLDIERS' HOME.

The Soldiers' Home in Bennington has been further supplied with facilities by the construction of a suitable hospital, and the erection of a chapel, funds for the latter having been obtained by subscriptions from friends of the soldier in the State. The report of the board shows that:

There have been admitted during the two years ending June 30, 1892	54
Discharged	39
Died.....	15
Present number.....	49
Whole number admitted.....	162

They ask for an appropriation of \$18,000. The report is so complete in all matters relating to the Home and the care of its inmates, showing widespread and patriotic interest on the part of our people, that it is worthy of careful study.

GETTYSBURG.

The work of marking the positions occupied by Vermont troops on the battlefield of Gettysburg, in the War of the Rebellion has been carried forward by one of the regiments engaged, and a monument erected by the surviving members and friends of the 16th Regiment, Col. Wheelock G. Veazey, commanding, which marks the advanced position occupied by this regiment in the culminating events of the last day of the battle.

It seems fitting that special mention of this circumstance should be made at this time in order that the patriotic history of the State may be kept fresh in the minds of the people and perpetuated in public records.

SALARIES OF STATE BOARDS.

In regard to salaries of trustees of public institutions, I am reminded that members of the bar are compelled by law to defend criminals without pay in some cases; that the savings bank trustees in the main perform their duties without pay; the asylum at Brattleboro, and the Soldier's Home at Bennington are managed by men who freely give of their time and efforts to aid in this philanthropic work. May not Vermont rely upon such service upon other of her boards? Men thus serving will confer high honor upon the State and in return be the recipients of that distinction which so peculiarly and gracefully attaches to those associated with charitable work, a nobility which only can come from personal sacrifice and devotion.

FISHERIES.

From the report of the commissioners of fisheries, it will be seen that much attention has been given to the proper enforcement of the laws already upon the statute books for the protection of fish and game. The benefits to be derived from the restocking of our streams and ponds will become more apparent with the advent of time, and consequently there will be greater temptation to violate the laws. This must be met by vigorous action, and the wrong doer get certain punishment. Where game laws are clearly understood, public sentiment will sustain their execution. It is unfortunate, therefore, that any confusion should arise upon this point, and I invite the careful attention of the legislature to the report of the commissioners, to the end that all uncertainty may be removed.

The slaughter of young fish not over a finger's length in size, by strong, able men, is not a pleasing sight. For such, the terrors of the six-inch law were provided, and it should remain upon the statutes if the work of restocking the streams is to be made effectual.

HATCHERY.

The State Fish Hatchery authorized to be built has been located at Roxbury and a small plant erected, from which during the past season 500 young fry have been turned over to the commissioners of fisheries and planted in different streams in the State. It is thought that at least double the number can be obtained from the same source the coming season. It is desirable that the work so successfully begun may be continued. The present demand for good fishing is far beyond the natural growth and if we would secure the greatest advantages that are afforded by our numerous waters, splendid locations and suitable surroundings, it is a matter of ordinary business sagacity to continue the work so well begun. One method of popularizing game laws is to procure such an abundance of game that there may be a reasonable catch at all seasonable times.

With the completion of the hatcheries, provision should be made to turn the plant over to the commissioners of fisheries, that being, in my judgment, in the line of true economy.

BOARD OF HEALTH.

I call your attention to the report of the State Board of Health and to the importance of strengthening the laws concerning the public health.

By reason of the unrestricted immigration from foreign nations, this country has recently realized the danger that accompanies the same. In all probability the alarm from this state of things will not have passed for some time; our own borders are exposed to all the dangers incident thereto. With the removal of the present trouble, lax views may find lodgment and it is a matter of the highest importance that in so far as we may be exposed to external danger, there should be adequate power lodged with the Board of Health to meet all reasonable requirements.

The provisions of the law giving the executive power to prohibit intercourse from without, in case of a great emergency, ought to be extended so as to include a proper regulation of communication, as circumstances may demand.

In the face of a great epidemic or calamity, it is plain that nothing short of federal control of quarantine at all frontiers will be able to cope with the question, and for this State to attempt to set up independent control would be suicidal.

It should be the duty of the executive to co-operate with the national government to the end that adequate measures may be adopted.

In this connection, I do not think it is out of place to express the hope that the national government may be able at no distant day to control these matters in such a way that our people will be free from the dangers to which they are constantly exposed by reason of unregulated immigration.

REVISION OF LAWS.

The revision of the laws of this State has been called to my notice and I have given it some attention. No doubt a new revision would be convenient, as there are already six volumes of session laws to be examined to get at the statutory law. I am convinced, however, that good lawyers keep their statutes well annotated, and can with reasonable examination determine a question, and in view of the expense, a new revision at this time is hardly desirable.

UNIFORM LAWS.

The necessity for uniform laws throughout the different States concerning marriage, divorce, commercial paper, days of grace, the execution of conveyances of property by deed, by lease, and the descent of property to heirs, as well as other important matters, is receiving attention in many States.

