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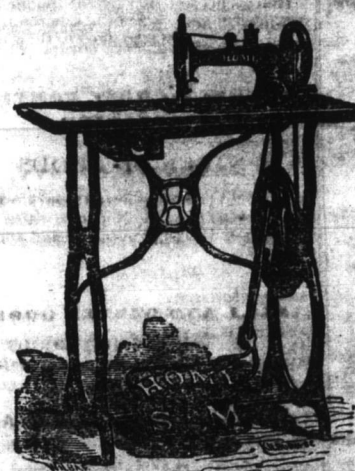
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GOV. VANCE'S MESSAGE.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives.—I congratulate you on the progress made toward the prosperity of North Carolina, and gladly avail myself of your invitation to contribute such suggestions as I may deem best calculated to aid your deliberations in behalf of the public good. I am so newly inaugurated into the executive office, however, that I am not possessed of the minute information in regard to the various parts of the governmental machinery which would make my suggestions of value; but such ideas as I have, of a general nature, in regard to the conditions and wants of our people, I shall make known to you frankly.

Among the first things to engage your attention will doubtless be, the best methods of adapting your legislation to the recent amendments to the Constitution, and of giving effect to the expressed will of the people in that regard. Too much care cannot be exercised in this matter, as our county government, on the average, costs twice as much as that of the State. Owing to the fact that in several of the counties the non-property holding portion of the voters is in a large majority, and that bad men have taken advantage of this state of things, many of them have been brought to the verge of absolute ruin. Their citizens have been ruled by ignorant and corrupt officials; the most enormous taxes have been imposed, whilst shameless profligacy and extravagance have marked all their proceedings. To such an extent has this evil gone, that many of the richest and fairest portions of North Carolina have been shorn of their wealth, their productions decreased, and their resources dried up in a manner resembling the desolation of fampland armies. Industry has been checked, idleness and fraud have been encouraged; local justice put in contempt; and every interest tending to prosperity and good government, in a measure, suffocated. The truthfull representations of these evils more than all things else, induced the people of the West to hasten to the relief of their Eastern brethren by the adoption of the Constitutional Amendments. That relief being happily made possible, it remains for you to apply it.

I shall not venture to recommend any detailed scheme for your adoption, but will simply suggest, 1st. That whatever system of county government you adopt shall be uniform. 2nd. That you violate the elective principle in the selection of county officers as slightly as possible. I am attached on principle to the plan of making all authorities who levy taxes and execute laws, directly responsible to the governed. In regard to the judicial branch, my opinion is different. It seems to me that all the grievances complained of may be remedied, and these essential principles preserved.

In perhaps a majority of the counties of the State, the government of commissioners has worked well, and the people are satisfied with its operations. I would not recommend any change greatly radical, for my opinion is that public sentiment will rapidly cure the evils complained of without the necessity of any considerable departure from the principle elective representations. The plunderers of our counties had before their eyes the examples of those who had robbed both the State and Federal treasuries, and now that we have checked the one and altogether stopped the other, we may reasonably hope that the smaller villains will gradually give place to better men, and a corrected public morality will powerfully assist in restoring confidence and integrity in every department of the government.

By the 17th section of article III of the new Constitution, it is made your duty to establish a Department of Agriculture, Immigration and Statistics, and to enact laws for the pro-

tection of sheep husbandry. This opens a wide field of judicious and experimental legislation. I look upon the adoption of that section of the Constitution as a step in the right direction. North Carolina is essentially and peculiarly an agricultural State, more exclusively so, perhaps, than any on the Atlantic slope, if not in the Union; yet has she done less to encourage this, her greatest interest, than any other interest of her people. For the most part her legislation, and the genius of her people, have been directed toward the attainment of other objects. The farmer alone has been left without any public aid to enable him to grasp the improvements and advances which science has been evolving for his benefit. It is a matter of rejoicing that the Constitution has at last made its obligatory upon the legislative branch of government to give him this aid. Without any definite plan of my own, I earnestly recommend this subject to your mature deliberation.

I transmit herewith a memorial from the Raleigh Grange, asking for the establishment of this department, and commend it to your favor.

As your honorable body, after its next adjournment, will not meet again, unless specially convened, for two years, I recommend the immediate establishment of such a board as is contemplated by the Constitution, which could at least make a beginning in the great work, and could gather up much valuable information which might enable your successors to enlarge and improve upon your work. In aid of the board, the statistical labor should be immediately undertaken. If the Secretary of State were ordered to furnish the necessary blanks, and it was made the duty of each person appointed to list the taxable property of the State, to take at the same time from each tax-payer, on oath, the amount, character and value of his productions for the past year, with the acreage in cultivation the wealth of the State and the condition of our people could be had every year at a most insignificant cost. And if the products of the whites and blacks were kept separate, it might be made of service in stimulating the industry of the blacks and increasing otherwise the value of their citizenship. In this connection I have the pleasure of sending herewith a memorial embracing the result of a conference between Agricultural Societies, the Patrons of Husbandry and the Trustees of the University, in regard to the importance of protecting the farmers against imposition in the purchase of commercial fertilizers. To do this they ask for a small appropriation to aid in the establishment of an "Experiment Station" at Chapel Hill, and the employment of a practical chemist. With the means already on hand at the University, I am assured they can accomplish their object at a very slight cost to the State, and all practical agriculturists agree in pronouncing it a necessity. I earnestly recommend the proposition to your favor.

