

Inaugural address  
of  
Samuel E. Pingree  
as it appears in the  
Journal  
of the  
Joint Assembly  
Biennial Session  
1884

**Thursday, October 2, 1884**  
**Inaugural Address**

*Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives in Joint Assembly convened:*

In obedience to the expression of the will of our fellow citizens and filled with a profound sense of the obligations and responsibilities which their partiality has imposed, I enter upon the duties assigned me by the public summons under the laws of the land answerable only for a faithful, fearless, impartial, and, so far as I am able to discriminate, a just administration of the high and varied duties of the executive office.

I feel that I ought to be, and am sure that I am, deeply grateful for this second unsought expression of the confidence of my countrymen in my trustworthiness, in connection with yourselves, in the conduct of the delicate, and (more than formerly) complicated, though still harmonious affairs of our state government.

And while my deep sense of the responsibilities of the post assigned me is relieved of all shrinking apprehension through a wise division, with your Honorable bodies, of the responsibilities for the record we shall make and leave here for our fellowmen to analyze and pronounce upon, when our labors shall have been concluded, yet, I devoutly feel that the diligent and constant exercise of the best power of any man or bodies of men would prove abortive of any good if their hope rests for a moment on man's unaided wisdom.

It behooves us, then, in all that we undertake here to be constantly mindful of our dependence upon that Being who holds the destinies of states as well as individuals as in the hollow of his hand.

Let us, then, as the servants of a people, "whose God is the Lord," look to that kind Providence which smiled upon our fathers that we may be enabled to preserve and magnify the blessings we have inherited.

The period which has called us together for the discharge of our constitutional trusts is one affording occasion for customary congratulations—perhaps no more—although the general health, prosperity and happiness of our people since our last session have been real in a marked degree; the harvests of the past two years have been in the main plentiful; and the rewards of temperance and frugality have been altogether more than fair.

The assembling of your bodies with the executive, constituting the legal representatives of the people of Vermont, and having as "the trustees and servants" of our fellow citizens "the sole inherent and exclusive right of governing and regulating the internal police of the State," to consult, to modify and enact rules of civil conduct as the supreme power of the State, is an event ever memorable in the political history of any commonwealth of Freemen, and never to be witnessed save under the republican form of government.

The past is replete with evidences of the uprightness of intention, earnestness of endeavor, and general success in results which have characterized and crowned the deliberations and acts of the General Assembly of the State.

In all our duties here as the representatives of the people let our zealous care and endeavor be to elevate and perpetuate that honesty of purpose, dignity of demeanor, grasp and dispatch of business which have, in the past, so signalized the Legislative bodies and the Executives which have preceded us, and for the consummation of this high aim and end I shall ever and earnestly share with you the one purpose which should animate Legislature and Executive in common, to discharge the co-ordinate duties constitutionally imposed upon each alike, in such a manner that the permanent material interests of the State and the happiness of her people may be advanced at our hands.

In accordance with the custom of every Executive in our past from the patriot and diplomat, Thomas Chittenden, the first Governor, down to my able and accomplished predecessor, I now present to you a brief recurrence to, and make some suggestions upon, the present and comparative condition of our now (much more than formerly) complex trusts, and Penal, Reformatory, Financial, Industrial and Educational institutions, all which will demand your attention and some of them your careful consideration.

The Biennial Reports of the several State officers having an intimate and particular knowledge of their respective departments will exhibit in detail the present status of the several important financial and other trusts and affairs of the State.

The suggestions and recommendations contained in these Reports, coming as they do, from those whose conversance with the subjects whereof they speak, and whose judgments are necessarily well advised, deserve the candid consideration of the Legislature to whom they are addressed and will doubtless receive the same.

The Report of the treasurer, which will be before you, presents an itemized exhibit of the financial affairs of the government for each of the last two fiscal years, to the varied details of which your attention is invited, since the public will demand at our hands a closer degree of scrutiny and attention to the subject of their finances than they exact upon almost any other of the varied trusts reposed in their public servants, inasmuch as *it* most directly and universally affects all bodies corporate, classes and individuals within, and not a few without, our borders.

