

RECOMMENDS PROGRESSIVE LEGISLATIVE ACTION.

In Annual Message to General Assembly, Governor Manning Reviews State's Affairs of Past Year.

Enactment of Laws Strengthening Those Already in Force is Chief Theme of Executive's Statement—Discusses Education, Primary Election Laws, Registration, Law Enforcement, National Guard, Good Roads, Prohibition, Rural Credits, Torrens System, Boll Weevil and Other Matters—Will Send Special Messages on Other Subjects.

Columbia, Jan. 9.—Richard I. Manning, governor, in his annual message to the general assembly of South Carolina today at noon recommended a program of progressive legislation and reviewed the condition of the State government. The address was read in the house of representatives and in the senate with a large number of spectators in the galleries of both houses. There were several questions that the governor did not touch upon, which will be dealt with later in special messages. The governor only discussed those questions that demand early and earnest attention.

The governor in his message discussed education, primary election laws, registration, law enforcement, the National Guard, prohibition, good roads, the Torrens system, rural credits, boll weevil, the Lever act, the State warehouse system, the State Hospital for the Insane, salaries and urged strict economy.

From a careful survey and observation of the entire State, I recommend that the present law, known as the gallon-a-month act, should be amended and strengthened in several particulars, and the governor, discussing prohibition.

Among the more important recommendations made by the governor were:

A State-wide compulsory education law.

A State board of examiners to secure competent teachers for the schools.

Provision for agricultural courts in the schools.

The Australian ballot system for the cities and towns of the State.

Liberal support for the schools.

The right to suspend local officers who fail to enforce the law.

Liberal support for the National Guard.

A sane but strict law regulating the impurities of whiskey.

A State highway department to enable South Carolina to share in the federal appropriation, is among the matters submitted for consideration. The governor also called attention to other highway legislation.

A short term rural credits law.

A continuation of the cattle tick eradication campaign.

Several acts to strengthen the State warehouse system.

Creation of a State institution for the care of the feeble-minded.

Careful investigation of the work of the State tuberculosis sanitarium at State Park.

Liberal appropriations for the support of the Confederate veterans.

Fire insurance legislation which will adjust our difficulties, protect our interests and be fair to all parties concerned.

Increase in salaries for State officials to meet the high cost of living.

That taxes must be held down to a minimum which is consistent with efficiency.

The enactment or repeal of the State income tax law.

The message delivered by the governor contains about 7,000 words, and was given close attention by the members and the spectators while the document was being read.

After pointing out that the prohibition law should be amended in several particulars the governor pointed the necessity for the appointment of constables to aid the local officers in enforcing the terms of the act. "We need a law that can be effectively and rigidly enforced," said the governor.

Gov. Manning discussed conditions at the State Hospital for the Insane and urged that a liberal appropriation be made to liberalize the program of improvement. He asked that the legislature visit the institution in a body and see for themselves what has been accomplished during the last two years.

The message in full follows:

Gentlemen of the General Assembly:

In conformity with custom, and in response to an obligation imposed by the Constitution upon me as governor, I submit for your consideration the following message:

I extend to you a warm greeting. I greet you as men inspired by a desire to transact the business of the State in

a thorough, economical and efficient way, that will appeal to the best judgment of our people and give that service to the State which will aid in elevating the moral tone and standards of our citizenship and will upbuild our material and industrial resources. In these efforts I can assure you of my ready, hearty and earnest co-operation.

The past year has been signalized as one of unusual and far-reaching events, and the obligation rests upon us to join together in fervent thanks to Almighty God for His guidance and for the blessings He has bestowed upon us. By His beneficence we have been blessed with health; the earth has yielded crops sufficient to sustain us, and in all lines of industry we have made progress. Our people exhibit the spirit of thrift, effort and self-reliance. They recognize as never before the value of education, both as a political and economical necessity, and demand greater educational facilities which will better equip our boys and girls for the duties and responsibilities of life. Our blessings have been abundant, both in national and State affairs. As a people we have been saved from the unespeakable ruin of war. We have contemplated with horror the accompaniments of war, with its daily devastation; with its suffering and tortured women; with its slaughter of men by thousands, and with economic ruin, while our country has been at peace with the world. For these and all other blessings we thank God.

Expressing our appreciation to Him whose beneficent providence has unerringly guided us, we turn now to a consideration of those specific duties that devolve upon us as servants of our commonwealth. It is not my purpose at this time to repeat the findings and recommendations of the different departments of the State government, but briefly to indicate those subjects which, in my judgment, demand your early and earnest attention.

Education.

