

Farewell address

of

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**Farewell Address**

*Gentlemen of the General Assembly:*

It is the duty, as well as the pleasant privilege of the retiring Executive, to call the attention of the incoming Legislature to matters of general interest and importance. I will endeavor to do so briefly, making such recommendations as experience suggests to be wise and for the best interests of the State and all its people.

OUR SCHOOLS.

The Legislature of 1904 did a most commendable thing when it passed the bill making the \$240,000 received from the Spanish-American war claim the nucleus of a permanent school fund. I appointed a commission, of which Hon. Joseph A. DeBoer of Montpelier was chairman, to see that this fund was safely and productively invested. I heartily approve the recommendation of this commission and of the Superintendent of Education that this fund be combined with the Huntington fund and the United States deposit money toward a permanent and adequate common school fund.

On August 1, 1905, I appointed Hon. Mason S. Stone of Montpelier, State Superintendent of Education. This was to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Hon. Walter E. Ranger to become Commissioner of Public Schools for the State of Rhode Island. Mr. Stone is a tireless worker in the interests of our schools and an ardent advocate of constant improvement along educational lines. I am heartily in sympathy with his efforts for a more ideal educational system and recommend his suggestions in this respect as fully set forth in his valuable biennial report.

Our Normal Schools are doing good work. Teachers educated there should feel under obligation to fill positions in the state for a given time, if required.

Morrill Hall, now under construction, a part of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College at Burlington, will offer exceptional advantages to the farmer boys of Vermont in fitting them for careers of success and usefulness in their chosen calling.

Our colleges are prosperous and constantly gaining in influence. Would not some plan for their better cooperation and specialization be in the interests of economy and greater efficiency? For instance, with Burlington and Middlebury for the higher education of the young men and women and Norwich devoted exclusively to military science and engineering, would we not obtain the best possible results?

Among recent profitable experiments have been the school for manual training at Woodstock, and the series of public institutes in the interest of elementary agriculture in our public schools. We are coming to realize the necessity and importance of a healthy, well-developed body as well as an active mind. The boy who can drive a nail, or strike twice in the same place with an ax, or tell the essential points of a good horse or cow, and the girl who can sew, cook and lay the table well, is better prepared for the battle and responsibility of life than the one who is ignorant of such things.

I believe, as does the Superintendent of Education, that an ideal educational system for Vermont must include equality in support and advantages, efficiency in administration and supervision, an adequate and productible permanent school fund and an unrestricted course of study as its essential features.

Good things always cost something, but we are not disposed to complain when we see that we are getting our money's worth. In our transaction of public business we should always exercise a wise economy. There is, however, an economy that is shortsighted. Liberality is economical when the education of our children is under consideration. We can make no surer provision for the continued success and prosperity of Vermont than by providing the best possible educational advantages.

## DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND AND FEEBLE-MINDED CHILDREN.

As Vermont has no school for these classes, provision is made by law for their education at approved institutions in other states.

The Governor, by virtue of his office, is made Commissioner of these wards of the State, and a specified sum is annually appropriated for their benefit.

The number of children now being educated in this way is 56, including one blind girl residing in the State who has been furnished supplies for educational purposes at home. These pupils are apportioned among the several institutions as follows:

Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded, Waverley, Mass.,	20
Clarke School for the Deaf and Dumb, Northampton, Mass.,	14
Perkins Institute for the Blind, South Boston, Mass.,	11
American School for the Deaf, Hartford, Conn.,	10

Of this number, 30 have been designated during the present biennial term.

For the board and tuition of state beneficiaries I have approved bills to date as follows:

Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded,	\$6,414.46
Clarke School for the Deaf and Dumb,	4,083.32
Perkins Institute for the Blind,	5,040.00
Arnenan School for the Deaf,	4,375.00
Minnie C. Fisher, supplies,	38.80

This makes a total of \$19,951.58, as compared with \$17,767.75 for the last biennial term. The Auditor's account for the two years ending June 30, 1906, shows that of this amount \$19,799.71 has been paid.

