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ELIAS M. AMMONS

GOVERNOR OF COLORADO

BEFORE THE

Nineteenth General Assembly

Tuesday, January 14, 1913

DENVER, COLORADO



Inaugural Address

OF

Governor Elias M. Ammons

To the Members of the Nineteenth General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

Greeting—You are here as the representatives of the people of the state, not to make partisan politics, but to enact laws for the benefit of all the citizens of our commonwealth. You must bear in mind that this is a state of great variety of industrial and business conditions; that there will be seeming conflict of interests to adjust. The field of legislation must be entered with wisdom and tolerance. I believe every member is inspired by the best motives, and I expect to see splendid results.

ROADS AND PARKS

Perhaps the most urgent necessity upon us at the present time for the advancement of farming, mining and all kinds of industrial pursuits is the construction of a systematic network of highways throughout the state. We have many sections of good road, but in very few places are they properly connected. In order to carry out a harmonious plan we must first build the main arteries reaching all sections of the state and make connections with every locality easy. To bring about such a result the work must be under the supervision of some efficient centralized body. Such a system would not only enable us to reach, settle up and develop every portion of our state, but it would also furnish the best possible means to market our farm and other products and to secure the tourist travel now looking for an opportunity to visit the Rocky Mountains. Even with our present disconnected system of highways, automobile tourists are visiting most portions of the state and advertising to the world our wonderful variety of scenic beauty. We are especially favored with natural attractions and all we need to secure the lion's share of this travel is the construction of good roads. In 1915

the transcontinental highways will be lined with automobiles, headed toward the Panama Expositions on the Pacific Coast, and unless we complete the main arteries of our system by that time we can hope for but little of this trade. If we have our highways in good condition, we may reasonably hope for most of it, because in no other place within the same amount of territory can so many scenic attractions be found. We will doubtless induce many people to build summer homes under the most inviting climatic conditions to be found anywhere and no doubt many new permanent residents and much capital will be brought to us. Within the limits of our state we have a great variety of beautiful mountain parks, perhaps no two of which are alike. Roads connecting these must pass through constantly-changing scenery of parks and groves and canons, and with our system of highways properly connected, tourists may spend an entire summer here and see something new and interesting each day.

To be ready for the advantages of 1915 we must commence work now and I sincerely hope that the General Assembly will make speedy arrangement for unlocking our road funds, secure the co-operation of the several counties, and such funds as may be enlisted from outside the state in an united harmonious effort to complete our road system at the earliest date possible. To supplement the funds now available, we should continue to use the convicts at the penitentiary and reformatory and there is hope of a considerable contribution of funds from the east through those who are anxious to have a portion of the main continental highway pass through Colorado mountains. In addition to this there seems to be a strong possibility that Congress will cede to each of the public land states an additional million acres of land for road building and I hope in the near future we shall be able to induce the Federal Government to cede to us in reasonable amounts a score or more of the most beautiful sites in the state and dedicate them for park purposes. With people from all over the country wishing to visit our mountains, it seems to me reasonable to hope for much assistance in this direction.

TRANSPORTATION AND MARKETING CONDITIONS

Inquiry has shown that we are annually importing into this state for our own use livestock and agricultural products to the amount of \$40 per capita, or about thirty-two million dollars a year. This is counting only those products we should produce ourselves. Nevertheless, this year we had an immense quantity

of fruit and other farm crops for which there was no available market or no transportation facilities through which they could be sold at a profit. Thousands of tons of the best fruit ever produced in the state went to waste. Much of this was perishable and if moved at all had to be shipped within a very limited time. Had there been ample manufacturing facilities much of this crop could have been put in condition to hold over for use in years of scant production. I realize that through sparsely settled sections it is expensive and often difficult to be in readiness to take care of unusual business, but I believe that some way can be found to ship and market our orchard and farm products without such an enormous loss as was experienced the past year. It would seem that our business organizations could induce manufacturers to handle our surplus crops and some effective means found by our Railway or Utilities Commission to bring about better transportation facilities.

STATE FORESTRY SYSTEM

The Eighteenth General Assembly authorized the appointment of a State Forester under the Board of Agriculture and enacted legislation to put into effect most salutary laws in behalf of forestry in this state. The appropriation did not become available until a year later and then only a part of it. Enough was secured, however, to effect the organization of the Service. The Agricultural College has established a course of study in forestry. Its purpose is to teach the growing of trees, to make experiments looking to the discovery of more valuable woods than are now grown in this state, and it has secured the permission of Congress to purchase sixteen hundred acres of experimental plots in the several altitudes at which timber will grow in this state.