I commend to your special consideration the report of the State Superintendent of Education. That report is highly interesting and instructive, and exceedingly encouraging. I cannot too strongly stress the importance of the work in the common schools, because the education of the vast majority of our boys and girls is limited to that education which they obtain in the common schools, and only a small minority of them can obtain the advantages of college education.

The duty of the State to educate its citizens is clear. Our educational system is growing in efficiency and support beyond the highest expectations of its advocates. The scholastic year shows that the public school revenue amounted to over four millions of dollars. The school fund has more than doubled within the past eight years. A local tax has been secured in over 1,600 school districts. This result is due to the interest which the public is now taking in education, and the wise policy adopted by the General Assembly, which bases the State aid upon local taxation, and demonstrates the wisdom of a policy of self-help.

Liberal appropriations to the schools for securing longer terms, better buildings and stronger teaching corps.

The enrollment for the year exceeds 400,000, and a gain of over 42,000 pupils in 12 months was better than could have been expected. This result has been obtained chiefly through increased efficiency of the schools, and the local option compulsory attendance law. Nearly 10 per cent. of the school districts of the State have come under the operation of this law and have shown the desirability and practicability of compulsory education. Over one-half of the districts of the State now have adequate and comfortable school houses. If every such community would accept compulsory attendance, over 900 districts should be operating under this law before July 1, 1917. The boys and girls out of school cannot be helped by taxation for public education; in my opinion, the time has come when the statute for

compulsory attendance should be made State-wide, but should allow districts that are unprepared or unwilling to enforce compulsory attendance, to petition for exemption.

The need for compulsory attendance is emphasized by the fact that on January 1st, instant, under the provision of State law regulating child labor, about 2,400 children were discharged from work in the cotton mills. These children cannot work in the mills under the State law—they should be in the schools.

Increased appropriation and heavy enrollment do not insure competent teachers. The prime importance of the school is its thoroughness and effectiveness. The present system of examining and certifying teachers has been pronounced unsatisfactory by the State Superintendent and County Superintendents. I again recommend the creation of a State Board of Examiners for Teachers, whose duty it shall be to protect the pupils by guaranteeing competent teachers, as well as to protect the profession of teaching against possible ignorance and incompetency.

It is reasonably certain that Congress will establish a Federal system of vocational education in co-operation with the States. The State Board of Education should be given authority to co-operate in this important movement.

The legislature, at its last session, provided for the teaching of agriculture in the common schools. This law has not been put into operation, and I will urge for your careful consideration such amendments as may be put into this law to make this work practical and effective.

The training in agriculture in the common schools is too important to be neglected further. We cannot afford to lag behind in the progress and new industrialism that now stirs the nation.

Primary Election Laws.

I desire to call your attention to our primary election laws. In South Carolina, the primary election is decisive, and is the election which determines who your officials shall be, and the policy of the State government. Under these conditions, it is of the first importance that the untrammelled will of the people shall be honestly expressed by their ballots, and that these ballots shall be fairly counted. The elector should be able to express his choice independently without compulsion, fear or reward. Experience has shown that we should safeguard in every way our primary election so that each and every man entitled by law to vote shall have the right and opportunity to vote once; that no man shall be allowed to vote more than once, and that the independence of each voter to vote as his conscience dictates shall be preserved.

Many States of the Union, as a result of observation and experience, have found it necessary, from time to time, to safeguard elections so as to get the untrammelled and independent will of the voters. As far back as 1894 I recognized this necessity and urged upon the legislature then the adoption of the Australian Ballot System. After twenty-two years of observation and experience, I again commend that system to your consideration, for cities, towns and large communities. I believe that at present it is unnecessary to apply it to the small rural communities.

Registration.

The Constitution provides that "registration which shall provide for the enrollment of every elector once in ten years, and also an enrollment during each and every year of every elector not previously registered under the provisions of this Article," shall be provided for. This provision should not be overlooked, and I urge you to pass the necessary legislation at this session of the legislature, to be put into effect in 1918.

Law Enforcement.

The enforcement of law devolves upon the executive branch of the government and upon the regularly constituted officers charged with that duty. Experience has shown that the means now provided for the enforcement of law are not adequate. If laws are disregarded and violated, our progress in civilization will be retarded. Security of life and property must be assured; the Constitution and laws of the State must be respected and obeyed. If we are to advance in the great race of human achievement, and if this attitude towards law is to be established so that our attention can be directed to those constructive measures that have been made necessary by new and changed conditions, the law must be supreme.

The governor is held responsible for the enforcement of law, and he is expected to require peace officers in the counties to discharge that duty. This is in accordance with the principle of home rule; but under our Constitution, the sheriffs of the counties are not subject to suspension or removal by the governor, even in cases where they manifestly fail to enforce law. This, while the chief executive is responsible for the enforcement of law, he is not given the

authority or power which would make his orders effective.

