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GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE,

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,

Raleigh, N. C. November 18, 1822.

To the Honorable the General Assembly of the State of North-Carolina.

GENTLEMEN,—Called together to consult for the general welfare, from among our fellow-citizens in the various counties of the state, and well acquainted with their interests and wishes, you have ever been viewed as a most interesting body. It is with peculiar satisfaction that I once more witness your meeting, confident as I am, that under the guidance of our excellent constitution, you will steadily pursue the common good. Chosen from among the people for your knowledge of their interests and devotion to their welfare, we may with safety rely on your patriotism and firmness never to abandon or neglect them, or suffer yourselves to be warped by sectional prejudices and local views, losing sight of the good of the whole. For let us ever bear in mind that the good of the whole, if not immediately, will always eventually prove the good of every individual.

I beg leave to call your attention, in a few observations, to some of the most prominent objects which claim your deliberation, without pretending even to name many things which your wisdom will suggest as requiring legislative interference. But it will be found, that by effectively promoting a few objects of fundamental importance, others which are highly desirable and useful will follow of consequence, or at least with much less immediate aid.

The improvement of the navigation of our rivers, an object which has for some years occupied much of the attention of the Legislature, and excited a great deal of interest throughout the state, will no doubt again come before you. It is a desirable thing to all that every facility within the power of the state should be afforded to our internal trade—It gives excitement to industry, and produces individual and state wealth—It improves the agriculture of the country, by making it the interest of every man to add to the productiveness of his lands—As it enhances the value of the farmer's lands, it makes him content to live and labour on his fields, rather than abandon them for a trifle, and rove in quest of wealth in countries more convenient to market—It diffuses knowledge among the people, by throwing open the avenues of communication, and affording free scope to the interchange of opinions, and the circulation of useful information; and so intimately are the operations of government connected with the agriculture, the arts, and the commerce of the country, that the farmer, while his interest leads him to avail himself of every source of knowledge within his reach relating to his avocations, will necessarily be led, in proportion to his opportunities, to a knowledge of the nature and administration of his government; taught to estimate his national blessings; to watch with an intelligent eye the conduct of those in office; and to guard against the artifices of designing and intriguing men. In fine, so general and extensive is the influence of convenient channels of intercourse, that there are but few objects of legislation of common interest, with which the subject has not some important relation.

It is therefore unnecessary to say that I feel a deep interest in the internal improvement of the state, or to endeavor to impress more deeply on your minds its very great importance. The laudable zeal which you have so long manifested in this grand project, is an evidence that you are sensible of its importance, and will not neglect it. But as to the particular objects which should be first effected, there has, I know, been a diversity of opinion. We have, I think, all seen, that had our limited funds been originally directed to a few points of primary and more general importance, and not dispersed in small portions throughout the state, the result would have been more beneficial to every section. Had we begun at the mouths of our rivers, and proceeded upwards, every step would have given additional impulse to those immediately interested in the work, and this impulse would have continued to spread until the whole state would have felt it. For example—if the channel of the Cape Fear, between Wilmington and the Bar, could have been deepened so as to admit vessels that could cross the Bar to come up to the town with their loads, and to go out with the same freight, without the aid of lighters, it is easy to perceive to what great extent the effects would have been experienced, both in stimulating the Navigation Company to vigorous exertions in clearing the river higher up, and in affording better prices to the planter for his produce, and lessening the cost of salt and other articles. But the truth is, that by dividing our strength so much in attempting to effect every thing at once, we have effected, comparatively, nothing, and it is to be feared that few facilities to trade exist now that did not exist before the commencement of our improvements. And what, but the one before assigned, can have been the cause of the failure of our works? We have for several years had the services of an able Engineer, who has explored our rivers, pointed out the various obstructions to their navigation, and given instructions in what manner they were to be removed; a zealous and intelligent Board of gentlemen have been watching over every project, and pushing them forward by all the means in their power, and still our progress is so gradual as to be almost imperceptible.—The reason is obvious—We have not concentrated our money in sums sufficiently large to effect the objects to which they have been applied. If a remedy is still within our power it [illegible] design and apply it. I have already said more than I had intended, de[illegible] to call your attention to the subject. The interest which I feel in whatever is the condition of the people, the sovereignty and strength of our country, will, I trust, claim your forbearance, and excuse the freedom and candor which I have used. The report of the Board of Internal Improvements will shortly be submitted to your honorable body, which will afford you every information with regard to our public works.