While I have granted every application made by indigent parents, or by those interested in indigent children, under the conditions imposed by the statutes for the education of children belonging to any one of these classes, the actual amount expended is well within the original appropriation of \$22,000 for the biennial term, although the last Legislature generously doubled this amount, making the total of \$44,000 available for this purpose if required.

I have visited each of the above named institutions during my term of office and have devoted considerable time to an inspection of the work done for and by the children who have been designated as beneficiaries of the State. I have no hesitation in saying that I believe the money thus appropriated is wisely expended in a necessary and most important service.

## ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

One of the most important acts of the last session was the passage of the bill creating the office of Attorney-General. Hon. Clarke C. Fitts, then the representative from the town of Brattleboro, was elected to that position.

The promptness and energy with which the Attorney-General has conducted his work proves the wisdom of this choice, and his recent election by the people to succeed himself is a deserved compliment to his faithfulness and ability.

That this new department was necessary is evident from the immediate and numerous demands for the services of this official and the great number of opinions he has been called upon to furnish. His assistance in preparing important cases has greatly aided the state's attorneys, and has brought more speedy justice and reduced the expense of trial by avoiding needless delay in criminal prosecutions. His first biennial report will be before you. It contains a detailed record of his, more important acts, together with several recommendations for legislation that should receive your early and favorable consideration.

## OUR COURTS.

A re-organization of our judicial system is suggested. I am in favor of it, if the ends of justice can be better and more quickly served thereby.

A law is recommended to provide against the unreasonable practice of continuing cases in county court without cause. The county court docket should be a new book from term to term, and not a continued story.

To fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court bench caused by the death of Judge Henry R. Start of Bakersfield, I appointed Hon. Willard W. Miles of Barton, a man peculiarly fitted by education and training to discharge the important duties of the office with credit to himself and the State. He was able to commence his work immediately.

In making this appointment, the number, fitness and unusual ability of the candidates suggested impressed me with the fact that Vermont's best material for offices of highest trust is always available.

#### REVISION OF THE RULES.

A committee was appointed at the last session to revise the rules of procedure of the Senate and House. This committee visited the legislatures of several nearby states and has prepared its report. While the change suggested are not numerous, they are important, and I recommend their adoption as the working rules of this General Assembly, as I believe by so doing the business of the session can be more carefully, speedily and intelligently transacted.

#### SILVER SERVICE FOR THE BATTLESHIP VERMONT.

One of the most important public functions of my administration was the visit to Quincy, Massachusetts. August 30, 1905, to attend the christening of a great battleship, when the official party were the guests of the contractors, the Fore River Shipbuilding Company. The new giant of our navy was duly christened the "Vermont", in honor of our State.

The Legislature instructed me to purchase a suitable silver service to be presented to this battleship when it goes into commission, and appropriated \$5,000 for the purpose. I contracted for this work with the Gorham Manufacturing Company, through Bogle Brothers of White River Junction, state agents, and hope to be able to present it to my successor at an early date, so that it may be placed on exhibition here at the State House during this session. It consists of fourteen very handsome pieces of solid silver, in cost not to exceed \$3,350. Among the decorations are the State Coat of Arms, the State House, the State flower, the sugar camp, the Jersey cow, the Morgan horse, things typical of the State's life and activity, to be constant reminders of the brave little commonwealth among the hills which is never afraid of conflict, but believes that the nation best prepared for war is best prepared to dictate terms of honorable peace.

This noble battleship, the largest of its class is fast approaching completion and will be ready for service early in 1907. It is our hope and prayer that it will sail the mighty deep on errands of peace, a messenger to proclaim the progress, the industry and the Christian spirit of the great nation of which our State is a part, but if it becomes necessary to bare its guns for battle, may it be in a just cause, and when that time comes, let whoever is in command remember to put the "Vermont" ahead and keep the line well closed up.

#### TOLL BRIDGES.

It is the opinion of a progressive people that toll bridges on the highways across our rivers are a relic of the past and should be abolished.

Authorized by the Legislature, I appoint a commission of which Hon. Gilbert A. Davis of Windsor was chairman, to consult with a similar commission appointed by the Governor of New Hampshire as to the advisability and expense of freeing the toll bridges across the Connecticut river between Vermont and New Hampshire.