The American Bar Association, seeing this necessity, has recommended that the States appoint commissioners to confer with each other and frame uniform laws on these various subjects and submit them to their respective States. Several have already appointed commissioners for the purpose indicated.

I recommend to you that suitable provision be made for the appointment of a commissioner for this State.

ELECTIONS.

In 1890, the legislature enacted a law to promote purity of elections and secure secrecy of the ballot, the better to enable every person who has a right to vote to express his will at the polls with precision and certainty. It was found necessary to make some amendments to this law at the special session in 1891.

The entire State has now had a trial of the same and you have all had an opportunity to witness and test its workings.

Any law to carry out these measures should be plain and simple in its provisions, without complication, difficulty of execution or uncertainty as to results.

That this law has operated to defeat the will of many voters, there can be no question. Many states that have tried laws similar in design have so far perfected them that the will of the voter is easily recorded, and accurately and quickly ascertained.

Every voter should have a certain and easy means of indicating his preference; he should have reasonable time and a suitable place in which to prepare his ballot, and ample opportunity to deposit the same.

The present law requires such an amount of clerical skill that a voter, in spite of the exercise of ordinary care, may be deprived of his franchise.

Any trifling with the ballot is a serious matter. The sanctity of the franchise must be respected. Your attention is called to the need of further legislation to perfect and carry out this reform.

MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE.

For several years the women of this State have had the same right to vote as men have in school meetings, the same right as men have to hold offices relating to school affairs they may also be elected to the office of town clerk, and in some communities the people have availed themselves of this aid.

Should any considerable number now desire that the right be extended so as to include municipal affairs, you will give the matter such consideration as in your judgment the subject may warrant.

UNITED STATES SENATOR.

Upon the resignation of the Hon. George F. Edmunds as United States senator from this State, the Governor appointed Hon. Redfield Proctor to fill the vacancy occasioned thereby, until the meeting of the legislature. It will be your duty to elect a successor to the present incumbent.

The act of Congress regulating the election of senators, provides for such elections on the second Tuesday of the session.

BIENNIAL SESSION.

One of the results of the biennial system is the presence of large numbers of new legislators in the different branches, and the consequent increased attention and study demanded in connection with the various measures brought forward for consideration.

It is no uncommon thing for an agitation to be prematurely started to induce the legislature to complete its work and return home. Ample time should be given to the formation of the different committees, thorough examination should be made into the matters presented, and all the deliberation accorded to the business of the State that the circumstances require.

It is not the amount of legislation or the number and length of bills that become laws, so much as their quality, that marks their importance for good or evil. A state that is governed least is usually governed best, and a few good laws are better than many ill considered ones. I fear the State has sometimes suffered harm by reason of haste and want of consideration in what at the time appeared to be harmless acts, but later we found to contain the necessary material for the doing of much injury and sometimes the expenditure of considerable sums of money. It is to be hoped, therefore, that you will take all the time that, in your judgment, the best interests of the State require; to do a faithful day's work and to perform it as far as possible in the daytime, not forgetting that the executive is a separate department of the government and is entitled to reasonable time for the performance of official duties.

While the expense of keeping the legislature in session is considerable, we must not forget that the demand for modern improvements has continued to press with increasing importance for many years, and in the adjustment from the old to the new it is not always easy to discern whether a proposed change is an improvement or not; time is required to test these things. It becomes you, therefore, unmoved by clamor of any sort, but with an eye single to the public good, to deliberately investigate the results so far as they are known, and take such further action as may be required in the interests of good government.

Four hundred years ago Columbus braved an unknown ocean to discover a continent, setting in motion those events which have changed the face of the political world, and where once lived a few children of the forest and plain, we now find prosperous nations with teeming millions of enlightened people. Then God ruled nations by the will of the king; today he speaks his will by the voice of the people.

To commemorate this historic and important event Congress has provided for a suitable celebration in the city of Chicago. Provision has already been made by law for a representation of the interests of this State upon that occasion.

In the near future the schools of the land will gather for the purpose of joining in special commemorative exercises. Within the last few years the great importance of teaching lessons of patriotism has so impressed itself upon many and such an impetus been given that already the flag of our nation floats from many a school house throughout the land.

This should not only be encouraged, but lessons of patriotism taught in the schools, and the text books, now far too silent upon the issues of military and patriotic events of the country, should speak as plainly as possible concerning them that they may be accorded their rightful places in the hearts of the people.

The State of Vermont has entered upon the second century of her existence, the anniversary of which was celebrated by authority of an act of the legislature, in the presence of the governors of several of the States, of the President of the United States and his cabinet, and large numbers of the people.

With four hundred years of the continent's history and a century of statehood behind us, with all its accumulated treasures of a Christian civilization, so well calculated to stimulate and fire the soul, and give hope of a bright and prosperous future, let us take these lessons to heart, inspired by the noblest ambition and worthiest patriotism, determined to make the most of our blessings and to carry forward those interests for which we are accountable, realizing the full measure of our responsibility, seeking divine aid, in order that we may reach the best possible solution of the problem committed to us.

LEVI K. FULLER.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, }
Montpelier, Vt., Oct. 6, 1892. }