From this Report we find that at the close of the last fiscal year (Aug. 1, 1884) the State

### LIABILITIES

were as follows viz.:

Due towns, surplus fund .....	\$13,397 62
“ soldiers, unpaid balance .....	8,803 60
“ suspense account, (the outstanding checks) .....	1,940 24
“ agricultural college fund .....	135,500 00
“ temporary loan of 1882 .....	50,310 37
	\$209,951 83

and the

### ASSETS

were as follows, viz.:

Cash on hand and in bank .....	\$18,149 46
Balance corporation tax (unpaid) payable in August.....	75,000 00
	\$93,149 46

The following items in this statement of State liabilities which are not regarded as subject to present (though to possible future) call, and for the meeting of which no present provisions are required are:

U.S. Surplus fund .....	\$13,397 62
Unpaid balance due soldiers .....	8,803 60
Suspense account, (old outstanding checks) .....	1,940 24
Agricultural college fund .....	135,500 00
	\$159,641 46

which sum being deducted from the general amount of liabilities leaves the amount of the same subject to be paid presently, \$50,310.37, showing an excess of available assets over current liabilities of \$42,839.09.

Any comparison of this result with those of previous annual or biennial periods would afford no reliable relative data of information as heretofore, since the basis of raising the public revenues and the dates of paying in the same have become wholly changed by the passage of the Corporation Tax Act of 1882.

## EXPENSES OF GOVERNMENT.

Sources of revenue for meeting the expenses of administering the affairs of the State government have rested for the last biennial period mainly upon a new basis—the same having been paid only in the past from direct taxation based upon the Grand Lists' valuations as heretofore, but being chiefly derived under the operation of the "Corporation Tax Law," so called, enacted by the last session of the General Assembly.

The framing of statutes so as to compel an equitable and just contribution towards the burdens of government from every citizen and every interest has been the long sought desideratum of Legislatures and of the tax paying body politic of all countries and of all times.

For many years prior to 1880 we had been relying upon a system of taxation for the payment of State expenses, which, though fair and just in theory, was regarded by political economists, long before its repeal, as, in its practical operations, a most unjust and unequitable method of meeting the exigencies of the public demands, through its irregular methods of reaching the property of the citizen or the corporation.

The law—surrounded though it was by all the safeguards of the requirements of official oaths to its due execution and compliance by the Listers—soon fell into disregard by them generally, to such a degree that the average Lister, as if by common consent, found customary facility in substantially making solemn oath that *one-third* or *one-half* of the known worth of specific property was its *just* and *full* value in money.

The law became of no avail to compel "an equitable and just contribution for the maintainance of government" and men feel at a loss to understand at this day, why the method remained so long in vogue and upon our statutes, while the inequality and injustice of its enforcement were so manifest to all who observed the varied usages and methods resorted to under it.

It gave way to the "Act to Equalize Taxation," so called, of 1880.

That this law, which imposed upon the taxpayer the personal obligation, under penalties and perils, of contributing his fair share to the support of the government which protected him in accumulating and secured him in the possession of his property, was a step far in the right direction, and the closest approximation to a just and practical system of taxation, soon became apparent to all honest men.

The uncounted thousands of personalty, which had never before been reached, was brought out and laid at the service of the State with the hundreds or less that had not been kept back before from the Assessors.

I believe there has been no improvement in legislation in the quarter of a century in which I have had to do, professionally or officially, with the laws of the State, which has more universally and emphatically commended itself to the approbation and confidence of the people than this Act of 1880.

This law for the municipal purposes of Town, Highway and School District revenues remains unchanged, but at the last session of the General Assembly a new departure was made in revenue legislation by the passage of the "Corporation Tax Law" above referred to.

By this law the method of raising the revenues for the support of the State government was completely revolutionized.

