

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF GOV. R. I. MANNING

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the General Assembly:

In assuming the duties of governor I am mindful of the responsibilities of the position. I invoke Divine guidance and earnestly pray that wisdom, courage and strength may be given me to see clearly and to do justly in all that may come to me as duty.

Under our form of government we have the executive, legislative and judicial branches each separate and distinct from the other, and each a check on the other.

The governor of the state is at the head of the executive branch. It is his duty to enforce the laws as they stand on the statute books. It is not his prerogative to decide whether a law is wise, or best suited to a community, but he is to see to it that the law is obeyed.

I have faith in our people; I believe that they want the laws enforced, and their conscience is awakened on this subject. The watchword of my campaign last summer was the enforcement of the law. I now declare afresh my purpose to carry out in good faith, this pledge. I believe in home rule—local self-government, and I expect every one who is charged with enforcement of law to do his duty. My

opportunity to vote once and that no man shall be allowed to vote more than once.

Education.

It is gratifying to know the progress we are making in education; it is even more gratifying to realize that our people are aroused to its paramount importance; that they are determined that the children of our state shall be educated. This is manifested in the spirit of self-help, and each year sees a substantial increase in the number of school districts that tax themselves for school purposes.

Our institutions of higher learning have shown steady growth and are doing splendid work. We must provide liberally for their support so that their growth and development can be maintained. But the fact stares us in the face that we are in a period of general business depression and we must jealously consider every item of expenditure, to save the people from unnecessary burden. I suggest, therefore, that at this time we should not undertake any enlargement of these plants or any unnecessary expenses.

Notwithstanding the progress we are making in educational facilities and the general awakening that has

schools. The policy of the state is to educate all the people at the expense of all the people for the welfare of all the people. I recommend, therefore, the enactment of a compulsory attendance law with local option feature. We must strive to bring each and every community to the point of having school facilities; and, wherever these facilities are acquired, to require school attendance.

Picture to yourselves what it would mean to South Carolina if all of her citizens were educated, and for the attainment of this object we give our best and unflinching effort.

Child Labor.

I recommend, as a companion act to the compulsory attendance law with local option feature, that you will amend the law on child-labor by raising the age limit from twelve to fourteen years.

Taxation and Assessment.

We all agree that change is needed in our tax laws. We have, in the past, given more attention to appropriations than to revenue. We must increase our revenue or decrease our expenditures in order to stop the overgrowing deficiency. The reports of the departments reveal the fact that there is now a large accumulated deficiency that must be provided for. Assessments are now unequal and unjust. Much property escapes taxation; different classes of property are assessed at different percentages of their value. Increased expenditures for educational and charitable institutions, as well as increased expenses in the judicial department, necessitate the devising of progressive and more modern methods of raising revenue. I would therefore recommend that a tax commission be created to examine into this subject and suggest a bill embodying a plan of revision of our tax laws. In order to acquaint this commission with existing conditions, the duties now imposed upon the state Board of Equalization and the State Board of Assessors, should be devolved upon it. Supervision of the enforcement of existing tax laws, should be given, temporarily at least, to this commission, with power to equalize the assessed valuation of property between county and county and between tax district and tax district, increasing or decreasing assessed valuation, as may be found necessary. Annual appropriations should be made by the legislature for state, county, and school purposes and the tax commission should be authorized to impose such levy upon the assessed valuation of property, when ascertained by it, as will raise the amount necessary to meet the appropriations made by the legislature. The method of taxation, the levying of the burden so as to secure justice between the tax payers, is of as great importance as the fixing of the appropriations by the legislature.

In this connection, as there is now in force a Federal tax on income, and as the operation of the present state income tax has been so ineffectual in obtaining true and just returns thus increasing rather than decreasing the inequalities of taxation I recommend the repeal of the state law taxing incomes.

Workmen's Compensation Act.

I realize the hardships and delays and the frequent miscarriage of justice in suits for damages for bodily injury. Damage suits intensify bitterness of feeling between employer and employee without a satisfying and just settlement between them. Frequently a hardship is imposed upon the employer; and just as frequently injustice and unnecessary delays in settlement of these cases are imposed upon the employee. I recommend the appointment of a commission to study this question and to report by bill or otherwise to the legislature to convene in 1916, a measure that will bring relief to plaintiffs and defendants, by a workmen's compensation act.

Land Registration.