The commission has investigated the subject in all its bearings and finds that there are twenty-seven bridges in the territory named, ten of which, including three to be constructed, are toll bridges. It is estimated that to free these, and to reimburse those already free so as to place all on an equal footing, would cost Vermont about \$100,000, this amount being one-third of the total expense. Vermont's share should then be divided equally between the towns interested and the State.

The report of this commission is ready and should be ordered printed for the instruction of the Legislature on the subject. The recommendations suggested by the commission are made after due deliberation and are worthy of your careful consideration.

#### CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Our law makes capital punishment the penalty for murder in the first degree. This is common with all but five states of the Union.

During my term of office it became my duty to see that this law was carried into effect. In the general discussion of the subject thus occasioned, in the State as well as elsewhere, I have been deeply impressed with the fact that Vermont has more regard for the dignity of law than for sickly sentimentality.

I am more firmly convinced than ever before that, as a safeguard against violence and as a protection to society in general, the law making capital punishment, in some form, the extreme penalty for crime should be retained on our statute books.

#### STATE INSTITUTIONS.

I direct special attention to the reports of the public institutions of the State and the recommendations therein contained. The publicity given these institutions through the investigations recently held has had good effect.

Following the investigations by the legislative committee, I was empowered to appoint a commission to make a thorough investigation of the conduct and condition of our State institutions. I named as this commission, Gen. N. G. Williams of Bellows Falls, Col. H. F. Brigham of Bakersfield and Hon. C. H. A. Stafford of Morrisville, gentlemen of sufficient standing to at once lend weight to their work and place their findings beyond the suspicion of party politics or neighborhood prejudice. The thorough and impartial manner in which they have conducted their inquiries has brought out information that is of great value to the State. The commission has completed its labors and its several reports have been given currency through the medium of the public prints. The recommendations made have been adopted in every case where possible under present appropriations, and should result beneficially for all concerned.

Vermont should be proud of her Soldiers' Home at Bennington and the ample provisions there made for the comfort and proper care of the boys who wore the blue, as the evening shadows fall across their pathway.

We have a splendidly equipped hospital for the insane at Waterbury and everything is done that is possible to relieve the sufferings of our unfortunate wards.

The State penal institutions, the Prison at Windsor, the House of Correction at Rutland and the Industrial School at Vergennes are all economically conducted. The appropriations asked for, as set forth in the officers' reports and the recommendations of the investigating committee, should be favorably considered. The Industrial School in particular needs money for immediate repairs and improvements, if that institution is to be maintained on a par with our other state institutions.

The conditions at Windsor are excellent. The discipline at that institution is conducted with a view to make necessary punishment a reform, whenever possible.

The crowded condition at Rutland should be relieved. I suggest an amendment to the present law so that short term sentences and fines for intoxication may be served out in the county where the conviction occurs, and that such prisoners be made to work out their sentences, on the roads and streets in summer and in chopping or sawing wood in winter. This is healthy, honorable work and would afford some return for their expensive burden to the community.

#### TAX COMMISSION.

As at present conducted, this office is an important and profitable one for the State.

The Commissioner is Hon. J. E. Cushman of Burlington. The fact that he has increased the revenue of his office 149,000 during the last biennial term, and \$600,000 during the period he has occupied this position, is an eloquent tribute to his faithfulness and efficiency.

#### CATTLE COMMISSION.

The work of this commission has recently been criticized. Vermont has always taken an advanced position in the attempt to free our cattle from the contamination of disease and has done more than most states to reimburse the owner for loss in this respect, until, under the provisions of the law as it stands today, we are practically placing a premium on disease. This is the fault of the law and criticism of the commissioners has grown largely out of their construction of that section of the statute relating to the disposal of cattle condemned as diseased. The law is wrong on this point and should be amended.

A diseased animal should be condemned, slaughtered and buried or burned immediately, and never be allowed to pollute the channels of commerce.