Great concern was felt by many, and various questions were raised regarding the validity, construction and application of the law, at the time of its enactment and through the earlier stages of its enforcement, but through the wise selection of the present Commissioner by my predecessor, the formulation and preparation of the proper blanks and methods for the fulfilling of the statute was attained and this work was supplemented by the general willingness on the part of the officers of the various corporations to comply with the requirements of the same, so that all the corporations and persons reached by this law, with a single exception, have made the returns required by the same, and taxes were assessed during the calendar year 1883 as follows, viz.:

On Express companies.....	\$1,378 71
“ Telegraph companies .....	597 60
“ Telephone companies.....	504 58
“ Steamboat, Car and Transportation company .....	7,913 26

“ Railroads .....	85,516 96
“ Savings Banks .....	52,771 76
“ Trust companies .....	30,507 67
“ Home Insurance companies .....	6,768 85
“ Foreign .....	13,355 69
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Making a total for the year	\$199,337 07

All which have been paid into the Treasury except \$2,658.56, the second semi-annual assessment of the St. Albans Trust Co., making amount received by the Treasurer as appears by his report, \$196,678.51. Of this amount the sum of \$56,506.70 was paid under protest.

The table attached to the Commissioner’s Report showing what corporations, companies and persons made payments under protest, and their reasons for the same as shown by the report, you will find deserving of careful notice for the better dealing with the suggestions and recommendations which the report contains.

The protest of the Trust Companies extend to one-half their assessment only and are based upon a question involving a point of constitutionality in a section of the law itself, they alleging that the law unjustly discriminates between them and the Savings Banks in compelling them to pay one per cent upon the average amount of their deposits, including trust funds and securities, while but one-half of one per cent upon the average amount of deposits and accumulations is imposed upon the Savings Banks.

There are now pending four suits of law against corporations assessed under this statute, the basis on which each is predicated and the statement of the defense claimed by the defendants in each is fully and clearly set forth in the report of the Commissioner, and as the defense in each case rests upon grounds distinct from the others, they will severally call for your analysis and action if you regard further legislation requisite to the ends of justice.

The suggestions and recommendations of the Commissioner relating to section 5 of the act embody the conclusions of the only one who must have been fully impressed with their importance and necessity, and I recommend that his suggestions be met by suitable amendments for the better practical workings of the law.

Sections 11, 12, 13, 17, 18 and 19, have all undergone the careful test of their practical applicability to meet the designs and aims of the law, and I commend their consideration to you in detail in view of the suggestions contained in the Commissioner’s Report.

I am aware that my predecessor, Governor Barstow, has given much careful study and reflection to this subject, both in its general aspect and in its details during his executive term, and we may well anticipate as we enter upon its consideration here that we will find in his retiring message much that will aid us in connection with the Commissioner’s Report in a rightful comprehension of our duties at this session in respect to it.

#### TRUST FUNDS.

After his usual clear and accurate manner the Treasurer sets forth the several funds held in trust by him at date of August 1<sup>st</sup> last, viz.:

The Agricultural College Fund (invested wholly in Vermont registered bonds of 1880).....	\$135,500 00
Bennington Battle Monument fund .....	20,000 00
This fund being invested in three per cent registered bonds.	
National Life Insurance Company fund, deposited under Act of Nov. 12, 1847, all in U.S. four per cent. bonds .....	105,000 00
Burlington Life Insurance Company fund under Act of Nov. 12, 1874.....	102,165 99

This last fund is invested in notes and mortgages, Burlington city bonds, Burlington Gas Light Co. stock,

Merchants' National Bank, Burlington stock. Howard and National Bank, Burlington stock.

All these investments of trust funds, for which the State is holden, however carefully and judiciously made, should always be regarded with closest scrutiny and concern by the Legislators.

It is a duty which a vigilant and economic people will always exact and have the right to demand at their hands.

In addition to the above the State Treasury holds the U.S. Deposit Money—sometimes called “School Fund”—to the credit of various towns and goes to the amount of \$13,397.62.

Also there stands another important trust in the hands of the State not heretofore among these high, important and perpetual responsibilities. I refer to the “Huntington Fund,” which the Treasurer, in authorizing him to collect and receive of the executor of the last will of Arunah Huntington, late of Brantford, P.Q., “all the property to which the State is entitled under said will, and deposit the same in the State Treasury,” has, with the counsel and assistance of the State Auditor, successfully accomplished and deposited the net amount so received, to wit, \$205,111.22, in the Treasury in the month of April, A.D. 1883.

This fund was collected in the kind of various stocks, bonds, notes, scrip, drafts, cash, etc., as set forth in the details of the Treasurer's Report, some of which have already been converted into other investments, as therein specifically shown, so that the amount of this Trust Fund at date August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1884, is, par value, \$219,864.37. This has been “received” and deposited as above stated, and the Treasurer's duty in the premises is ended.