The delay in congressional action, on the establishment of a rural credit system, makes it necessary for us to look to ourselves for help in this matter. As the first and necessary step towards the development of such a system, I recommend the enactment of a land registration act that will guarantee title and fix boundary lines. This would enable the landowner to obtain loans on his real property with as little trouble and expense as he is now able to do on his personal property, by removing the necessity of repeated examinations of title. This is a necessary step before we can provide a system of land banks for rural credits. I deem these measures important, if properly planned and safe-guarded, in order to increase the number of home owners in the country and towns, and to furnish means for improvement of rural homes and the conditions of life in the country. Ownership of home means permanency of tenure; permanency of tenure means improvement of conditions of life and surroundings. If every farmer owned his place and lived upon it the problems of rural life would automatically solve themselves; isolation removed, homes would be more comfortable; there would be better churches, better schools, better roads, and community life more attractive. I realize that this may be classed as progressive legislation, and we have limited precedence for it in the country, dating back only to 1910. I do not advise these land banks as state institutions, but that they should be developed by independent organizations under state supervision.

Fertilizers.

Under existing laws regulating the manufacture and sale of commercial fertilizers, our farmers have not ade-

quate protection, nor do they yet know what ingredients in fertilizers are best adapted to their lands, and what ingredients should be avoided. This matter should be considered with great care; the interest of the farmer who is the consumer, as well as the interest of the honest manufacturer, should be carefully guarded. I would recommend, therefore, the creation of a commission to consist of representatives of the fertilizer department at Clemson College, of farmers, and of representatives of the manufacturers, to revise our fertilizer laws and to report by bill to the next session of the legislature.

Auditing.

I recommend that all state institutions should be examined and accounts audited regularly. I suggest that you devolve this duty upon the state bank examiner, and give that department the necessary additional force to enable it to do this work thoroughly and effectively.

I recommend the enactment of a law providing for the medical inspection of pupils in the public schools, under the supervision of the state board of health in co-operation with the state board of education, and with due provision for the protection of the pupils.

Penal and Charitable Institutions.

It seems to me that it would be wise to consider our penal and charitable problems as a whole. There is a lack of co-ordination in the system of management of the state penitentiary, state hospital, reformatory, jails, chaingangs and alms houses of the state, counties and cities. We should develop our humanitarian undertakings. In this work we have the examples of other states, notably Virginia, illustrating what may be accomplished by having a state board of charities. I recommend, therefore, that you consider the advisability of establishing, in this state, such a board, for, though the proposition involves an expenditure each year, if this work is properly done, it would mean greater economy and efficiency in these institutions.

National Guard.

I favor a strong, well-maintained, well-disciplined National Guard, and urge that adequate appropriation be made for it, to make it an effective factor in the state government. South Carolina must have an efficient and effective National Guard.

I will, at a later date, submit for your consideration, by special message, suggestions relating to the state institutions, especially the Hospital for the Insane, to which I am devoting special consideration.

I will also communicate with you later, on the subject of roads, the Confederate Home, the Confederate veterans, and the needs of the state board of health; also the Lever bill, cattle tick eradication, and other subjects pertaining to the interest of our people.

Permit me to remind you that we are face to face with a situation in business for which we have no precedent. The European war has clearly shown how closely allied and interlocked are the interests of the nations of the world. The general shrinkage in values and in business, has added greatly to the anxieties, cares, and suffering of all our people, and has greatly increased the number of those without employment. Under these conditions, we must, on the one hand, jealously guard the expenditures of the public moneys; but on the other, we should be slow to stop public work that is desirable, which would further increase the number of the unemployed. The time is propitious for the state and counties to undertake carefully conducted work on the public highways. This would accomplish a greatly needed improvement and would give employment to many who have no means of making a living. It is not a time for us to be discouraged and to look at only the depression around us. If we think that conditions now are gruesome, pause for a moment and consider the conditions under which we labored in the sixties and early seventies. Faith and hard work brought us through these trials, and I am confident that self-reliance and resourcefulness will dominate and improve this situation. With self-denial, with economy, with energy and courage we will meet our difficulties bravely and we will work out our salvation, and will bring about a restoration of business and enterprise to a normal condition. Let me urge you to bear in mind these facts; and let us urge you to that cool consideration of all matters that will bring you to realize that economy does not constitute merely in cutting off items in the appropriation bill, but rather in seeing that the peoples' money is judiciously spent and that for every appropriation the state will receive a full and adequate return.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, permit me a personal reference. From my earliest youth the ambition to be the governor of South Carolina has filled my breast. To serve my state is my ardent desire. To join all other patriotic citizens in the effort to do their service and help in the upbuilding of her resources and in the character of her citizenship, I appeal to all citizens to join me in the determination to place my feet on South Carolina in the foremost ranks among her sister states in progress in moral tone, and in an enlightened and educated citizenship. I am confident that I voice the desire of a large majority of South Carolinians when I urge our people now to turn their backs on past failures and dissensions, to look forward, turning their faces resolutely to the future. The vision of a people determined to take advantage of the resources which God has put within our grasp, to develop these resources; to build up our waste places; to diversify our crops and industries; to educate and uplift our citizenship, and to that end I pray that God may give to me and you a wise and unshakable heart that we may be able to discern the will of the good, and that He may give us the spirit to think, to say and to do such things as are right, and that His blessing may be upon us in our efforts to serve our state.