Vermonters have established an enviable reputation for producing the best. This should be a true of our cattle as of our other products. The comparatively small amount derived from the sale of condemned cattle is tainted money, and is no fair offset for our lost reputation for pure food products.

In my message to the General Assembly two years ago I advised the establishing of some date after which the State should cease to be responsible for nearly the full value of condemned cattle. I wish to emphasize this recommendation, for I believe that, with stringent police regulations governing the importation of stock and an enforced test of all cattle within the State, disease should soon be practically eradicated, and the State should be free from further expense in this direction.

#### OTHER COMMISSIONS.

Vermont has many important commissions in charge of the several departments. The work required is more varied and of greater value than at first supposed, and under the law every commission is busy.

I believe it would benefit the service if all state commissioners were paid the same per diem. I so recommend.

The railroad commission must be given more power if its work is to be made effective and of the greatest value to the State.

The Governor is frequently called upon to appoint delegates to represent the State at conferences and conventions of a general nature and of national importance. No provision is now made to defray the expense of such commissions. This State should make a reasonable appropriation to cover the necessary expense thus incurred, and not be obliged to depend upon the loyalty and public spirit of the persons designated to suitably represent us on such occasions.

#### CAUCUS LAW.

The caucus law should be given a fair trial. Experience will show that it is an important step in the right direction. Until we know more of its actual workings, it is best to suspend judgment. A critic without experience is nothing but a common scold.

We are a liberty loving people. The caucus law does not infringe upon our rights as free citizens. The political intention clause of the law is intended to check the dangerous individual who so far forgets his responsibilities that he turns liberty into license.

The voter who is honest in his political convictions is always willing to signify his party intentions.

#### NEW TUBERCULOSIS SANITORIUM.

Good health is ours by inheritance. Nowhere on earth is the air clearer, the water purer or the climate more invigorating than in Vermont.

We have come to recognize the importance of pure food laws, a careful inspection of water supplies, the prevention of epidemics and of the needless spread of contagious diseases. In this the truth of the old maxim, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", has been duly recognized, and the work of the Board of Health and the Tuberculosis Commission has been an important factor.

The new tuberculosis sanatorium now under construction at Pittsford marks an epoch in the life of the State, and when completed will be a means of valuable service in our fight against what has come to be termed "The Great White Plague."

This magnificent institution, fully equipped and endowed, is a gift to the State, and is not the first instance of the thoughtfulness and generosity of Vermont's "Grand Old Man", Hon Redfield Proctor.

#### TAXATION.

In this connection I can only repeat what I said on the same subject in my message of two years ago.

Taxation is a simple matter when all property, both real and personal, without exemption of any class or kind, is made to pay its just proportion. The moment we begin to legislate in favor of one class, some other class is sure to suffer, and trouble begins.

Double taxation is an acknowledged evil. Its remedy is a perplexing problem, difficult of solution, unless we are willing to start from the general proposition that all property should be taxed.

This General Assembly can build for itself no more lasting monument than by placing upon our statute books a law that does away with double taxation. In any sincere attempt in this direction I am sure you will have the hearty co-operation of my successor in office.

#### HIGHWAYS AND AUTOMOBILES.

Under the direction of our present State Highway Commissioner, Hon. C. W. Gates of Franklin, our appropriation for highways is wisely expended. With skilled supervision, the amount now raised annually for this purpose ought to make our good roads better and keep them repaired.

For several months in the year, Nature provides abundant material for surfacing our highways and renews the supply from year to year without the necessity of legislative enactment. During this period the snow roller has the right of way and automobiles have no terror for our horses.

Good roads are not a sure mark of civilization, nor are automobiles the only advance agents of prosperity. Many ancient and heathen nations boasted better roads than ours. The use we make of our highways is a safer indication of our progress. When the driver of the automobile and the driver of the horse practice the golden rule, speed laws will be unnecessary and many of our road problems will be successfully solved.

The automobile has its rights. It has evidently come to stay. The Morgan horse is a Vermont product and also has its staying qualities. The horse is rapidly becoming accustomed to its new rival, but the educational period is filled with dangers.