It now becomes your duty, gentlemen, to take such measures in legislation as shall secure to the “Government and Legislature of the State of Vermont” this fund and its proper investment and direction for and to the end and purpose sought to be attained by the testator, to wit:

For the use and benefit of the common schools. How this may be best brought about will be the subject of your candid discussion, deliberation and legislation.

That the recommendations and suggestions of the testator be treated with your considerate and careful regard so far as the same may be clearly practicable and in no measurable degree an impediment or hindrance to the attainment of the high purpose and end sought to be accomplished under the will, I would earnestly recommend.

But above all these considerations such legislation should be had as will best carry out and on this trust for the sole use and benefit of the common schools.

How may this be best accomplished at your hands?

I have not yet seen the report of the Superintendent of Education, but have had occasion to confer and discuss this question in a limited degree with him and more at length with others who have given this subject thought and reflection, and I would now recommend as one of the means suggested by the Honorable Superintendent of Education, and which commends itself to my judgment above others that have been presented, that the minimum period required by law for the length of our common schools be increased to such a number of weeks above the twenty per annum now required by law as shall be sufficient for the utilizing of the income of this fund in this way for the use and benefit of the common schools, and that the necessary legislation be had whereby the standard of the school requirements as at present existing shall be fully kept up in the manner heretofore, or, at least, independently of, this Trust Fund, so that the current provisions and requirements in the interests of the common school education of the youth under the law, shall be in no way diminished, but their securities supplemented and enlarged by the blessings which this new fund was intended by its donor—a native Vermont philanthropist—to bestow upon them.

I regret not to have been able to see the State Superintendent's Report, which has for long weeks been in the hands of the printer and inaccessible.

The same has been true of most of the official Reports until within the past week.

Legislation correctionary of this inconvenience has heretofore been recommended.

To continue this subject of State finances I take and collate from the Auditor's Report the following tabulated statement of results:

Auditor's orders 1884 .....	\$231,184 45
Court orders 1884 .....	40,782 62
Fines and costs collected, 1884.....	28,694 17
Net court expenses 1884 .....	49,653 89

For the biennial term ending July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1878, and so forth, the following orders were drawn, viz:

	STATE PRISON.	REF'RM SCH'L.	HOUSE OF CORR.	MILITIA.	ASYLUM.
1878	\$40,116 20	\$43,139 27	-----	\$41,213 43	\$48,523 00
1880	47,902 99	28,337 56	\$53,753 76	31,170 44	56,548 74
1882	75,127 04	37,175 15	27,141 94	24,695 46	72,544 00
1884	40,927 63	29,810 52	16,566 74	37,457 88	70,327 55

It will be noticed by referring to the State Prison and House of Correction reports that the exceptionally large items in the Prison and House of Correction expenses are accounted for as being occasioned by special rebuilding and repairing expenses connected with those institutions.

The following comparative table for the four last biennial terms, beginning July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1878, abstracted from the Auditor's Reports, is also subjoined, being regarded as of special interest to yourselves, and through you perhaps more accessible to the people of the State than through the more voluminous books of the Reports of State officials:

Term ending July 31,	Auditor's Orders	Court Orders.	Net Court Expenses.	Fines and costs collected.	State Prison.	Reform School.
1878	\$582,596 25	\$165,822 73	\$223,886 89	\$28,583 76	\$40,116 20	\$43,139 27
1880	569,464 67	135,379 97	176,565 84	45,007 13	47,902 99	28,637 56
1882	558,204 62	83,683 17	93,728 76	66,576 47	75,127 04	37,175 15
1884	506,687 30	80,261 75	89,418 88	62,313 26	40,927 63	29,810 52

	House of Cor.	Militia.	Vt. Asylum.	Probate Fees	
1878	-----	\$41,213 43	\$48,523 00	\$ 1,117 12	Deficit
1880	\$53,753 76	31,170 44	56,548 74	1,290 00	"
1882	27,141 94	24,695 46	72,544 00	109 00	Excess
1884	16,566 74	37,457 88	70,327 55	2,927 35	"

This matter of State and court expenses has been the subject of free discussion through official communication and report and by the press for several years past, and critical investigation has been devoted to it through officials, special committees and commissions, and more particularly by the thorough and analytical grasp and comprehension of the proper remedy for its abuses at the hands of your efficient Auditor, which have resulted in the foregoing satisfactory exhibit showing the steady decrease of these various expenses through the discovery and steady correction of the many subtle and long standing abuses.

