

Farewell address
of
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As it appears in the
Journal
of the
Joint Assembly
1912

Thursday, October 3, 1912
Farewell Address

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

It has been the custom of my predecessors for many years at the close of each administration to present an account of the conduct of the executive department for the two preceding years to the Joint Assembly, also to suggest such changes in the laws of our commonwealth and such new legislation as would be deemed advisable. This duty is attended with many regrets that I could not have had that experience and wisdom which would have enabled me during my term of service to accomplish more for the happiness and uplift of our people, and also with pleasure when I realize that a higher standard has been attained in our educational and agricultural life, and a marked improvement in our highways.

In this my retiring message I wish to state that I have carefully considered the various subjects which I have treated, with those officials most conversant with the same, and have drawn largely from them for expert knowledge, oftentimes the result of long experience, and have quoted freely from suggestions made by said officials.

In my message of two years ago, I urged the General Assembly to carefully consider a few subjects of vital importance and not attempt to correct all the errors of the past legislatures or to enact all the wise legislation which the present and the future may require, and thus with a defined policy presented, I feel that most satisfactory results as to educational and agricultural life and the betterment of our roads has been attained and it is with pleasure that I shall refer briefly to what has been accomplished in these vital departments of our state life, hoping that you will continue the progressive work so well begun.

EDUCATION.

Not only has Vermont been blessed during the past two years with great material improvements such as permanent highways and public buildings; not only has the state made worthy advance socially and civically as is indicated by the deep interest of the people in the state's welfare and their sincere desire to work unitedly for the state's advancement; but probably in no respect has the state made greater progress than along educational lines.

This has been due chiefly to the strong and progressive measures passed by the General Assembly of 1910. Among these certain ones might be considered of a minor character, as they were simply modifications of existing laws and provided for an expansion of the free advanced instruction law; the raising of the school age to sixteen years, the strengthening of the child labor law, and the making of the school attendance laws more operative.

Also, in the minor enactments may be included the permissory acts allowing towns to pension teachers, providing for medical inspection of school children, and authorizing the state board of education to purchase the normal school property at Castleton and to lease the normal school building at Johnson.

In addition to the foregoing are four measures that most signally marked a new era educationally and stand as unassailable evidence to the progressive statesmanship of your last assembly.

1. The first was an appropriation to the Austine Institution of Brattleboro for the purpose of erecting a building for the education of the deaf, dumb and blind. Heretofore they have been educated outside the state, but hereafter they may be educated by the state at cost in the Austine Institution.

2. The second important measure was the change in the date of the school year from April 1 to July 1. This change was so reasonable that it provoked no discussion, and it is now a surprise that the state should have continued so long with its misfits, disjointed and overlapping census reports, official, fiscal and scholastic years. This is apparent when I state that the census year of Vermont was February 1, the school directors' report year

was February 15, the official year began March meeting day, the fiscal year began April 1, the superintendents' year began July 1 and the scholastic year began September 1. All school business is now centered upon a single date and can be transacted without the delays and confusion previously prevailing.

3. The third important school measure passed by the General Assembly of 1910, and one that introduced a new and necessary feature into our educational system, was the creation of a state school of agriculture at Randolph Center. When we reflect upon the importance of agriculture and the extent to which the people of the state are engaged in it, then the importance of this new institution is appreciated. The educational system of the state, especially in its secondary courses, had not in any noticeable degree aided the state in the development of its resources, in revealing the opportunities within its limits, or in conserving its population and possibilities. Therefore the state school of agriculture was established. That it will perform its purpose, there can be no doubt; and, that it meets a demand, the present large attendance testifies.

4. The fourth important measure marked a departure in the system of teacher training in New England and was introduced into the Vermont system for the purpose of meeting a condition that could not be met in any other way. The normal schools of the state never have, and never can supply the rural schools of the state. It is doubtful if they can supply the graded schools. Concerning the number who would probably graduate annually from the Vermont normal schools, there are no valid grounds for supposing that the proportion in Vermont will exceed the proportion of other New England states. On such a basis the Vermont normal schools will produce less than eighty teachers annually. This number falls far short of the three or four hundred needed annually, and the schools needing trained teachers the most, would probably receive the smallest percentage.

For years various attempts to elevate the standards of the normal schools or to secure through legislation better rural conditions, have been stoutly resisted by representatives of certain institutions, that ought to be leaders in education progress rather than hindrances. It is not consistent with justice or with good public policy to sacrifice state interest to local interest, or to jeopardize the common schools for the sake of one or two favored institutions. It is a most hopeful sign of the times that the people of the state begin to appreciate the urgency of the rural school problem. The state republican platform incorporated the following words:

“While the large central public schools of the state are doing splendid work, the small rural schools are not keeping pace. For the present these latter should be the especial care of the state. In so far as their standards can be improved by more liberal state aid, it should be extended.”

The state democratic platform declared as follows:

“We favor a more liberal extension of the benefits of our school system to the rural communities and the introduction of more efficient supervision of such schools.”

The chief educational problem today is the development of the country school and the rehabilitation of the countryside.