Before we leave the subject of Internal Improvements, suffer me to call your attention to a subject which has hitherto been too little regarded, and to which some of the foregoing remarks have reference. I mean the opening & improving of our Roads. While we are expending the public treasure in improving the navigation of our rivers, we owe it to those who live remote from navigable streams, and who, in many sections, find it necessay to go to market by land, to open Roads [illegible] unite at convenient points, and lead to good markets. By this means too, we should keep in our own state a great deal of produce, which at present enriches other states, and draw capital to our market towns, which our own produce has helped to centre in theirs. Although it is desirable that every man should have a convenient channel to carry his surplus produce to market, even though he should be adding to the wealth of another state, yet it is but justice to ourselves, that while we expend the public wealth, we should, at least, give our own markets a fair competition. While our treasure is employed in public improvements, it is, surely, desirable that those improvements should be so directed as to repay us. It is, therefore, of the highest importance, while we open rivers which lead into other states, and give the farmers inducement to carry their produce away, that we should likewise make roads to our own market towns, give our merchants a fair competition, and add to our wealth; and this is still more desirable, when we consider that it would be to the manifest advantage of the planter, by giving him a choice of markets. I might point out particular roads which seem to claim your prompt assistance, but the circumstance that some of you come immediately from them, and are, therefore, much better prepared to explain and enforce their importance, renders it useless.—Your own discernment will follow the subject throughout its extensive bearings, and your wisdom and attachment to the common weal, are a sufficient guarantee that you will give it your mature deliberation, and adopt such measures as are practicable and conducive to the great ends in view. The improvement of roads and rivers would soon enable our citizens to get out of debt, & would be the surest means, by affording a strong motive to industry, of keeping them from the ruinous and visionary schemes of speculation. Talk not of Banks—of an increase of circulating medium, as a means of extricating them from their embarrassments. It will only "put off the evil day" of payment. Our countrymen, taught in the school of sore experience, begin to see the wisdom of economy, and to feel the necessity of retrenchment. They are in the very situation, then, to return to habits of industry and morality; and they will do it, and will soon rid themselves of debt, if you will offer them every inducement, and every facility in your power. They will presently get into the good old ways of certainty and safety, and will be content with a more moderate increase of wealth.

By a judicious and well conducted plan of Internal Improvements—by opening, so far as our resources will permit, our roads and rivers, always taking care to begin with such works as are of most general utility, the effects of which would be most extensively experienced, we should go far towards accomplishing another most important object of state policy, viz. the improvement of the agricultural condition of the country. The planting community are the very strength and sinews of the government, and in proportion as they are suffered to languish, must the government become feeble and inoperative, and all other objects of public utility experience a depression. The effect of roads and navigation on agriculture will always be mutually felt, and if the Legislature would give to agriculture even a small share of direct aid and encouragement, there is no doubt the effect would be reciprocated in a much higher ratio. With the increase of agriculture, indeed, every thing else is made to flourish. Wealth, knowledge, and virtue conspire to make us happy, and perpetuate the inestimable boon of freedom and independence—Contentment smiles in the cottage, and wealth diffuses its genial influence to all around—There is an inspiring beauty and harmony in the aspect of a well cultivated country which seem to be reflected from the countenances of the people; and I never presented to my imagination a more delightful image than that of flourishing fields, cultivated by free and happy people. Born in the country and raised a planter, I have always felt a degree of enthusiasm in contemplating this subject, bordering, perhaps, on extravagance. But its importance is by no means diminished by the coolness of deliberation; its consequence, indeed, is the more obvious and home-felt, for its practical and universal necessity goes into every man's door, and is experienced alike by all classes of society. Why our agriculture has been so long neglected by the Legislature, and is so far behind-hand with respect to [illegible] of our sister states, and whether [illegible] be not [illegible] appear to me to be enquiries [illegible] your attention. Their solution I [illegible] your own wisdom, and the remedy or [illegible] your own judgment, far better than [illegible] suggest. If the reclaiming of our [illegible] could be commenced by offering [illegible] by any other better means, the [illegible] salts, I apprehend, would very soon [illegible] would you induce farmers to make [illegible] on their lands, in new methods of [illegible] and the introduction of articles not [illegible] growth, and which have been found [illegible]able, not only as valuable articles of [illegible] but as enriching the soil, a very great [illegible] would, without doubt, be thereby [illegible] to you, gentlemen, with confi[illegible] with pleasure, I submit the subject, [illegible] tending to dictate to your wisdom, [illegible] I can add to your zeal for the [illegible].