That much yet remains to be done in this reformatory process is altogether probable.

Legislation in the right direction to this end can have much to do in the establishment of a well rectified public sentiment against unwarrantable extravagances and unlawful exaction of public servants in connection with the performance of official duties.

It will be further observed from the above table of comparisons that the results show not only a reduction in court expenses, but also that the amount of fees and costs collected have generally and steadily increased in amount.

The Report of the Auditor, which will be in your hands, though extending to the minute details from which the foregoing results are summarized, is so full of interest that it deserves to be reproduced here in full—that by repetition and in an increased variety of ways this whole subject of State expenses may be spread before the public for their careful scrutiny of the details which go to make up its aggregate.

#### REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF FINANCE.

This annual report shows the condition of the Savings Banks and Trust Companies of the State on June 30<sup>th</sup> last.

In view of certain data and recommendations appearing therein I deem it my duty to make special reference to it for the general information of many who may not have it at hand and into whose hands this communication may come.

It appears by this report that there are twenty-four savings banks, savings institutions and trust companies in active business in the State, with 45,837 depositors holding deposits aggregating \$13,724,291.53, of which amount \$11,327,100.78 belong to resident depositors and \$2,394,218.75 to non-residents; the average amount deposited by each being \$299.35, or about one-third less than the year previous.

It will be noticed by reference to the intelligent and concise tabulation arrangement of the Inspector of Finance that there are but 272 depositors having to their credit over \$2,000 each, and that about one-half of these deposits were in the seven trust companies which are not restricted by law in the amounts receivable from any one person, while the savings institutions are prohibited from receiving in excess of that amount except from widows, orphans, executors, etc., these persons being the only beneficiaries for which the savings bank was primarily intended.

The recent law subjecting the excess of \$1,500.00 of this individual deposit to taxation has decreased the number of heavy depositors, “a result,” as is well said by the Inspector, “the most gratifying to the managers of the most conservative banks.”

Of all our savings banks but one has passed its dividend, and that one for the special reason of accumulating with a view of winding up. These dividends have varied from four to five per cent. This is a result most gratifying concerning the successful operation and management of our savings banks.

This institution—the savings bank—is constituted essentially in the interests of that portion of our people who are less able than the more experience financiers of the community to husband and convert, from time to time, their earnings and savings from one kind of security to another. It is, in short, the bank of the poor, the widow, the orphan and the daft, who are unable to find a more remunerative place of investment for their savings.

It therefore becomes your duty to see to it that no safeguard which your judgment and forecast can invent, be omitted in your legislation, to shield this institution from the possibility of miscarriage, that its beneficent object may be attained according to the original designs and purposes for which it was instituted.

The Inspector of Finance should be armed with the sword of the law that he may protect this class of depositors with the shield of the law.

The Inspector has also submitted in his report a series of recommendations which are stated with a degree of conciseness that would seem to render an abstract thereof hardly adequate to a rightful comprehension of the same; and that these may be impressed upon the General Assembly in their original clearness and importance, and believing that the same are entitled, in consideration of their vital interest to those of our people having hard



earned moneys to deposit where they may be safe and yielding the fruitage of a moderate increase, and also in view of various losses that have come upon some of that class of depositors since the last session of this General Assembly, through the insufficiency of the laws on the subject, I here quote with my full approbation and approval the following from his Report, viz.:

“I recommend the enactment of a distinct code for the trust companies which shall clearly define their powers under their charters, that there may be no uncertainty as to the investment that they may lawfully make. As there is no limitation of the amount of loans, which may be made, it follows that the entire assets of any trust company may be loaned to one person or upon any collaterals which may be thought to be good by the trustees or directors for the time being. In a few instances I have found loans to one person or firm, by trust companies, of over sixty thousand dollars. My predecessor, in several reports, called attention to the danger from excessively large loans, suggesting that it would be *safer* to make loans of moderate amounts, scattered around in various localities, than loans of twenty or thirty thousand dollars in one place, subject to only one misfortune, to hazard the whole amount.”