The General Assembly should make the appropriation of two thousand dollars necessary to secure this valuable land. I had hoped, inasmuch as we were educating the youth of the state to handle the forestry problem of both state and federal lands, that the government would give to us from its more than fourteen million acres of forest reserves in Colorado the small amount of sixteen hundred acres. We failed, however, to secure the consent of the Forest Service and Congress required us to pay for it.

IRRIGATION

The development of our irrigation system is the most important factor in our agricultural growth. Experience has

taught us that by storing and holding within the state a large portion of the natural water supply that comes to us in the way of snow and rainfall, we will, during the course of time, add almost indefinitely to the amount of land we may irrigate.

During the past several years we have been gradually carrying ditches farther out from the streams and using the return water through underground storage over and over again before it finally drains out of the state. By employing our almost limitless means for generating cheap power, we may use this great underground sponge, repeatedly pumping the water it contains to the surface. Experience in other sections of this country and Old Mexico has shown that this can be done at a less cost per acre than under many of the great irrigation plants of the west. I expect to see the day when Colorado, through economical use, extension of ditches, storage of flood water and the use of the underground flow of water, will be irrigating at least four times as much territory as is now watered, and to a much better purpose.

PUBLIC DEFENSE

To extend our irrigated territory as we should, the state must defend its title to the streams which rise within it. By Congressional enactment we were given these waters nearly a half century ago and our title to them was confirmed by our Constitution at the time of our admission to statehood in 1876. Notwithstanding this fact, several suits have been brought by neighboring states to deprive us of the use of these waters, and more suits are threatened. Unhappily, several bureaus of the federal government, which gave us these streams, are intervening against us. Every stream rising within the state is involved in this controversy. The most pressing is the suit brought directly in the Supreme Court of the United States by the state of Wyoming. Inasmuch as the same principles are very largely included in all of these cases, it is important that we win the first. Attorneys who have examined into the matter believe there is no doubt of our success in the trial if we properly prepare for it.

It seems plain to me that the government's contention in all these cases is wrong, even from the standpoint of "the best use," which requires the first storage and application near the head waters in order that the water may be used over and over again as it drains and re-drains back to the streams, equalizing

the flow, minimizing floods in the spring time and insuring a better supply during the dry seasons. This principle also applies to water for power purposes, because a storage right established at the lower end of the stream might preclude a better use of the water near the head waters. Storage for power purposes near the source of supply would allow repeated use below without additional storage. I recommend the appropriation of adequate funds for the most vigorous defense of the state's rights to the use of its own streams.

Some of the most eminent lawyers in the state are of the opinion that the state, under the right of eminent domain, can obtain rights of way over government land by condemnation proceedings, and bills providing for such proceedings will be introduced. I urge that this legislation be adopted, because success in one of these cases would determine the entire controversy as to rights of way.

STATE INSTITUTIONS

The demand upon a new state for educational, penal and charitable institutions is always great. This is especially true of our educational institutions in Colorado. Our natural resources are of great variety, and their development involves problems as numerous as those to be met by the entire country. We have half the minerals known to the world, and all the mining problems of this continent. To develop our immense area of mineral land, it is necessary to give the widest range of education to the young men going into this business. Our agricultural resources are equally varied, and all of them are different from those existing in the east. Whether the settler comes to the dry farming districts, under irrigating canals, into the mountains or the fruit-growing valleys, he must learn a new way to farm. We have all the agricultural conditions from the north line of the cotton belt to the Arctic zone. The growing of live stock, even, must be done in a different manner from that followed in the east or the south. The industrial field in other directions is as diversified as it is in mining and agriculture. It is, therefore, necessary to provide the widest possible range of education if our people are to be trained for the best development of the state. There are just two reasons why the state educates the child—one is to make him a more useful citizen, and the other, to make him a better governing agent. Every faculty of the human mind must be developed

to the highest degree if we may hope to occupy the wide field of possible development in Colorado.