The country schools have been unfairly discriminated against in kind of buildings, in quality of equipment, in number of weeks, and in character of instruction. Justice demands that equality of educational advantages shall be afforded and that the country child be given the same school opportunities, so far as possible, as the city child.

The rural schools have always been the experiment station of teachers. If they tested out well, they were brought into the grades. This process will probably continue for years, but, if it is to continue, then in all justice and fairness to the country children, the state should send them the best teachers possible. Because the normal schools can never supply the rural schools with teachers, and because fairness demands that the previous discriminations cease, the teacher training courses have been established.

Twelve such courses were provided for during the past school year, skilled specialists were employed, and one hundred and fifty well trained teachers entered upon rural school teaching this season. This large accession of trained recruits to the teaching ranks of rural schools, adds a force of no trivial power and is an educational event of no mean magnitude.

OUR NORMAL SCHOOLS.

In accordance with the declared purpose of the normal school law of 1910, the standard for admission to the normal schools was fixed at graduation from four-year courses in high schools and academies. This is the standard adopted by all the New England states and by all the leading states in educational matters. There is no reason why Vermont should trail behind other states in standards, and maintain a weaker normal school system. It is not consonant with its present spirit or dignity, and any attempt to degrade her standards should be resented. Nothing lower than the common standards of neighboring states and nothing but the best available in education will suffice true Vermonters.

No state normal school in New England and probably no state normal school in the United States is located in so small a community as that in which either of the normal schools of Vermont is located. It is the smallness of population in the normal school communities of Vermont that has provoked the question concerning the maintenance of the present normal schools at Castleton and Johnson. Model schools are necessary for demonstrating methods and management, and practice schools are necessary to secure skill in teaching. On account of the practical impossibility of affording sufficient demonstration and practice work, because of insufficient children, the state board of education advocates the change of these two institutions into others of more profitable character.

Also, as the normal school graduation will probably never exceed eighty, unless there is a large increase in the state's population, the number will not greatly exceed the minimum a profitable normal school should produce annually. It was for this reason also that the state board of education endeavored to enter upon a peaceable compromise and to allow each town to have a state institution more worthy of the state. All the probable students could be more conveniently accommodated and better instructed in the department of pedagogy of Middlebury College and the University of Vermont than in the present normal schools. This could be done at an expense of \$10,000 annually, in contrast to the present expense of \$20,000 annually. If the state were rich, it might be prodigal; but, on account of its limited revenues, it should expend its moneys so as to receive the largest returns regardless of any local sentiment or personal pride. The state's interests are superior to any local interests. The welfare of 66,000 children should not be jeopardized by any community advantages, and the educational progress of the state should not be impeded by any low standards or local considerations. The entire state should be a unit for the best, and the potential measures adopted and recommended therefore should be put into operation for the benefit of the present, for the security of the future, and for the welfare of all.

I cannot urge you gentlemen too strongly to give this subject,—the education of your children—your thoughtful and earnest attention.

FIRE INSURANCE UPON STATE PROPERTY.

The legislature of 1910, by its act No. 8, authorized me, "to appoint a commissioner or commissioners to investigate the fire insurance placed by our state, with a view to obtaining lower rates and more uniform system of valuation and placing of insurance." The act also authorized me, "to make such changes in the placing of the fire insurance, as after investigation, was deemed best."

For this purpose I endeavored to find a citizen of our state, thoroughly familiar with this subject and who was not a solicitor of insurance but was thoroughly conversant with the adjusting of losses. I appointed Mr. L.S. Hayes of Bellow Falls as sole commissioner, he having had large experience in various lines of fire insurance, and being in my estimation, in a position to act independently and effectively for the best interests of the state.

The result of the careful investigation made was that the property of the state was found insured—some to its full value; some partially; and a portion not at all;—the aggregate being \$945,875.00. The rates and forms of policies varied in material respects, and in some cases a fire would have developed conditions embarrassing and unbusinesslike. The heads of the various state departments had acted each according to his individual judgment, which had varied widely, and naturally there was no uniformity as to the insurance placed.

Reading between the lines of the act under which the investigation was made, I deemed it to be the judgment and expectation of the legislature that the property of the state should be fully protected by fire insurance, and that it should be done economically and systematically. With the assistance of Mr. Hayes, every piece of property owned by the state, whether real or personal, was appraised and scheduled. Architect Hira R. Beckwith of Claremont, N.H., was employed to appraise all the buildings and the head of each department scheduled the personal property in his charge. These schedules showed that the total cash valuation of property owned by the state on October 7, 1911, was \$2,051,509.00, of which \$1,394,810.00 was buildings and \$656,699.00 was personal property. Upon this, insurance was procured to the amount of \$1,850,000.00, or about 90 percent of its value. The policies are uniform in their application, each covering a proportionate amount upon every piece of property and in blanket form, this property is widely scattered, being located in sixty-two different places, and thus insurance companies can carry large lines. The risk was offered to every fire insurance company authorized to do business in Vermont, and is carried by forty-four companies, each writing from \$6,250.00 to \$125,000.00.