I desire to call your attention to another matter of importance to the welfare of a large portion of our people somewhat similar to the foregoing. It is known that great success has, within the last four years, been achieved in various parts of the world in the artificial propagation of fish. So important has this become that the government of the United States has established a department for the purpose of stocking the inter-State rivers with suitable breeds of fish, and quite a number of States of the Union have taken in hand the filling of all their streams. The results so far have been satisfactory beyond the most sanguine expectations. I am in receipt of an official letter from the Fish Commissioner of the State of Virginia, inviting our co-operation in the restocking of those rivers which lie partly within both States, notably the Chesapeake and the Roanoke. These will be restocked with shad, striped bass, and other kinds at the expense of the United States, if the two States unite in freeing them from obstructions to the passage of fish. The same

will be done for our two great Western streams, the Yadkin and Catawba. If the authorities of South Carolina can be induced to unite with us in removing obstructions. But a propagation establishment of our own could be created at a small expense, which would enable us in a few years to fill every stream in the State, great and small, with the best varieties of fish, thus increasing both the food and the pleasure of our people. The fact that within the recollection of living men almost every stream within our borders was once alive with the finny tribe, is accepted by the pisciculturists as proof that they can be so filled again. So unfilling are the conclusions of science in this matter that it is well authenticated that whilst in the natural state subject to all the accidents and deprivations of the open rivers, only two per cent. of the eggs are ever hatched into fish, in the protected establishments of art ninety-eight per cent. are matured to the size at which they are deemed sufficient to turn into our rivers.

Should you establish a Department of Agriculture, I recommend that the establishment for an institution for this purpose be made a part of the duty of whoever shall have the department in charge and that the necessary acts be passed for keeping open fish ways in our streams; and also for the protection of the fish in the spawning season. Though this may seem a small matter, the experiment in other States has been attended with very considerable and very beneficial results.

The Geological Survey which has done so much towards making known to strangers and to our own people the nature and resources of our own State, I recommend shall be connected with the University. By some arrangement to be agreed upon by a committee of your honorable body and the trustees, this could be effected in such a manner as to increase its efficiency, whilst Professor Kerr, the State Geologist, could lecture in the winter and conduct advanced students in the field in the warm season, greatly to the benefit of the University and its pupils. I am sorry to see any considerable of our people indifferent to the continuation of this scientific survey. Its results not being so obviously apparent as works of a more tangible character, its necessity does not so vividly impress itself on the popular many and many think it an unprofitable expenditure. In a hundred ways I believe it has been of the greatest service to the interests of our State. Nothing has done so much to develop our mineral resources or to introduce capital to our mines of gold, iron and copper. Its influence on immigration has also been considerable and we may reasonably believe that much fruit will yet ripen from the seed sown in Europe by the distribution of more than ten thousand reports, in German, concerning our resources which the State Geologist has made, in addition to the many valuable volumes circulated at home. As the agricultural interest is principally concerned in this survey, it may, I trust, continue to enjoy this public favor.

In regard to the great subject of education I earnestly desire to engage your attention in behalf of the accompanying "Memorial of the Central N. C. Teachers' Association," which is herewith transmitted. Perhaps the most effective action which your honorable body could take to promote the cause of education would be the establishing of a school of normal instruction at the University for the exclusive education of teachers. This would be only a compliance with the plain provisions of the constitution, and would be a long step in the direction of connecting the University with the common school system as the head and guide thereof, which is its natural position. It is impossible to have an effective public school system without providing for the training of teachers. The bill cannot lead the blind; mere literary attainments are not sufficient to make their possessor a successful instructor. There must be added ability to influence and interest the young and to communicate knowledge. There must be a mastery of the best modes of conducting schools and of bringing out the latent possibilities, intellectual and moral, of the pupil's nature. In some rare cases these qualities are in born, but generally it is of vast advantage to be trained by those who have studied and mastered the meth-

ods which have been found by experience to be the most successful in dispelling ignorance and inculcating knowledge. The schools in which this training is conducted, called normal colleges or normal schools, have been found by experience to be most effective agents in raising up a body of teachers, who infuse new life and vigor into the public schools. There is urgent need for one at least in North Carolina.

