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GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

To the Honorable the General Assem-
bly of North-Carolina.

GENTLEMEN.—Although we have
continued during the past year, in
the uninterrupted enjoyment of all
our civil and religious privileges;
yet the chastening hand of an all
wise providence has borne heavily
on particular sections of our State.—
Whether the injury sustained by the
late untowered seasons, is of mag-
nitude sufficient, to merit your in-
terference, is a question submitted
entirely to your discretion.

Believing it universally admitted,
that the existence of free govern-
ments depends upon the virtue and
intelligence of the great body of the
people; and that these are also, the
sources of individual comfort and
happiness, I shall not consume your
time in repeating arguments so often
adduced, to shew the necessity of
diffusing the benefits of education a-
mong the poorer class of our fellow
citizens. But, permit me to call
your attention to a clause in our
State Constitution, which enforces
the obligation, of giving to this sub-
ject your serious consideration. It
is thus: "A school or schools shall
be established by the Legislature of
this State, for the convenient in-
struction of youth, with such sala-
ries to the masters, paid by the pub-
lic, as may enable them to instruct
at low prices. All useful learning
shall be duly encouraged and pro-
moted in one or more Universities." The
latter branch of this constitu-
tional injunction has long since been
complied with, by your predecessors.
We have an University in a pros-
perous condition, with competent
funds. But, as to the former, and
no less important branch, concern-
ing schools—it is to be lamented,
that from the formation of the Con-
stitution, until the last session of the
General Assembly (a period of forty
nine years,) nothing whatever
has been done. The last Legisla-
ture commenced the important work;
but if that beginning is not well sus-
tained and pursued, the present gen-
eration may pass away, before any
thing effectual is accomplished. Many
enlightened persons believe,
that it is more difficult for an indi-
vidual in ordinary circumstances, to
obtain for his child, at this time,
the common rudiments of education,
than it was at the period when our
Constitution was adopted. This
increased difficulty originates, in
part from the increased demand
which the exigencies of government
have made upon the resources of in-
dividuals and the enhancement of
the necessaries of subsistence. It
appears, therefore, peculiarly just

and proper, that the State should
contribute somewhat to the diminu-
tion of that burden, which, in part,
it has created. And while it exacts
and expects obedience and support
from the citizens to its laws and in-
stitutions, it should give them the op-
portunity to appreciate their privi-
leges and improve their condition.
The least reflection will satisfy us,
that reading, writing, and the com-
mon rules of arithmetic are highly
essential to the healthy action of
our government, founded, as it is,
upon the supremacy, and executed
by the agency of the people: And
they unquestionably contribute more
largely to the individual benef-
it and morality of the body of the
people, than the branches of sever-
al science usually taught in our estab-
lished seminaries. Whilst upon this
subject, I beg leave to remark, that
the Constitution itself, in the section
before recited, has not only imposed
the obligation, but has suggested an
important mean for the execution of
the injunction.

The benefits resulting from a well
regulated and properly conducted
system of Internal Improvements,
in a country like ours, are too ap-
parent, to require many remarks to
prove their importance. Let us, for
instance, confine ourselves to the
limits of North-Carolina, and mark
her situation at this time. We all
know that in particular sections of
the State, the greatest distress is at
present apprehended, among the
poorer class of our fellow citizens,
from the deficiency of the various
crops, springing from sources, which
it is unnecessary to investigate. We
also know, that in other sections,
the usual productions were never
more abundant. From the great
variety of soil and climate, may not
this state of things often occur? Let
me ask then, what is the proper
remedy for such evils? Can there be
any other answer given than—fac-
ilitate the intercourse between the
different sections of the State? In
other words, open your water cours-
es, repair your old roads, and make
new ones. Make them, what they
should be, cheap and convenient me-
diums of social intercourse! Then
the failure of crops in some few
counties would not have the effect
of thinning a population, already too
much scattered and diminished.
But the redundant fulness of some
parts, might conveniently be drawn
off, to fructify and supply less for-
tunate situations. There is every
reason to believe, that at the pre-
sent time, grain and other necessary
articles would not command, more
than their ordinary price, were it
not for the great difficulty of trans-
portation. Those who are, fortu-
nately the venders of produce this
year, may be purchasers the next.
It behooves the people of every part
of the State, maturely to consider
this subject. It is frankly admitted,
that money has been, perhaps un-
necessarily expended, at the com-
mencement of undertaking. But is
not this, the fate of all human un-
dertakings, without the benefit of
experience? Is there an individual,
who for the first time has opened a
plantation or built him a house, who
is not, at its close, convinced that
he has committed many errors, and
expended money uselessly? What
then would be thought of the rea-
soning, which should gravely con-
clude, that these things, which add
so much to our comfort and con-