The average rate conceded by the companies upon this unusually good line of business was \$1.53 per \$100 for five years, the premium aggregating materially less to the state than the same amount of protection would have cost at the rates upon the individual risks as formerly insured. This premium has been paid by the state treasurer and charged up to the different departments as nearly according to the relative hazard of each class of property as possible.

Although the policies being written in 1911 for five years made a large proportionate expense for insurance in that biennial term, arrangements have been made for the rewriting of a fifth of the amount in each of the succeeding four years, so that thereafter the expense will be distributed evenly in each year.

The insurance had previously been controlled by only a few agents. It seemed to be the most just and equitable division of benefits accruing, to divide it as equally as possible among the leading agencies; and, as now written, eighty-three Vermont agents have a proportionate amount to place.

Since the insurance was placed one fire has occurred, whereby the equipment of Co. E., V.N.G., at Bellows Falls, was destroyed March 26, 1912. The insurance upon this property previous to the revision made last year was only \$300, but under the new contract the full amount of the cash loss, \$3,099.82, was paid, thereby demonstrating the wisdom of the re-arrangement of the insurance and the benefits to be derived from the present indemnity contract.

I earnestly recommend that legislation be enacted that will thoroughly protect the property of our State in an economical and businesslike manner. I am advised that certain states protect and carry their own risks but this policy would have been most unfortunate had it been adopted in Vermont. A review of the state's losses for the past fifty years fully justifies this conclusion.

FIRE PROTECTION.

The consideration of the fire protection of state's property leads naturally to the subject of our general fire protection as governing in our commonwealth.

Losses by fire are entirely different from other disasters. Failures, panics, etc., simply cause the change of ownership. The property still exists in the hands of others, but losses by fire completely wipe out the property whether owned by the people or the commonwealth, and the loss eventually and invariably falls upon the people.

With this fact firmly in mind, I have been reviewing the statistics of fire losses and premiums paid for fire protection during the last ten to twelve years. In 1901 the losses by fire paid in Vermont were \$475,869.95. These have increased till you will note that loss by fire paid in 1910 was \$916,122.77, almost doubled in ten years and this does not include the uninsured property or that only partially insured.

You will note that losses by fire in 1910 were fully a million dollars and when we realize that we have a population of only about 360,000 we learn that our per capita loss is \$2.96, while the per capita loss in the United States was \$2.33. Thus our average of per capita loss is 25 per cent higher than for the average of our

nation—a fact worthy of your attention, and especially so if you realize that the per capita loss by fire of the five leading nations of Europe for the year 1910 was 33 cents.

OUR DEGENERATES.

This is a subject which has never received special attention by the legislature of our state. I have endeavored during the last two years to inform myself thoroughly upon the same, having corresponded with the secretaries of twenty or more of our most progressive states to learn what was being done with reference to this unfortunate class. I have obtained copies of their laws and have made a careful study of the same, and the more I have considered the subject, the more largely has its importance appealed to me. It is a subject of a delicate as well as an unpleasant nature.

The heads of our criminal institutions tell us that among the inmates there is always a considerable class that are termed “degenerates” or “defectives,” by which is meant a class of individuals in whose mental or nervous construction there is something lacking. Alienists, criminalologists and physicians tell us that individuals of this unfortunate class tend to marry those cursed with similar defects, and that this class is increasing out of all proportion to the normal growth of the population, and that most of the insane, the epileptics, the imbeciles, the idiots, the sexual perverts, together with many of the confirmed inebriates, prostitutes, tramps and criminals that fill our penitentiaries, jails, asylums and poor farms are the results of these intermarriages or the natural offspring of defective parents. In the cases of these unfortunates there is little or no hope of permanent recovery, and the great question that is now being considered by the lawmakers in many of our states is how best to restrain this defective class and how best to restrict the propagation of defective children.

Let us consider this matter upon these facts:

1. The fact of the great number of public charges recruited from the defective classes.
2. The fact that defects, physical and mental, are transmitted to the offspring.
3. The fact that if a defective marry a defective, as is very often the case, the offspring will inherit the taints of both parents. That this class is prolific, knowing no law of self-restraint, and consequently defectives are increasing in numbers and are of a more pronounced type. What can be done to protect society from these unfortunates and what to protect them from themselves?
 1. Restrictive legislation in regard to marriages.
 2. Segregation of defectives.
 3. A surgical operation known as vasectomy.

Restrictive legislation in regard to marriage.—Minnesota has a law providing as follows: That no woman under the age of forty-five years, or a man of any age, except he marry a woman over forty-five years of age, either of whom is epileptic, imbecile, feeble-minded or afflicted with insanity, shall intermarry or marry any other person in that state. Five or six other states have adopted restrictive statutes along similar lines. Of such legislation I heartily approve, but, while it is preventative in a certain class of cases, it does not and obviously cannot go far enough. While by preventing marriages among defectives, it restricts the propagation of defective children born in lawful wedlock, it does not restrict the propagation of children in those cases where the taint of degeneracy is coupled with that of illegitimacy.