“To this sentiment I heartily subscribe. If the laws should specifically restrict loans to any one person, corporation or company, or its individual members, to some limited percentage of its capital stocks or deposits; and should forbid any officer or trustee of trust companies and savings banks, borrowing funds of the corporation or becoming surety to it, the result would be beneficial.”

I also specially commend the recommendations of the Inspector in regard to the officers and bank examinations, and the investments of school and municipal bonds, to your consideration, and I recommend such legislation on your part as will tend to make available these desirable safeguards in the first, and safe investments in the other cases.

#### EDUCATION.

The paramount importance of this interest can not be overrated. Upwards of seventy-three thousand of our youth, being more than one fifth of our whole population, are, year by year, undergoing the training and education which our common school affords. Upon the character and quality of this school, as an institution of learning and virtue, the future character and quality of our State institutions largely depend.

And in it we are not moulding and shaping the future of our State alone, but of others—even to the influencing of all where the Anglo American race are planting or peopling new states or enlarging the missionary operations and successes of mankind the world over.

It is axiomatic in American politics that free institutions cannot subsist among an unlearned people, but must draw their life sustenance from the intelligence and culture of the masses—which virtues cover and protect them with an impenetrable aegis.

It is for wise legislation to determine and direct how the \$600,000.00 which is annually devoted to the common school education of these youth, by direct taxation, may be made to yield its best and most enduring returns for the welfare of the State and for the good of mankind. Nor is it the large sum of money thus expended that robs this interest in its chief importance.

It is rather the rich returns that we may be assured of to brighten the visions of coming years if the annuity is wisely disposed and applied, or, on the other hand the disappointment and despair that is the sure fruitage of our suffering this interest to languish and die simply because it is not made to progress and keep abreast with the current of the best regulated states in this regard.

Can it be answered why Vermont—one of the most nearly non-manufacturing states—with a foreign born population of only 40,000, and with her district school system a century old, and not cramped or diverted from its highest usefulness by any radical legislation or experiment for a change, and with an enforced liberality in expenditure of money in the interests of education almost proverbial—can it be explained why she should stand so far behind those states which have never adopted that system or have long ago abandoned it for the town system?

A careful examination and comparison of the various tables of illiteracy among the states of New England and the West, coupled with a consideration of such surroundings and data as are proper to a rightful comprehension of the subject and its causes, must surely lead the honest Vermonter to inquire, wherefore are we being left behind in the results of these dissimilar applications of our zeal and wealth for the increase and diffusion of education among our children?

The limits of this communication would prevent, and its proper scope and purpose, perhaps, forbid, the trenching upon the field of argument upon the merits of the possible remedy for this (what has seemed to me) evident misapplication and waste of some of our wealth and much of our otherwise most fruitful energies under the inequitable and varied "District System;" but I should at least present to you as my earnest conviction, and I do confidently recommend, that some measure be adopted at your instance looking to the universal establishment of the town system of schools in the near future—as probably the most promising of practical and permanent good to the cause of common school education and of the reformation of many of the existing evils which now handicap and thwart its largest beneficence.

The system is of no new devising in its advocacy in our State, but began to be adopted as organic law, and, as of course, in some of the new state near a half century ago—and has become the prevailing usage of most if not all of our standard educational states throughout the west and north central portions of our country.

I believe that wherever the system has come into state or town, it has invariably come to stay.

The disastrous effects and concomitants of the District System, so tersely summarized by our National Commissioner of Education—"The small schools, the short terms, the meager salaries, the "cheap" teachers, the incessant change, the multiplicity of incompetent and irresponsible officers, and instruction devoid of spirit and lacking the conditions necessary to steady progression"—seem to indicate, (and the successes of the Township System wherever adopted concur therein,) that the time has come when the Legislature of Vermont should meet the demand for a change.