venience, were useless, because er-
rors might be committed? I do not
advocate, far less wish, the public
money to be unnecessarily expended,
when it can be avoided. But a pru-
dent, though unfortunate manage-
ment, may be lamented, although it
should not be blamed. When it is
considered that there is already a
fund created, (the Cherokee Lands,)
and our fellow citizens will not
probably be burdened with addition-
al taxes, it is most respectfully sub-
mitted, whether a judicious system
of Internal Improvements, should
not be prosecuted? In connection
with this subject it may be well to
mention, that under the provisions
of the several acts, prescribing the
mode of surveying and selling the
lands acquired by treaty from the
Cherokee Indians, four sales at pub-
lic auction have been had, and the
most valuable lands disposed-of. It
is believed, however, that the lands
remaining unsold, are of sufficient
value, to be well worthy the atten-
tion of the Legislature. It is sub-
mitted to your discretion, to deter-
mine what disposition shall be made
of them. It is obviously the inter-
est of the State, and more imme-
diately of the citizens of that sec-
tion of the State, that they should
forthwith be brought into market,
since their value is continually di-
minishing, by trespassers, who des-
troy the timber and wear out the
soil, and who can scarcely be pres-
sured to make good citizens or quiet
neighbors. Whether it will be ad-
vantageous to have the unsurveyed lands
run out, and with the surveyed lands
undisposed-of, offered at public auc-
tion, or open an entry office under
suitable regulations, are subjects
which will properly claim your con-
sideration. Before we take leave
of this subject, you will pardon me for
again calling your attention to the
reclaiming of our swamp lands. I
is believed to be a subject, in which
the State is deeply interested. If the
States have the power of regulating
their own internal policy, if they
have the power of instituting precau-
tions for the preservation of the
health and lives of their citizens, can
there be a doubt of the power to
act upon this subject? What can
stay the tide of emigration, now flow-
ing to the west, but the improvement
of our State? There can be but lit-
tle doubt, that the undertaking would
not prove burdensome, but would rat-
her directly and greatly enhance
the present revenue, while it would
augment the agricultural resources of
the State, improve the health of our
citizens, and relieve our territory
from a melancholy blot on its geo-
graphical appearance. As to the
particular works which have been
carried on, during the past year, their
progress, &c. will be detailed in an-
other communication.

Some of our most enlightened fellow
citizens are of opinion, that the crim-
inal code is susceptible of improve-
ment. This would be attained, by
leaving it discretionary with the pro-
per jurisdictions, to substitute either
the tread-mill, or work house, instead
of the present modes of punishment,
for petty offences, by fine, imprison-
ment and stripes. The assertion can
scarcely be doubted, that in the neigh-
borhood of our towns and villages,
within the last few years, the com-
mission of crimes is much more fre-
quent than formerly. The present
modes of punishment, especially by
imprisonment, which is most general-
ly inflicted, present feeble, very feeble
checks to their multiplications, and
tend but little, either to an amend-
ment of the culprit's morals, or to

produce a wholesome influence on o-
ther wrong-doers. At the same time
the general insolvency of such off-
enders, heavily accumulates the charges
of prosecutions upon the different
counties. One of the present modes,
of punishment, that of whipping, es-
pecially where meanness enters into
the commission of the crime, I es-
teem a valuable feature in our crim-
inal code. The propriety of extend-
ing it to some misdemeanors, at pres-
ent punishable by fine and imprison-
ment, particularly in the case of
fraudulently trading with slaves, is
respectfully submitted to your consid-
eration. I doubt not, that the use
of the tread-mill and work house, where
such establishments were found prac-
ticable, and were well organized and
conducted, would contribute largely
to the efficient administration of crim-
inal justice, to the reformation of of-
fenders, and sensibly diminish the
charges of prosecution, by the profits
of the establishments. The present
mode of compensating our prosecut-
ing officers, appears to me objection-
able. Is it not the policy and duty
of every wise and liberal government,
as well to protect the innocent as to
punish the guilty? Can it be right and
just, that the compensation of these
gentlemen, should, in a great degree,
depend upon conviction? Is it not
their interest to convict, whether the
accused be innocent or guilty? And,
however respectable, still they are
but men! liable to all the weaknesses
which flesh is heir to, and capable
of being influenced by all the consid-
erations, which influence humanity.
Would it not be preferable, that they
should enjoy fixed salaries, thus re-
moving all temptation to persecution,
and make their present fees payable
to the county trustees and State
Treasury, as reimbursements? That
there are other defects in our judic-
iary system, cannot seriously be dou-
bled, but whether they are of the de-
scription, which require legislative
interference, or such as are incident
to all human institutions, you alone are
competent to decide.

I herewith transmit you a communi-
cation from Vermont, enclosing a
resolution of their General Assembly,
for your concurrence. It is, in sub-
stance, that slavery is an evil to be
depreciated by a free and enlightened
people; and, declaring that their Gen-
eral Assembly will concur in any
measures, which may be adopted by
the general government, for its aboli-
tion in the United States, that may be
consistent with the rights of the peo-
ple and the general harmony. This
is an additional instance, indicating,
that States like individuals, may fall
into the common error of believing,
that they better understand, and with
more skill and to greater advantage
could manage the concerns of others,
than they display in their own trans-
actions. The reason is obvious: They
take but a partial and imperfect view
of another's affairs, without the ad-
vantage of being possessed of the
whole ground. May not this be the
situation of the non-slave holding
States, and can they not, without
transcending "the modesty of nature,"
fairly presume, that this subject in
all its bearings, is fully understood
in the South? It becomes every State
and people, to be peculiarly alive to
every circumstance, which may
threaten their existence; and to pro-
vide every precaution, against any
emergency to which they may be ex-
posed. I repeat but a common truism,
but one appreciated by every wise
people,—"that peace is the time to
prepare for war." From foreign force,
or internal insurrection, we are in-
deed protected by constitutional pro-
visions. But it does not become us,
to neglect our resources or overlook
the peculiarity of our situation, in