Segregation of defectives.—Dr. R.W. Bruce Smith, of Toronto, writes on this subject, “What avails the continuous increase of hospitals, asylums, and similar institutions, if the number to occupy them grows faster than the accommodations?” and further on he says: “The only true course to be taken is to separate all the degenerates from society and keep them by themselves in carefully classified groups.” This method of dealing with the problem would necessarily entail a very great expense for the establishment and maintenance of these colonies—conditions would have to be safeguarded with the same care as an actual penitentiary, and would, in many cases, result in life-imprisonment of unfortunates who are in no way responsible for their plight, but who might, in a small way, be of some use in the world, and who should be given the opportunity to enjoy life and liberty so far as they are capable of enjoying anything.

The operation known as vasectomy. This operation is simple, taking less than five minutes to perform. In the case of defectives and persons convicted of certain crimes it is strongly endorsed by Dr. Rentoul of Liverpool, England, and by Dr. Ex. Goddard of the training school for feeble-minded at Vineland, N.J. The states of Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota and California, have laws upon this subject. Dr. H.C. Sharp, the physician of the Indiana reformatory, highly approves of this plan of restricting the propagation of defectives and abnormal criminals. He states that since 1899 he has performed this operation nearly two hundred and fifty times. He has had good opportunity to observe the past operative effects of this operation, and in this number of cases he has not observed a single unfavorable symptom. So far as any disturbance to the physical, mental or nervous system of the patient is concerned, his testimony, based upon observation, is that this operation is decidedly beneficial, rather than detrimental.

Let me, at this time, respectfully recommend to the legislature of 1912 that they at once take steps to safeguard and restrict the issuing of marriage licenses to persons convicted of rape, incest, open or gross lewdness, and cases where either of the parties are known to be suffering tuberculosis, syphilis, or epilepsy, and in cases where either party has been in confinement for habitual drunkenness, feeble-mindedness, or insanity.

And, I further recommend that a commission be appointed to investigate and report upon the advisability of the adoption of the operation of vasectomy as a prevention for the spread of hereditary taints and diseases.

STATE BENEFICIARIES.

At present, the state is supporting sixty-one children at various institutions. They are as follows:

Mass. School for Feeble-Minded.....	27	\$300.00	\$8,100.00
American School for Deaf	7	275.00	1,925.00
Perkins Inst. For Blind.....	7	300.00	2,100.00
Clarke School for Deaf	7	300.00	2,100.00
Mystic Oral School for Deaf.....	5	275.00	1,375.00
Penn. Training School.....	4	300.00	1,200.00
Conn. Inst. For Blind	1	300.00	300.00
Maine Inst. For Blind.....	2	300.00	600.00
Vineland School.....	1	300.00	300.00
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	61		\$18,000.00

Of these children only eight have been designated during my administration. Four feeble-minded have been sent to the Massachusetts School for Feeble-Minded Children and one to a similar school at Vineland, N.J. I have designated one child to the Clarke School and one blind adult to the Maine Institution for the Blind. From the above figures you will notice the fact that the number of feeble-minded children designated to date is about fifty per cent larger than all the other classes of defectives. While something can be done for these unfortunates, the feeble-minded, it usually takes years to effect even a partial relief, and in most cases a designation means that the children will spend the rest of their days in the institutions to which they have been assigned. I have felt, during the two years of my administration, that it was the intent of chapter 60 to give help primarily to those cases where there was a reasonable hope of benefit. Thus, in the case of these unfortunates, I have tried to designate only those whose application papers held out a hope of a permanent and distinct improvement. If I have been a little conservative in the designation of deaf and dumb beneficiaries, it has been from the fact that the Austine Institution in Brattleboro was in process of erection and that most of the state beneficiaries of this class would be transferred from their present schools to this home. It seemed to me wiser to let the child make its beginning in our own institution, rather than to designate the applicants to some other school, and then, after a few months, to transfer them, to new surroundings. I have had very few applications from those suffering from blindness, and as stated above, I have designated two from this class and the reports of their progress are most gratifying.

Experience has taught us that deaf, dumb and blind children, after a few years of proper education, become self-supporting and valuable citizens, while the feeble-minded are a charge upon the state too often for life.

With a limited appropriation at our disposal much more can be accomplished by caring for the deaf and blind, and thus a much larger number of beneficiaries can be educated by the state's appropriation.

PAROLES.

In the exercise of my prerogative as governor, I have paroled to date two hundred and forty-three prisoners. Of these one hundred and seventeen have been paroled from the state prison at Windsor, one hundred and fourteen from the house of correction at Rutland, and twenty-two from the different county jails. Since the establishment of a State Commission on Probation, the executive department has endeavored in every way to cooperate, and at present I am sending the secretary of this commission monthly reports giving the names of the prisoners paroled, the date of expiration of their maximum sentence, their last known residence and the name of the probation officer to whom they report. These paroled prisoners, as a rule, have reported very well. Of course in some cases the prisoners leave the state as soon as they receive their parole and are never heard of again. Another class of prisoners who fail to report are those in whose case the difference in the period of time between the minimum and maximum sentences is short. I note that in those cases in which the period of time between the minimum and maximum sentence is a year or longer, the paroled prisoners are very careful about reporting on time. I think this custom of paroling at the expiration of the minimum sentence where the prisoner's conduct has been good is a very excellent one, and I should respectfully recommend to the legislature of 1912 that they enact a law requiring the difference in time between the minimum and maximum sentences to be largely increased. I believe that such a law would still further increase the regularity of the reports from the probationers and have a favorably restraining influence for that much longer period.