[illegible]nection with this and the subject of e[illegible] to which I must beg leave to invite [illegible] at the present session. I would [illegible] defect, which appears to me to ex[illegible] in the education of our young men [illegible]vantages: They know little or no[illegible]culture, and are not taught to hold [illegible]formation. The consequence is, [illegible] nearly all devote themselves to the [illegible]fessions, and leave the calling of hus[illegible]ally as respectable and more useful, [illegible]om they consider their inferiors.—[illegible]ect, and these consequent mistaken [illegible] lose the talents and influence of [illegible]ng man, who lags and withers in [illegible]rofessions, when he might be an or[illegible] guide in the quiet walks of agricul[illegible]nstitute one of that most excellent [illegible]lass of society, *good citizens*. It is [illegible]choly to witness the crowds of [illegible] drones that hang upon the rear of the learned professions, burdens to themselves and burdens to society, because they are useless; and many of them—perhaps I might say a large majority—men of talents, but unhappily misapplied. I trust, if they are beyond the saving influence of the Legislature, that you have it still in your power to prevent their accumulation, and to diffuse the talents of our state into more extensive usefulness. Should the Legislature even practically unite in the important truth, that it is of the last moment to the stability and security of our republican institutions, that all kinds of useful knowledge should be extended to our youth, the poorest as well as the richest, it is to be hoped that they will not overlook the article of agriculture; and in the present flourishing state of our University, when its wealth has received such an addition in western lands, its number of students such an increase, its buildings receiving such improvement and extension, and its able Faculty and Trustees are so zealous and indefatigable in raising its reputation, and extending the sphere of its usefulness, it appears to be an auspicious period to introduce the subject of agriculture within its walls, and lend it your aid. Were you even to devote a considerable sum of money to this purpose, how manifold would be the interest which the people would receive in its advantages? Young men of liberal education would leave our University with proper ideas of the dignity and usefulness of agricultural avocations, and with much useful knowledge relating thereto. They would go into the different parts of the state, and devote themselves to agriculture, and associate in Societies with men of more limited opportunities, where their knowledge and their influence would be widely diffused, and give a life and vigor to agriculture, of which we can easily form some conception.—But I would not have you suppose that this subject is altogether neglected in our University.—We have there a professorship of chemistry and mineralogy, which bear an intimate relation to agriculture, and it gives me much pleasure to state, that I have been informed that the gentleman who has charge of that department of instruction, takes a lively interest in the improvement of the agriculture of the country, and devotes a part of his course of lectures to that subject alone, and loses no opportunity of imparting to his pupils every article of knowledge which will be of service in the business of life. I am happy that I have it in my power to make known the fact, that our University is not confined to those studies which, though of the highest importance in a liberal education, have no immediate relation to the concerns of life. I have said the more on this subject, because it derives additional importance from the fact that we are, and, from our geographical situation must continue to be, an agricultural rather than a commercial people. I trust that this fact, and the intrinsic importance of the subject, will lead you to a serious investigation of it, and (for it is surely practicable) to give it your aid and protection.