I believe that the governor should be held responsible for the enforcement of law. If he is held responsible for it, he should be given the power to require local peace officers to discharge their duties, or, upon failure to do so, to suspend such officers.

I will, at a later time, make a special report to the General Assembly of events that transpired in November in Anderson county, where, as a result of the sheriff's failure to execute the order of the courts and to maintain peace and good order, it became necessary to call out the National Guard to protect the civil authorities in executing the orders of the courts, which was clearly the duty of the sheriff to perform. I therefore, commend this subject to your consideration.

If, under the constitution, these deficiencies can be supplied, I urge such action. If, after careful investigation and study, this cannot be done, then I would urge that you submit to the people of the State an amendment to the Constitution that will permit a remedy for this condition. This will require time. For immediate relief, I urge that authority be given the governor to appoint constables, in his discretion, with State-wide jurisdiction, to enforce the prohibition law, and also, in case of failure of the peace officers in any county, to enforce all laws. The governor may then use constables for this purpose. I believe that the people of South Carolina demand enforcement of law. This public sentiment should be respected and encouraged. The means to make enforcement of law effective should be provided. I again pledge my best efforts to uphold and enforce the laws.

National Guard.

The South Carolina National Guard has demonstrated its value during the past year, both to the Nation and to the State. Its members have made serious sacrifices in responding to the call of the Nation and the State, in the protection of life and property. The sacrifices of both officers and men in the emergencies of the past year have proved their loyalty, efficiency and patriotism. I state frankly that without the South Carolina National Guard the governor would have been powerless to enforce the laws and to protect life and property. I recommend that the National Guard be liberally supported. I regard it as a very important part of the Government, under existing conditions. I will communicate with you further on this subject later.

Prohibition.

At the last session of the legislature I asked you to make adequate provision for the pay for special constables wherever and whenever needed to enforce the prohibition laws of the State. I repeat that the number of deputies now provided for by law will not be sufficient to enable sheriffs, magistrates and other local authorities to prevent the illicit sale of liquor. Besides the inadequacy of the number of officers allowed under the existing law, these officers are not sufficiently responsible to the governor for their acts. To remedy immediately this defect, the governor should be authorized to appoint constables with State-wide authority to enforce the prohibition laws and all other laws when necessary. The prohibition law should, in my judgment, be amended in many particulars. Experience has shown the weak and defective points in the enforcement of the present law. It is my firm belief that your honorable body will take a sane and conservative view of the matter. The simple enactment of a law, however ideal in its provisions, will not accomplish the results aimed at. The law itself should command the respect and compliance with it of the public.

Our purpose is to minimize the evils of liquor. We need a law that can be effectively and rigidly enforced. From a careful survey and observation of the entire State, I recommend that the present law, known as the "gallon-a-month law," should be amended and strengthened in many particulars. It is not my purpose to go into the details of these amendments, but in a general way I would advise that the quantity of liquor allowed each person per month be reduced and that as a substitute for liquor, wine and beer, with stated percentages of alcohol, be permitted as an alternative. That the importation of liquors, wines and beer by minors, college students and women other than the heads of families be prohibited; and that such changes in the law regulating the transportation of liquor be made so as to enforce a strict observance with the purpose and object of the law.

I earnestly desire the reduction in drunkenness and crime. I believe that the enactment of a sane but strict law regulating the importation of liquor, strictly enforced, would bring such a result. I desire a law that will be respected and obeyed, and I again pledge my very best efforts and service to the administration and enforcement of law.

Boll Weevil.

I have called your attention to the necessity for agricultural education in the common schools. This need is emphasized by the appearance at our very doors of the boll weevil. No way of checking or destroying it has been discovered. Next year will see this pest within our State. It is the destroyer of our chief money crop—cotton. When once the boll weevil reaches us it will be a permanent factor in agriculture, and will produce heavy financial and agricultural loss.

Realizing this danger, Clemson College appointed a commission, of which I was chairman, to visit our sister States that have suffered from the ravages of this destructive pest

Good Roads.

In urging good roads legislation at this session, I call your special attention to the following facts:

First. South Carolina is spending approximately \$1,000,000 a year on its roads—practically a 3-mill tax. This sum is raised by county taxation and is expended on the chain gangs, roads and bridges entirely through county agencies.

Second. Forty-two States have established State highway departments to do educational or administrative work, or both, in behalf of good roads. South Carolina is one of six that still follow the system of county or local management. Viewing the matter nationally and for a century and a quarter, local road management has resulted in a striking lack of progress, despite the fact that there is now being spent in the United States in this way more than \$150,000,000. Only in those States which have adopted a State policy has there been real marked progress in highway construction. There are now more than 50,000 miles of State highways, and no State after having once adopted a State policy has reverted to the old plan of management.