JAIL REMOVALS.

By virtue of the authority given me by the state laws, I have ordered three hundred removals from the different county jails to the house of correction. They are divided as follows:

Addison	6
Bennington	3
Caledonia	12
Chittenden	170
Essex	1
Franklin	28
Lamoille	1
Orleans	12
Washington	7
Windham	27
Windsor	33

Unless there were certain urgent circumstances which made the change advisable, I have made no removal except in cases where the prisoner's sentence was over thirty days. Twice I have had to suspend the granting of these removals; once on account of an epidemic of diphtheria at the house of correction and again because of its crowded condition.

UNIFORM STATE LAWS.

I wish to call to your consideration a matter which I think should receive your very careful attention. I refer to the efforts of the various states of the union to promote uniformity of state laws. Under our form of government the states are independent in matters of local legislation. The inevitable result has been great conflict in the laws of the various states upon matters in which there ought to be uniformity. This resulted in so much embarrassment that in the year 1889 the American Bar Association appointed a special committee, which recommended to the association that a committee of one from each state should meet in convention from time to time and compare and consider the laws of the different states, especially those relating to marriage and divorce, descent and distribution of property, acknowledgement of deeds and execution and probate of wills.

The following year the legislature of New York passed an act authorizing the appointment by the Governor of three commissioners, to be known as "Commissioners for the Promotion of Uniformity of Legislation among

the States” and making it their duty to examine the subjects of marriage and divorce, insolvency, the form of notarial certificates, and other subjects, and to ascertain the best means to effect an assimilation and uniformity in the laws of the state and to consider whether it would be wise and practicable to invite the other states of the union to send representatives to a convention to draft uniform laws to be submitted for approval and adoption by the several states.

As a result there has been established the present National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws. The conference is made up of commissioners appointed by the governors of the different states. Usually there are three commissioners appointed from each state participating in the conference. A large number of states have special acts authorizing the appointment of such commissioners, who are usually appointed for a term of five years. Most of the states provide for the payment of the expenses of the commissioners. The expenses of the conference are met by the different states participating therein through an appropriation for that purpose by the legislature. The number of states, territories and federal districts which have appointed commissioners is as follows:

States.....	45
Territories.....	3
Federal districts.....	1
Possessions.....	2

Total.....	51

The annual meeting of the conference is held at the same place and just prior to the annual meeting of the American Bar Association, and in conjunction therewith.

Previous to last year this state had taken little interest in the subject of uniform state legislation. Being impressed with the desirability of having this state represented at the conference and deeming it to the great advantage of the state so to do, I appointed a commission to attend that conference by virtue of the general act under which the governor of this state has the authority to appoint such a commission.

The act by virtue of which I made this appointment necessarily limits the activity of the commissioners to the particular conference. It seems very desirable, if the state of Vermont is to take any part with the other states in this work, that commissioners should be appointed for a number of years so that they may be continuity in their work.

Our commission attended the conference in Boston and have made a full report upon the general subject of Uniformity of State Legislation, explaining the origin and history of the conference, the details of the work and what has been accomplished by the conferences, and have recommended to me the adoption of the following Uniform State Laws recommended by the conference of commissioners and approved by the American Bar Association.

The “Negotiable Instruments Law”; the “Uniform Divorce Act”; “An Act Relating to Marriage and Marriage Licenses.”

The “Negotiable Instruments Law” has been adopted by forty of the states, among them New York, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, three states with which we have very close relations. The “Uniform Divorce Act” has been adopted by three states.

The commissioners also report that they believe it would be wise to adopt the “Uniform Sales Act” now in force in ten states, and the “Uniform Bills of Lading Acts” now in force in eight states. Copies of the various acts referred to in their report are appended to said report. I quote the following from the report:

“Your commissioners believe that the attendance of Commissioners from this state at the various meetings of the National Conference, especially if these commissioners are appointed for sufficiently long terms of service to become familiar with the work of the conference, will result in benefit to the state. It will tend to produce more care in the drafting of laws, it will create a means by which the legislature of this state may be compared with that of other states. Uniformity of some of the more important branches of the law will be the

natural result. As the commerce of the nation becomes more and more inter-state and our business men are having increased business relations with people in other states, uniformity of the laws relating to commercial matters is of great advantage. Any work which tends to simplify and make uniform the laws of business, and thereby benefit the business interests, ought to be encouraged and promoted. We believe the adoption of our recommendations will promote that result.”

The commissioners also recommend the passage of a law creating a board of commissioners by the name of “Commissioners for the Promotion of Uniformity of Legislation in the United States,” said board to consist of three members to serve without compensation, but to be reimbursed for all of their expenses in connection with the discharge of the duties of their office, and providing for contribution by this state to the expenses of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws. A proposed draft of said law is appended to the report.