HON. RICHARD IRVING MANNING
Governor of South Carolina

desire is that in each community the laws shall be enforced by the local authorities. I take this, the very first occasion, to say to these authorities that I stand ready and eager to cooperate with them in this work, and that they may be assured of my aid with every available lawful means to attain this object. Let me add another word, not as a threat, but as a warning; if in any community the lawful authorities fail to enforce the laws, it will then be my duty to see that the laws are obeyed. This I intend to do.

The constitution provides that the governor may make such recommendation to the general assembly as, in his judgment, are good and proper.

The time has come when we have to meet new conditions; we are living in a time of change and progress. This condition gives us new problems to solve—new difficulties to meet. We are to be congratulated in having at the head of the nation a man of great discernment, courage and ability, who is dealing with national questions in statesmanlike way. May I hope that we will seek inspiration from that example to deal with state questions with wisdom and courage.

We are progressive Democrats and we must have the courage to do justly to each and every class of our citizens, even if it requires legislation hitherto untried by us.

Primary Election Law.

In my judgment, the people of this state, regardless of party, owe a debt of gratitude to the last state convention of the Democratic party for adopting rules and regulations governing the primary elections. It is due to the members of that convention to say that the apprehensions of those who opposed personal enrollment were not justified, and that personal enrollment, together with the publicity given to the rolls of the clubs, saved us from irregularities, and charges of fraud. So far as I know, the last primary election was one in which the will of the people was honestly expressed by their ballots, and these were fairly counted. I recommend, therefore, that your honorable body shall enact into law for primary elections, such provisions as controlled the last Democratic primary election. In order that, in all primary elections, each and every man entitled by law to vote, shall have the right and op-

portunity to vote once and that no man shall be allowed to vote more than once.

come to us, we must frankly admit that we are still far short of the position we should occupy in the work of education. It stands to our shame that the percentage of illiteracy among our citizens is so great. This stain must be wiped out; and to do this, we must tax ourselves liberally for the public schools, in order that their usefulness may be increased, and that the opportunity for education may be given to all of our boys and girls. We must encourage the spirit of selfhelp and every district should first impose a local tax by the vote of its resident voters before receiving state aid. Yet, the growth of the public schools will be determined largely by the amount of state aid. Weak country schools must be helped and every community must be encouraged to have at least a seven months' term, and no teacher should be required to teach more than fifty pupils. The state cannot have an educated and efficient citizenship unless it extends help to weak and undeveloped districts. Any community voting a liberal tax and enrolling forty or fifty children, should be assured of adequate educational facilities. It is the duty of the state to make up deficiencies in such districts. The right-thinking people of South Carolina will stand for this expenditure of public money and will endorse the position that we cannot spend public money better than in educating the citizen. The people realize and demand that the shame of illiteracy must be blotted out from us forever.

Mill Town Schools.

The problem of public schools in manufacturing centres and mill towns demands attention and study. The state cannot longer overlook the needs of children in such communities and should encourage the spirit of selfhelp and public responsibility that will bring substantial and marked results in public education, state growth and community cooperation and development. I recommend that the state department of education be given such additional help in its forces that will enable it to do in mill schools what has been done so effectively in high schools and rural schools.

Attendance.

As soon as ample school facilities shall have been provided, the welfare of our people demands that our children shall be required to attend the

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