Third. Under the terms of the Federal Aid Road Act no State can receive its apportionment until a State highway department has been established and the necessary co-operative machinery provided. Failure to create a State highway department, in accordance with the provision of this Federal Act, means the forfeiture of South Carolina's apportionment of Federal aid, which, for the five fiscal years ending June 30, 1921, totals more than \$1,000,000.

Fourth. For motor vehicles there is now being collected in this State a perennial license of \$1.00 per car. The Federal government estimates, the revenue accruing from this source to have been \$16,000 in 1916. Taking the United States as a whole, the average gross revenue return per motor car registration was \$7.46—more than seven times that being secured by South Carolina.

These four facts, among others, emphasize the need for your giving careful consideration at this time to the whole question of better roads. To meet the situation will require, in my judgment, the enactment of at least two laws: First, a law creating a State highway department and assenting to the provisions of the Federal Aid Road Act; second, a motor vehicle law requiring the licensing of motor vehicles by the State and the use on the roads of the net revenue thus derived.

Torrens System.

At the last session of the General Assembly you adopted the Torrens System of Land Registration. I regard this action then, as I do now, as a most important prerequisite to rural credits and a successful operation of the Federal Land Loan Bank. The act which was passed has not proved a practical measure, and I earnestly recommend such amendments to the Act as will make it practical and workable and an economical means of determining the validity of title to land.

Rural Credits.

In my first message to the legislature I urged the passage of a Rural Credits Act. Since that time the Federal government has enacted a long term rural credits law. The South, especially, is to be congratulated on the adoption of this law, and South Carolina is particularly fortunate in securing the location of this bank in Columbia. Therefore, it will be unnecessary for the State to adopt such a law in addition to the Federal law. The action of the Federal government in enacting the Federal Land Loan Bank is particularly opportune at this time. It will furnish the means by which those who are tenants may buy their homes; or those who own their land can secure funds to improve their farms, and to adapt themselves to a system of diversified farming, made imperative by reason of the approach of the boll weevil. It is important, however, in view of the high rates of interest which many small farmers now have to pay for credit, that the State should provide a short term rural credits law, and I recommend the enactment of such legislation.

State Warehouse System.

I respectfully refer you to recommendations made in my annual message last year on the subject of the State Warehouse System, in which I stated: "Operation of this system has demonstrated that it can be of great and valuable service. It should be our aim to perfect the system, to operate it on sound business principles, to protect it against possible abuses, and to throw around it every safeguard. Make the State warehouse receipt a collateral that will be recognized as safe, so that it will be sought after as collateral to loans in any of the money centers and money markets of this country. The liability of the State should be clearly defined. It is not necessary for me to suggest specific amendments to the act. It is well to bear in mind that our chief source of borrowed money is to be had through the Federal Reserve Bank. The requirements of that institution should be met, both because they are sound and reasonable and because these requirements and these safeguards will the sooner attract attention in money markets to these receipts as collateral, and thus will be sought after by investors. This will eventually lead to the lowest obtainable rates of interest. I refer you to the question of ownership and management—the manager of the warehouse issuing negotiable receipts should be a disinterested party and not the owner of the cotton stored, on which it is proposed to issue negotiable receipts. Accurate and reliable grading and weighing by licensed graders and weighers is of great importance. It may be that these matters might best be regulated by rules and regulations of the commissioner and the Board of Commissioners, to which I will refer



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and to study the plans and methods of those States in dealing with this condition. The disaster which accompanies the boll weevil will apply to farmers, bankers, merchants and professional men and all classes of our people. That commission, co-operating with the Federal government, with Clemson College, our State Agricultural Department and every other available agency, is now doing effective work in leading our farmers and business men to prepare for this disaster. The diversification of crops, the selection of early varieties of seed, the raising of food crops and the raising of cattle and stock are among the important steps that are to be taken. In this connection I cannot too strongly emphasize the completion of the cattle tick eradication which has been carried on so thoroughly and rapidly by the State and Federal government. You understand this matter and I need say no more than that it will be necessary for the State to appropriate \$30,000.00 for the work this year, in order for us to secure a continuance of Federal aid; and it is hoped that in two more years this work can be completed, our State cleared of this hindrance to cattle raising, and thus enable us to meet the dangers which are immediately before us.

The Lever Act.

I repeat my recommendation of last year and ask that you make the necessary appropriation to continue the work that is being done in the Agricultural Extension Department of Clemson College under the Lever Act, so that we can obtain the increased amount of money that will come to us from the Federal appropriation under the terms of this Act, provided we do our part.

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