I respectfully submit to your attention and consideration the whole of said report and papers appended thereto.

I wish to express my approval of the recommendations made by the commissioners. Vermont should take an active part with the other states of the union in promoting a uniformity of state laws in inter-state matters.

OUR WHITE COAL.

Some two years ago I was a guest at a banquet given by the Massachusetts Real Estate Exchange and I was asked to suggest what would benefit most efficiently industrial life in New England, and in my response, I enumerated among other commodities, free coal, as our distance from the coal fields of Pennsylvania and Ohio made the cost of transportation for manufacturing purposes nearly prohibitive. We must have cheaper power to compete successfully with the factories of the great Middle West. I little realized at that moment that we had a white coal, so-called, running to waste at our doors, sufficient to furnish power for all our factories, all our mining purposes, and our electric lighting plants, and in addition sufficient to operate our steam and trolley railroads.

This white coal from hydro-electric development, free from smoke, soot, and cinders, attended with no fire risk, can be and is being developed today from our streams and rivers and furnished in certain localities for from 25 per cent to 33 1/3 per cent less per horsepower for all purposes than can be obtained from any other source. Our streams and rivers, including that being developed from the Connecticut River with power houses on the Vermont side, are today producing power sufficient to displace the use of a million tons of black coal annually, and this power can readily be distributed to every small and large town in that section of our state, and thus revive the hundreds of small factories which were formerly hives of industry in so many of our small villages.

Again, how different, financially, for our people and state, if this \$5,000,000, now paid annually to the coal-producers of Pennsylvania and Ohio should be produced and kept within our borders.

There has been developed on the Connecticut River at Vernon, six miles south of Brattleboro, what is probably the largest hydro-electric development in this country east of Niagara Falls. An immense concrete dam and power house on the Vermont shore with eight generators of more than three thousand horsepower capacity each, utilizes the flow of the Connecticut River, the dam creating a lake more than twenty-five miles long, and covering from four to five thousand acres. This development is, of course, partly in Vermont and partly in New Hampshire, as this is an inter-state river. Brattleboro thus far is the chief beneficiary of this development in Vermont, and nearly all the industries of Brattleboro are operated by this power, and the rapid growth of that town which is now taking place, is chiefly attributed to this development.

The same financial interests, but under another charter of organization, are making an enormous development of the power of the Deerfield River. This is also an inter-state river, having its rise in Stratton, Windham County, and flowing through several Windham and Bennington County towns, into Massachusetts. There are planned at least ten large hydro-electric developments on this stream; six of them are now in process of construction. The largest is a great storage dam and power plant at Somerset. This plant, now in process of construction, will flood two thousand acres of land to an average depth of forty feet, holding practically the

entire flood waters of the stream, which are to be so handled as to equalize the flow of the stream below. Twelve thousand horse-power will be generated at the Somerset plant.

Other plants in Vermont are proposed to be located at Wilmington, Whitingham, and Readsboro. An enormous expenditure of money will be made in the completion of the whole project. Between one and two million dollars will, it is said, be expended in the Somerset development alone, and the total developments on the stream in both Vermont and Massachusetts, will, it is said, cost about twelve million dollars. It is reasonable to expect that the whole Deerfield Valley will see a tremendous industrial growth within the next few years.

The Deerfield Valley project is conservation in the most approved way. The holding of the flood waters in storage for equalizing the flow of the stream in low water periods is essential to the best development of perhaps our greatest natural resource.

I have referred to the enormous development in Windham County, as it has progressed farther than in any other part of our state, but similar conditions, though less in magnitude, are found in other counties. The hydro-electric power in Rutland County, though feebly developed, is immense, and we have one corporation developing and using 5,000 horsepower annually, and double this efficiency could be obtained if necessity required. Rutland, Addison, Chittenden and Caledonia Counties afford promising opportunities for this development. The spirit of conservation should possess the people of our state and govern their endeavors, if we hope to keep abreast with the spirit of progress maintained by our neighbors. We should not fail to conserve and utilize the unlimited advantages so readily obtained from the development and use of our native white coal, found so abundantly upon nearly every hillside and in our valleys.

I would, therefore, earnestly recommend such legislation as will inure to further development of this natural wealth, realizing the immense benefits to be obtained if it is properly controlled and the rights of the state protected.

Also, to consider carefully some reasonable plan whereby possibly state aid could be given without risk for the development of these storage reservoirs, looking to the utilization thereby of the water powers on the streams further down. This is a subject worthy of your thoughtful consideration. Some action along this line would be a forward step and could be used with great force by our senators and representatives in Congress in obtaining national assistance.

It would make Vermont the most progressive of states, in the development and conservation of her natural resources.

HIGHWAYS.