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

This college, originally styled "The University of Vermont," and intended as an institution of learning under the patronage and fostering care of the State, has had a life and history of struggle with misfortune and calamity which has fallen to the lot of but few of the seats of learning and culture in our land. The record of her early and unsuccessful enterprise and efforts to start in life on sure foundations—the financial turns which embarrassed and crippled her zealous and beneficent almoners so as to cause her prosperity to miscarry for a time—the laying on of the heavy hand of military necessity—appropriating her halls of learning for hospital uses in the war of 1812—the loss of the same by fire in 1824—and the long and varied record of her resolution and persistency to live and thrive, and attain a rank high up on the roll of the best colleges of the land—all unfold to us a history that no Vermonter can read and ponder without commingled sentiments of sympathy for her in adversity, admiration for her courage and persistency, and of personal and state pride in her so complete success at present.

And although by our original constitution it was declared that "One University in this State ought to be established by direction of the General Assembly," and this was primarily intended for that one, yet, barring the original grant of lands, much of which proved of little value, the State has done nothing in the way of material aid for this college.

The University, which was called into existence by the fathers, and which was expected to be the future recipient of State encouragement and aid, has, from its earliest days, been dependent upon the charities, beneficence and more recently the largesses of its friends.

Would not this seem an opportune moment for the ancient obligation of the State to be honored, and, in imitation of our mother State, New Hampshire, towards her college, an appropriation for a limited number of scholarships to be granted to our University.

I regret that I have been unable at this writing to examine the last report of the Honorable Board of Trustees of the University and Agricultural College.

## AGRICULTURE.

If there is any single interest that should engage the fostering care and attention of the Legislature more than any other, it is that on which all the others especially depend for the sinews for success and existence.

Pre-eminent in our State the tilling of the soil and all that class of industry which appertains to agriculture, claims, and is by common consent entitled to this distinction.

This interest is, most of any, identified with the prosperity of the State. It has been, and is ever likely to be, the occupation and employment of a large majority of our people.

The manufactures and mining interests—the handmaidens of agriculture—are also industrial concerns of our people of too far reaching importance to be overlooked in the promoting and fostering justice of your legislation.

I am requested by citizens prominent in some of these interests to call the attention of this body to the fitness of having an authorized state representative sent to the World's Exposition, to be opened at New Orleans in December next, and I am advised that a small appropriation will be asked for as in other states to defray the requisite expense of the same.

## STATE PRISON.

The Report of the Directors of this institution shows that the \$5,000, appropriated at the last session of the general assembly, has been expended for the purposes for which the appropriation was made, and that the same was sufficient for the purpose with the economical utilization of convict labor and material on hand.

The report of the Directors and Superintendent shows the Prison to be in good condition, both in its management, compartments and financial affairs.

Large appropriations have been called for, for several sessions past, for the rebuilding, repairs and improvements in and about this institution, and they have been liberally made, and, in the main, judiciously expended, so that at this time the Prison will compare in no unfavorable light with the best arranged penal institutions of New England.

Public institutions of any character, when raised and improved to the level of the best, should be kept there in the interests of state credit and economy. This will require new appropriations from time to time. The needs of these come to us the most reliably through the Report of the Directors and Superintendents, through legislative committees and personal examination and observation.

Two improvements from the ancient to the modern and most approved methods of repairs are recommended by the board. They seem almost necessary to economy, safety, cleanliness and health, and the expense would not be large. I fully concur with the board in these recommendations.

The rapid decrease in the number of convicts confined here would seem to have reached its minimum in the last biennial period – since the falling from the number confined on July 31, 1882, is but one; while from 1878 to 1880 the decrease was thirty-four, and from 1880 to 1882 it was fifty-two. The whole number now in our prison is eighty-nine, while at times in the last year there have been but eighty-one. The average number for the last two years is eighty-eight.

About the same corps of officers is required for the management of the prison that would be with twice the number on convicts. The expense of this corps to the State would be about the same as now, while the income from convict labor would be doubled; so that the prison, if filled to its utmost capacity, might, as the times now are, become not only self-sustaining, but be a source of revenue to the State—a consummation not to be desired under such conditions.

## HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

This institution has now been in operation near six years and is universally admitted to be a success of its kind, not surpassed in quality for beneficent results in the suppression of crime by similar institutions in other states.

I regret not to have been able to see the Report of the Trustees in season for presenting to you a more specific knowledge of this House.