With regard to education, although we have been considering an important part of it, you are by no means to stop here. Our constitution has made it your duty to encourage and promote every kind of useful learning. Its wise and patriotic framers, who were about to burst from the thraldom of oppression, and who were sensible of the enslaving influence of ignorance, ordained it to be their own duty, and the duty of their sons, to whom they were soon to bequeath the inestimable legacy of freedom, to diffuse learning among the people—and they no doubt looked forward, in pleasing contemplation, to the period when their posterity should have schools and academies erected among them, when knowledge, at least of the most useful and indispensable kind, should be within the reach of the child of the poorest citizen. When "all useful knowledge should be duly encouraged and promoted"—the people acquainted with their rights, sensible of their national blessings, and therefore determined to perpetuate their institutions; and to keep the soil which their fathers had purchased with their blood and treasure, "the land of freedom, and the asylum of the oppressed." I fear, gentlemen, if those venerable fathers were to rise from their tombs, they would reproach us with supineness and neglect, and would not listen to our plea of want of power. We shall never know what power we have until we exert it; and it holds in political as well as physical strength, that it is increased by exercise. To all these subjects, then, which appear to me, I am sure, in a far more important light than my limits or language will allow me to express, let us give heed, and timely heed. Let us do something, however [illegible] it may prove in time [illegible] grain of mustard seed."

But whilst we are sedulous to attain these grand objects, we should not lose sight of the fact that these and all our blessings and privileges are liable to invasion from abroad. We have experienced the injustice of foreign nations before, and we have no reason to conclude that this is never to be the case again. It is therefore important that we should direct our attention to the training of our militia. Our militia system, as you well know, is still very defective. Let us ever recollect the advice of our Political Father, to prepare for war in time of peace. By far the most important part of this preparation consists in training up a body of men that will always be ready, in case of war, to send into the field an efficient force. It seems to be the policy of the general government to reduce the standing army of the United States, as being too expensive and dangerous to the Republic. Whether this be sound policy or not, it certainly increases the importance of having a well organized militia. At present it is difficult to discover what advantage is derived from our system and practice, except in a few remarkable instances, where individual exertion and spirit presents a cheering prospect amid the surrounding gloom, and shows what may be done by proper endeavors. This is a subject of no small moment, and I trust will receive a share of your deliberations. It is to be hoped that we may never become a nation of soldiers by profession; or neglect the delightful arts of peace, while we pay some regard to those of war. And while we prepare for our enemies, we should cherish towards them generosity and forbearance, adopting the sentiment, "be able foe, fame enemy rather in power than use."

By an act of the General Assembly, passed in the year 1819, it is made the duty of the Governor to procure places of deposit in the towns of Edenton, Newbern and Fayetteville for such arms as belonged to, or might become the property of the state, and to cause such arms to be collected and removed to one of those places.—Since the adjournment of your last session, I have received a letter from the War Department of the U. States, stating that the small arms, accoutrements and artillery procured during the last six years, agreeably to an act of Congress, passed in the year 1808, for arming and equipping the whole body of the militia of the United States, were ready for delivery, and would be delivered so soon as returns of the militia of all the states should be made, by which they would be enabled to distribute the relative proportions to the respective states and territories, agreeably to the said act. By the law of this state above mentioned, they will be deposited at one of the places designated, unless otherwise directed by the General Assembly.

Agreeably to the act of the last session of the General Assembly, authorising the sale of so much of the Cherokee lands as had been surveyed and remained unsold, I gave notice, according to law, of the time and place of holding said sales, and appointed Col. John Patton, of Buncombe county, commissioner to superintend the same. I expect to have it in my power, in a short time, to lay before you the report of the commissioner, which will, doubtless, give you all the information you may require. It is made the duty of the commissioner, by the act of Assembly, to ascertain and report to the Public Treasurer what lands are in dispute between the Indians claiming under the treaties and persons holding under the state; and the Treasurer is directed not to proceed in the collection of bonds due for such lands until the controversy is properly settled; and, in the event of the claimants under the state being ejected, to refund to them such sums as they have paid to the state, with interest from the time of payment. It is recommended to your consideration, whe-