Better highways for our state has always appealed to me as one of the most important subjects for legislation. It affects our religious, our agricultural, educational and social life, to a greater extent than any other condition, and if I am correctly advised our state has expended on her system of roads during the last two years about two million dollars, and the demand for good roads has been growing rapidly in Vermont for the past few years and resulted in the passage of the state aid law in 1906, appropriating \$50,000 which was available to those towns which would vote an equal amount, "dollar for dollar", under certain limitation. In 1908 the appropriation was increased to \$75,000, and again in 1910 to \$150,000. The number of towns voting and the amount of money for this purpose has increased year by year, until March, 1912, two hundred and twenty-seven (227) towns voted practically one hundred thousand dollars.

There has been a steady growth of sentiment in favor of the law as is evident by the annual increase in the number of towns available themselves of the act, and by the annual increase in the amounts voted, the largest increase being in the year 1912. No better evidence is necessary that the law meets with popular approval than this showing of the towns. Not a single year since its passage has there been any dropping off in the number of towns voting money, nor in the amount of money voted.

The past year 1911, and this year 1912, the biennial term just closing, show an advance in the quality of work done in that practically every improvement under state supervision has been carefully laid out by an

engineer with the idea of uniform construction. The gravel road was assumed to be the most economical for Vermont to build under present conditions when the law was enacted in 1906 and up to the present time no change has been made in this particular, save in large cities. In villages and towns where the traffic is excessive some of the best forms of macadam construction have been adopted, with the result that we have a small mileage of excellent macadam road built under state supervision in the past two years.

It is becoming more and more evident that a good earth road properly maintained is satisfactory for summer travel, and that in Vermont more attention will naturally be paid to roads of this kind in the future.

Our system of selected highways has been in the past two years somewhat increased by the addition of roads in different localities in the state that were not considered five years ago of sufficient public importance to warrant their being selected, but with the increased tourist travel it has seemed wise to your commissioner to open up some of the beauty spots of the state around our lakes and mountains, by the addition of some of the most attractive roads we have in the state, and it would seem that no better outlay of money could be made than to develop with special appropriations some of these roads that probably cannot be improved in any other way.

I earnestly recommend your thoughtful consideration of this important subject and sincerely trust that the good work being done may be continued.

TAXATION.

No subject with which you have to deal is of larger importance than a revision of our present system of taxation. At the last session a bill came to me for my signature, which I was obliged to withhold. The object of the measure had my entire approval, but the bill itself was crude and it seemed obvious would be impotent to accomplish its understood purpose. It had passed both legislative branches in the closing hours of the session and came to me at a time when my department was rushed to the limit of its capacity. Proper consideration was absolutely impossible, and two courses only were open to me, one to summon back legislators who had returned to their homes and hold the legislature until needed corrections could be made and the other to exercise my right to veto. Having in mind that the session had been unduly prolonged, and that to reform the measure would cause the state many thousand dollars expense, as well as prove a hardship to the members who had then left the capitol, I pursued the course which economy, and as it then and now seems to me the interests of our people, required.

The demand for a radical revision is insistent and has been for several sessions. The present law does not have general approval, but no tax system has ever been evolved by any state, ancient or modern, which has had universal approval and which will completely abolish the inequalities of taxation. The great trouble with us has been, that legislators held so many different and conflicting opinions about methods, there could be no common ground. Commissions have been authorized to study the tax system of other commonwealths and report to our General Assembly, but commissioners have disagreed mainly on unimportant questions and legislators in the infinite variety of "cure-alls" suggested have become confused and doubtful as to the expediency of proposed reforms.

A solution of the whole problem is not probable at any one session, but an immediate correction of some of the inequalities of the existing law, is imperatively demanded. Let me ask, that the first work of the Assembly now convened be directed to this problem. The constituencies you represent expect it and the state requires it. Let your aim be, to broaden opportunity, strike down inequalities, and lift the burdens from those least able to carry them. It is proper for you to inquire if corporate property pays its fair and just share; if large wealth may not be made to contribute its full and measured part; if financial institutions should enjoy the privileges that are denied to men; and if you shall find present laws unjust and unwise, it is your duty here to apply the remedy and to do it with unsparing hand. I counsel you, do no injustice to the rich or strong, but remember that governments exist to care for and protect the poor and weak. It is not in my province to direct what you do, but there is a command from all the people, irrespective of party, which you will gladly heed. The problems are not new; they are as old as the state; your predecessors have in the main wrought well, but the tax question remains unsolved.

EXEMPTION FROM TRUSTEE PROCESS.

The absolute exemption of all sums to the amount of ten dollars due for labor from attachment, has been long asked for by the wage-earners of Vermont. Exemptions have been lavishly granted by former legislatures to our citizens engaged in various pursuits, but this meritorious measure has repeatedly failed of enactment. The present will of the people is unmistakable. They have made their decision. It is for you to record it in the laws of the state.

LABOR LEGISLATION.

Vermont has been progressive in this respect but not sufficiently so. The state is now entering the period of its greatest industrial development. More and more will measures for the betterment of labor conditions press for enactment. A careful study of the recent legislation in other states will convince you that the hour is at hand, when we ought to enact many of the beneficent measures now being asked for here. "The laborer is worthy of his hire," and he is entitled to perform that labor under safe conditions and to be surrounded by every precaution and protection.

PREVENTION OF STRIKES.