#### THE REFORM SCHOOL.

This beneficent institution for the detention and reformation of those in our youth who are criminally disposed, that their downward tendencies may be stayed and rectified under correct training and they lifted up through a better education and holier influences to future respectable citizenship—has been and must continue to be the object of most watchful interest, and of ungrudging bestowment of State aid and encouragement through the legislative channels.

The Reports of the Trustees and Superintendent represent its present condition, buildings, appurtenances and lands entirely ample for all its wants, with harmony of management and workings of the departments, and that the objects and purposes of the institution are going forward in an unusually gratifying manner.

I invite your attention to the suggestions of the Board of Trustees touching certain needed legislation in the interests of the school, and particularly that which relates to the matter of town contributions to the support of its inmates.

#### THE ASYLUM.

From the biennial Report of the Supervisors of the Insane you will see that the number of these unfortunate wards of the State confined in this institution remain substantially unchanged—the number of inmates August 1, 1882, being ..... 441  
and August 1, 1884 ..... 437  
a decrease of only four.

During that period 189 patients were admitted to the institution and 190 were discharged. Of these inmates 172 are supported (aside from the State contribution of \$1.00 per week) by towns; 132 are supported wholly by the State, and 133 are private patients and are sustained by themselves or friends.

In contemplating this stricken class of our people—bereft of home—in many instances of friends, and always of reason, it is indeed painful to learn from the Report of the Board that not over one in ten of the 437 now in confinement there hold out any reasonable probability of recovery.

This Supervisor's Report, prepared with evident painstaking and elaboration, I commend to your careful perusal and study, and I would especially invite your attention to that part of the same wherein the inefficiency of the present law is adverted to, and to the suggestion of needed authority on the part of the Board to investigate and correct certain existing evils for the remedying of which no adequate authority now exists.

#### THE MILITIA.

The organized military force of the State remains unchanged, consisting of one regiment and one unattached company of Infantry and one Light Battery.

This force, however well perfected, could not be less, and yet be of that practical utility which the peace and sense of security of a well ordered commonwealth constantly demands.

No state can be regarded as reasonably safe that is not always prepared for abnormal emergencies and dangers calling into requisition at least the appearance of force.

An efficient military organization, of strength adequate to such ready expansion as will include “the young men fit for war” in times of possible public peril, is worth, for the fending off of calamity, and for the sense of security it affords a people, all it will cost them, through never required for any actual service.

Its known existence carries peace, order, and obedience to the law everywhere, or, failing in this, it forms the rallying point for their better enforcement.

I believe the force we have, at the least, should be zealously kept up to its present high standard of efficiency by all the needed means of legislative aid and encouragement.

#### LIBRARY AND CABINET.

The great need of additional facilities for Library and Cabinet uses has been kept before the General Assembly for several sessions last past, through Executive Messages, Reports of Committees general and special, and through bills introduced and discussed or entombed in committee.

This need has become a positive necessity.

I cannot better emphasize this subject than by inviting your attention to the earnest recommendations for an independent library building in the messages and reports above referred to.

#### FISHERIES.

Your attention will be called to certain details of the existing law for the protection of fish, with a view to render the same more effective for compassing the ends sought.

In the laudable efforts made within the last year for the enforcement of this statute, it is said that in some of its details inefficiencies have been discovered which tend to hamper its salutary effect.

The importance of this subject is of great practical consequence to those who live on the shores of Lake Champlain and to the thousands of our fellow citizens who resort thither for their summer homes.

The law should be made effective.

#### UNITED STATES SENATOR.

I invite your attention to the duty which devolves upon you to elect a United States Senator from this state to succeed the Honorable Justin S. Morrill, the present incumbent, whose term of office will expire on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, A.D. 1885.

By the laws of the United States relating to the election of senators, this election should be had on the second Tuesday of the session.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I will only add that the varied interests of our state government, increasing in their complex relations every few years by the supplementing of some new public trust or benefaction, can be carefully reviewed and blessed by your salutary legislation but once in two years.

In order to wisely deal with this variety of important public concerns which you are sent here to improve as your judgment shall commend, it should be a first care to avoid all legislation which comes of undue haste or incomplete deliberation.

So far as may be consistent with this, let our work go forward with such dispatch as may become the faithful representatives and servants of a people who demand good work at our hands.

SAMUEL E. PINGREE.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, }  
Montpelier, Vt., Oct. 2, 1884.