

THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

To the Honorable the General Assembly of North Carolina.

In compliance with the constitution and the time-honored custom of my predecessors, I have the honor to greet you as the representatives of the people and to confer with you in regard to the state of our Commonwealth.

It is known to you that owing to causes which need not be attempted to elucidate, the people of the United States—and in a great measure of the civilized world—have been for some years past, and still are, passing through a period of most remarkable financial troubles, producing everywhere much distress and even disaster.

The crops of the last two seasons have been excellent and the means of subsistence have never been more abundant and cheap. The industry of our people has been notably increased and diversified; their farms, stock and agriculture have shown considerable improvement; and while the production of our cash staples has steadily enlarged, the amount of breadstuffs purchased abroad has visibly diminished.

Remembering that North Carolina is preeminently an agricultural State, your legislation should be directed towards the improvement of that interest mainly. In this connection I beg to call your attention to the fact that the first and perhaps greatest need of an agricultural State is a good system of roads over a wide extent of territory, is that of good highways and easy transportation for persons and products.

I am happy to see that the increased interest in manifested among all classes in popular education. This, I believe, is mainly due to the action of the last Legislature in appropriating money for the establishment of the State Normal School. In accordance with the law the board of education established one for the whites at the University, and decided to locate one for the blacks at Fayetteville, in a building tenanted by the colored people of that city.

From this we may draw some valuable conclusions: 1. That convict labor is almost if not quite as valuable for road construction as hired labor. 2. That convict labor is more valuable in this kind of work than employed at trades and mechanical work in the State.

Asylum makes perhaps a more satisfactory exhibit than it has ever done since its establishment. With a large increase of pupils there has been a decrease of 16 per cent. in the total of expenses.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

The establishment by the last Legislature, in pursuance of the constitution, of a department of agriculture, was a very important step indeed to the benefit of this State.

The establishment of the Board of Agriculture, in pursuance of the constitution, was a very important step indeed to the benefit of this State. It has in some respects proven effective, and will require some amending at your hands.

The work on the Western Insane Asylum has been fully commensurate with the appropriations. The report of the commissioners will give the particulars.

The penitentiary system of dealing with our criminals is comparatively new in this State, and as it is now by far the most costly of all our institutions, it is almost daily becoming more so.

The Chester & Lenoir Narrow Gauge Railroad company has finished its line to the State Normal School, and is now grading to Newton on the Western North Carolina Railroad.

VALUATION OF CONVICT LABOR.

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As a further illustration of this idea, I beg to call your attention to the situation of that rich and once productive region, the Roanoke country, by the report, with a reduced appropriation from former years, the board of this institution have saved \$1,656.12 out of the amount, with which they have erected a new and more commodious building.

RAILROADS.

The public works have been pushed forward with energy and economy. I regret exceedingly that the management has not been able to have the road on the Western North Carolina Railroad running across the Blue Ridge by this time.

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NAVIGABLE WATERS.

It is gratifying to see that the general government has begun to take an interest in the improvement of our navigable waters. Surveys of the Neuse, the Yadkin and the Catawba are in progress or contemplated.

FINANCIAL.

The treasurer's report will engage your earnest attention. You will see that whilst the utmost economy has been practiced, yet the funds in his hands have not been sufficient to meet all the objects provided by law.

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STATE GEOLOGIST.

The State geologist survey having been made co-worker with the board of agriculture, its usefulness has been thereby greatly increased to the people.

MILITIA.

To the increasing energy and perseverance of Adjutant-General Jones we are indebted for the nucleus of an excellent volunteer militia organization.

EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY.

Much criticism has been made upon this and preceding administrations in regard to the exercise of executive clemency toward criminals.

STATE PROPERTY HELD BY THE UNITED STATES.

The property of the State, once known as the United States barracks in this city, has been occupied by the United States ever since 1865.

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The State Guard really do all the duty, and fill all the functions of the whole militia organization. The constitution should be amended so that the militia be organized liberally.

ACTS OF THE LEGISLATURE. Complaint is frequently made by the Secretary of State and others, at the careless and insufficient manner in which many of the acts and laws in the original are kept and enrolled.

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