The Constitution of the State, in section 14, article IX, requires the General Assembly, as soon as practicable, to establish and maintain in connection with the University, a department of Normal Instruction. I respectfully submit that it is now practicable to make a beginning in carrying out this provision of the Constitution. There cannot possibly be found in this State competent teachers for our public schools. The records of the county examiners show that most of the applicants for the post of "unparagoned" to others, are themselves deficient in the simplest elements of spelling, reading, arithmetic and writing. The University is now in successful operation. If the General Assembly should appropriate an amount sufficient to establish one professorship for the purpose of instructing in the theory and art of teaching, I am persuaded the best results would follow. A school of a similar character should also be established for the education of colored teachers, the want of which is more deeply felt by the black race even than the white. In addition to the fact that it is our plain duty to make no discrimination in the matter of public education, I cannot too strongly urge upon you the importance of the consideration that whatever of education we may be able to give the children of the State should be imparted under our own auspices, and with a thorough North Carolina spirit. Many philosophical reasons can be given in support of this proposition. I am conscious of a few things more dangerous than for a State to suffer the education of an entire class of its citizens to drift into the hands of strangers, most of whom are not attached to our institutions, if not positively unfriendly to them. There are in the State several very respectable institutions for the education of black people, and a small endowment to one of them would enable it to attach a Normal School sufficient to answer the present needs of our black citizens. Their desire for education is an extremely creditable one, and should be gratified as far as our means will permit. In short, I regard it as an unmitigated policy to imbue these black people with a hearty North Carolina feeling, and make them cease to look abroad for the aids to their progress and civilization and the protection of their rights as they have been taught to do, and learn them to look to their State instead; to convince them that their welfare is indissolubly linked with ours.

I transmit herewith the first biennial report of the Commissioners of the Western Insane Asylum. It contains an interesting account of the location and partial erection of the institution, which is destined to be another monument to the humanity and liberality of our people. It would seem to be very satisfactory indeed. I think the location fortunately chosen in all respects, the surroundings most excellent, and the state of the work in reasonable forwardness. For a wonder, the cost so far is considerably below the original estimate, and I am assured by disinterested parties that the work is thorough and substantial. I presume you will have no hesitation in making the needful appropriation for the current year. In regard to the parent Asylum in this city I respectfully recommend the reducing of the number of Directors. Fifteen, the present number is altogether too large, both for economy and efficiency. Eight or nine would be amply sufficient. I also respectfully recommend that the Stewards of the several institutions, penal and charitable, be compelled by law to buy all leading articles of supply by advertising for proposals, instead of the present method of private purchase. It is thought this plan would save money to the Treasury. The habit of buying at private contract makes everything cost more, and breeds a system of favoritism and small population, injurious to the public interest. The tax-payers are entitled to the advantage of the com-

petition of the whole country.

Accompanying this message I also send a report from the Board of Public Charities. The indefatigable Chairman, Dr. C. T. Murphy, has gathered up a considerable amount of information, as set forth in this and preceding reports to which I invite your attention. Heretofore such has been the average prosperity and wealth of our people that we have had little knowledge of the suffering and extreme poverty and disease; and but little attention has been given to the methods of providing for them. Since the war, this afflicted class of our citizens has largely increased, and humanity demands that our legislation should make all the necessary provision for its relief. I am assured, that many of our prisons are badly kept in regard to health, and many of the counties houses for the poor are obnoxious to the severest criticism—not because of any inhumanity on the part of the county authority, but because sufficient attention is not given to the subject. Most of them would doubtless do their full duty in the premises if overhauled from time to time by the supervision of this Board. I recommend that a reasonable salary be paid to the members of this board, and that the duties of annual visitation and report upon the prisoners houses for the poor be made obligatory upon them.

I also recommend that an act be passed, if deemed necessary, authorizing the Judges of the Superior Courts to send proper criminals direct from the counties where they are tried to the railroad work, there to be received and carried by the Warden in charge and thus save the very considerable expense of transporting them to Raleigh first. This brings me to speak of internal improvement works.

The idea of utilizing the convict labor of the State for the public benefit in this way was a happy one. Skillfully and economically managed, an immense good can be effected at a very small expense to the State. I commend to your favor the effort in this way to complete the Western North Carolina Road through the mountains to the great Mississippi valley. It is said to contemplate the mishaps which have so long delayed that most important work and to see the almost heart-broken disappointment of those Western people. Again and again both political parties before and since the war, have pledged themselves to finish that road. The war stopped it; since then the gigantic corruption of those who had it in charge stopped it again; the ruin of our credit caused for awhile to put an end to all operations for this generation at least. The expediency of finishing it with the convict labor was, therefore, eagerly well-considered as a certain and cheap, though slow means of building the road. I sincerely trust that nothing will be permitted to prevent your liberable legislation in this behalf. The entire available force of the penitentiary, except as otherwise now disposed of, should be put at once to the work from the present terminus of the road to the French Broad river, any then be divided betwixt the short branch line and the main trunk line according to pledges heretofore made. I recommend that instead of the government by commissioners, the affairs of the road shall be administered by the ordinary machinery of railroad companies, with at least eight directors and that you provide means to furnish the iron as may be required. It is expected that before your assembling again the road will be in operation as far as Asheville, at least.

Many inquiries are being made as to the disposition of our public debt. I presume it is the intention and desire of our people to provide for its liquidation at some future date as soon as the necessary taxation can be done, you, as the immediate representatives of the people, must decide. Whilst it is certainly desirable in many respects to take this debt up and restore our credit to its ancient standard, I am far from believing that we are subject to self-reproach, or are in any way obnoxious to the sneers of those who hold claims upon us. In regard to much the greater part of those claims there is not the slightest moral obligation resting on the

(Continued on Fourth Page.)