I still believe the suggestion contained in my former message was reasonable and just and that, for a time at least, automobiles should be excluded from the narrow, winding country roads and less frequented thoroughfares.

#### FISH AND GAME.

The lack of uniform seining regulations between the United States and Canada has operated to the great disadvantage of our fishermen in Missisquoi Bay, in Lake Champlain. The last Legislature attempted to correct this wrong by adopting a joint resolution providing for the appointment of a commission to act with a similar commission from the State of New York, and the proper authorities of the Province of Quebec, in the formulation of some plan for the protection of our fishing interests in the upper waters of Lake Champlain. A commission was appointed, of which Hon. Nelson W. Fisk of Isle La Motte was chairman, and several important conferences have been held. The matter was finally referred to the Federal authorities at Washington. At the suggestion of President Roosevelt, the then Secretary of State, the late Hon. John Hay, brought the

subject to the attention of the Canadian authorities, with the suggestion that this individual case be included in the general plan for the adjustment of the fishing rules all along the border, in other states as well as our own. This method of settlement seems wise and will probably prove more permanent and effective. While it necessarily occasions considerable delay, it is believed that a satisfactory and amicable adjustment will be agreed upon in the near future whereby our border fishermen may obtain the desired protection without injury to their neighbors across the line.

Our laws should operate not only to the pleasure of the sportsman, but to the profit, (or surely not to the loss,) of the land owner who often suffers inconvenience and actual damage when his fields are made a run-way and his crops a forage for wild game.

Deer are an aesthetic attraction when a part of the landscape picture in forest or pasture, but the poetry of the situation is lost to the farmer whose grain fields are trampled down and crops destroyed.

Cattle and sheep frequently become wild in the back pastures and the farmer's dog is often trained to drive them and all other intruders from his master's fields. It must be a discriminating dog who can see the difference between deer and domestic animals under such circumstances. A careless hunter often makes more real damage than the game he seeks. While we protect the man with the license, let us not forget the resident taxpayer who summers and winters with us.

The present Commissioner, Hon. Henry G. Thomas of Stowe, is an enthusiast in his work. His exhaustive report furnishes valuable information concerning Vermont's valuable resources of forest and stream. Our fish and game, if properly safe-guarded, will continue to be an increasing source of pleasure and profit.

#### IN CONCLUSION.

During my term of office I have been asked to represent the State on many public occasions of an official or social nature. I have considered it my pleasant duty to accept these invitations when opportunity permitted. I have attended many meetings of Vermont societies in other states and have been deeply impressed with the loyalty and patriotism everywhere displayed. The sons and daughters of Vermont, who have gone forth to make homes and fill honorable positions in broader fields of usefulness, still have true hearts, and their thoughts always turn fondly to the hills and valleys of the old Green Mountain State.

In my recent inspection of state institutions, I extended the trip somewhat, and with my staff and friends, visited a large number of our leading industries. The better we come to know Vermont, the more proud we are of her present enterprise and grand possibilities. The wheels of industry are busy, the barns full, and success and happiness are evident on every side. Our great prosperity as a State is made substantial by the individual success of the humblest citizen. There is no trouble between labor and capital. These two giants walk hand in hand in Vermont. Our most serious problem at the present time is the lack of help, in the factory, on the farm, in the kitchen. Our industrial possibilities have just begun to be developed. There is no lack of funds for this purpose, for our savings bank deposits are increasing by millions of dollars annually. Vermont is no place for idle hands.

Of course, we cannot make a man honest and temperate, or a State industrious and prosperous, by statute, but we can by wise legislation encourage and foster these conditions

It is to legislate for the good of all our varied interests that you are assembled here. The farmers are a majority in every Vermont legislature. They should remember that majority means power and power means responsibility. Avoid class legislation. Be honest. Be faithful. Be fair. Be economical. Remember that the goose that lays our golden egg is not a foreign product but a native of our soil. Act for the good of Vermont, and every individual interest will be benefited, and, in the blessings of Providence, the continued prosperity thus assumed will amply repay your honest efforts.

FREDERICK G. FLEETWOOD,

*Secretary of State, Clerk.*