There must continue to be differences between employer and employed. Every time such difference results in a "strike", there is loss not only immediate and substantial to those participating, but consequential to the state. Production has been reduced, consumption restricted, and the sum total of aggregate wealth lessened. To just what extent the state ought to intervene is a debatable question, but that its good offices might be invoked to adjust or at least to suggest honorable terms of settlement, will not be challenged. Many states and countries have boards of arbitration for this purpose. It will probably be going too far to say that the decision of such a board should be final and conclusive, but if one authorized by law and properly constituted could here investigate and recommend a basis of settlement, popular opinion, would, in most cases, bring adjustment without resort to coercive measures.

DIRECT PRIMARIES.

The day of the so-called "political boss" has closed. Vermont never knew him in the sense that he has existed in some of the great cities, and in other commonwealths, where as the "king-maker" on the day of convention or absolute dictator when party policies were to be defined, he was master of the state, but in some degree we accepted the leadership of certain citizens of commanding ability. The direct primary has successfully been invoked elsewhere to register the will of the people. In some cases the methods have been cumbersome; all of them expensive and occasionally impotent.

A simple, inexpensive method, one that will ensure the full, free choice of our citizenship, and one adapted to the peculiar conditions which exist here, is to be found in the recent enactments of the most progressive states.

CAMPAIGN EXPENSES.

The restriction of expenditures by candidates for office within such limits as would make it possible for the average citizen to aspire to any position in the government, and the publications of sworn statements, both before and after elections, are safeguards that should surround the ballot box and make it sacred to the people and the state. Recent disclosures have demonstrated that fabulous sums of money have been expended in the elections of some of the states. The high ideals, the lofty aims, the great purpose which characterizes the incomparable citizenship of our splendid commonwealth demand that public office shall be offered neither on the auction block or at private sale. Limit then the expenditures of candidates and nominees; require every expenditure and promise of place or pay to be published, and disfranchise forever those who disobey. Thus may the honor of our officials continue unsullied and the fair name of the state remain unsullied.

CONCLUSION.

During the last two years, and especially for the past few months, our state and in short, our nation, has been passing through a period of intense political unrest, greater than we have experienced at any time during the last half-century.

There has been a general uplift or demand, in fact, for a general advance along all lines which could result in a betterment of the social and physical conditions of our people.

This progressive spirit has been planted in the fertile soil of our commonwealth and is rapidly securing a strong hold with our people. We have felt it in the betterment of our school life—our agricultural conditions and our highways; in the state control of corporate life; in the purity of the ballot box, in our endeavors for uniform laws; in our efforts for the elimination of mental and moral degenerates; and in short, along every avenue which leads to the uplift of our citizens.

You should, with all your strength, maintain the advances already made, and further progressive legislation should be enacted at this session, ever keeping in mind our peculiar conditions; not similar, in fact, to those of any other state.

You have before you the special report of each official of your state government. These you should study carefully as they will furnish you more complete and accurate information as to each department of our state government than can be obtained from any other source.

I cannot close without referring to a weakness or failure which seems to possess every legislature; viz., rapid increase of state expenses, and more particularly during the sessions of the legislature. I was greatly surprised to note that the expenditures of the lieutenant governor and General Assembly from 1900 to 1910, inclusive, were as follows:

EXPENDITURES.

1900.....	\$ 61,979.83
1902.....	60,637.59
1904.....	70,498.40
1906.....	81,714.21
1908.....	134,326.98
1910.....	about 145,000.00

This increase of legislative expense of nearly 150 per cent is, in my judgment, wholly uncalled for, and an extravagance without an excuse. There are many avenues through which this money could have been expended which would have inured greatly to the good of our people. The spirit of progress toward better conditions is stimulating our people as never before, and is not here an opportunity for this legislature to set an example worthy of that ambition which should be the aim of every true Vermonter?

Do not deceive yourselves with the delusions that this money spent so lavishly does not come from the hard earnings of the common people. We boast of our revenues from corporate taxation. Don't forget that this money spent so freely comes from the great masses and when you are urged to vote large appropriations for some questionable purpose remember that you are indirectly emptying your own pockets. Let us strive to return to and maintain the economy of our fathers; only spending our state's money when it can be done for such purpose as will inure to the greatest good of our people.

Gentlemen: You are honored in being chosen as the representatives of the freemen of this state to guard carefully her present interest and to provide for her future with your best judgment, strengthened by your knowledge obtained from the experience of other legislatures.

You should ever realize the worthy examples of your ancestors who have assembled in these halls, and who have given our state a reputation for wise and helpful legislation unsurpassed by that of any other state. A galaxy of names is furnished which should serve as a stimulant to your highest endeavors. Your opportunity is ever present and your duty should call for your best efforts. With these thoughts ever in mind you should

realize the great blessings bestowed upon your state by a kind providence appreciating the worthy inheritance from your fathers, and may the results of your labors be of such nature that Vermont may continue to be regarded as one of the best governed states of our union.

JOHN A. MEAD

The governor having concluded his message, withdrew and the Joint Assembly dissolved.

GUY W. BAILEY,
Secretary of State, Clerk.