BOARD OF IMMIGRATION

Not ten per cent. of the area of this state is developed to any considerable extent, and not five per cent. as it should be. Our mineral lands, except in small areas, have scarcely been prospected. Less than four per cent. of our water power is developed. We have sufficient known coal, to say nothing of undiscovered fields, to supply the entire world, at the present rate of consumption, for more than three hundred years. We are bringing into this state annually two million dollars of clay products when we have vast quantities of a better quality of the same clays undeveloped at home. A similar condition exists as to many of our other resources. Our opportunities for cheap power are practically unlimited. We are in the center of the Rocky Mountain region, and can offer industrial possibilities unequaled by any other state in the Union. To occupy our lands and utilize these advantages we must have more people and more capital. To secure these we must collect accurate statistics and facts concerning our production and opportunities and distribute them among the people of the east who are looking for homes in the west. We need an added agricultural population of a hundred and fifty thousand to produce the live stock and agricultural products we are now importing into the state for our own use. Ours is a great live stock state, and yet we buy abroad annually eight and one-half million dollars of meat products; our conditions are ideal for growing poultry, and yet we buy beyond our borders more than four million dollars of poultry products each year; naturally, there is no better dairy state in the Union, and yet we are bringing into Colorado, for our own use, four and one-half million dollars of dairy products each year. These industries offer splendid opportunities for new farmers and ranchmen coming to Colorado. The Board of Immigration must therefore be afforded means to thoroughly advertise our resources, and the State Board of Agriculture should be required to collect the agricultural, live stock and horticultural statistics necessary for this campaign of publicity.

REAPPORTIONMENT

I cannot urge too strongly the necessity of a fair apportionment of legislative and congressional districts. Since the

last general enactments on this subject the population of the state has so shifted as to make the present division ridiculously unjust. Attempts, too often made, to gerrymander for partisan advantage are likely to have exactly the opposite result from that intended.

The state should be divided as fairly as possible, having due consideration for counties with a meager population and making no float districts if it can be avoided. In reality no two members of either House should represent the same territory, and every county should have at least one member of its own in the House of Representatives. This, however, cannot be done without a Constitutional Amendment.

We now have four congressmen and but two districts. We therefore have two congressmen-at-large, who, to a great extent, are duplicating the representation of the other two. The state should be divided into four districts, giving each electorate a member of its own, securing less duplication and more effective service.

ELECTIONS

The people of Colorado are to be congratulated on the fact that our recent election was freer from corrupt practices than any held in many years. This does not mean that the conditions were as good as they should be, but that we have made material progress. Through the adoption by the people of the pure Australian ballot, I expect to see still greater improvement. We cannot afford to tolerate any corrupting influences in our elections. Nothing will do us so much good abroad, where we must look for new capital with which to develop our resources, as a reputation for honest elections and stable, efficient and economical government.

As was to be expected, experience has pointed out some defects in the direct primary law. One of the main objects to be attained was the elimination of conventions controlled by political trades. The assemblies held during the past year have proven conclusively that they too will be controlled by the same influences, and to an exaggerated degree, because of the lack of responsibility of assembly action. I therefore recommend that the assembly feature of the direct primary law be repealed, if it cannot be amended to effectively carry out its original purpose.

Experience during the past year has taught us the necessity of stringent laws to prevent fraud in the submission of initiated and referred bills. During the recent campaign people made a

business of securing signatures to petitions at from two to ten cents per name. Many of the petitions, therefore, did not represent the sentiment of the signers so much as they did the industry and importunities of the canvassers. Some of the papers filed last summer contained large groups of unauthorized names, doubtless put there by the solicitors themselves and copied from one petition to another in the same handwriting. I regard this feature of initiating and referring legislation as obnoxious as any other scheme of corrupt machine politics. I believe the people intended the Initiative and Referendum to be applied where the General Assembly refuses to act or legislates unsatisfactorily. To make a business of securing signatures to petitions will tend to turn a splendid system into a farce and lead to inexcusable confusion and expense. Whenever there is sufficient popular demand for direct legislative action by the people themselves, I have no fear of failure to secure the necessary number of signatures in a legitimate way. Our past experience has demonstrated that the operation of the best law passed by the legislature may be postponed for two years at an expense of only a few hundred dollars, although the sentiment of the state might be unanimously in favor of it. I hope the action of this General Assembly will be so satisfactory that there will be no general demand for initiating or referring bills.

At the recent election there were submitted two measures to lower the cost of advertising initiated and referred bills. Both of these were defeated. It is imperative that some restrictive legislation be enacted to cheapen and regulate this advertising.

With biennial elections has come a new problem. Long lists of nominations and numerous political organizations, to say nothing of independent tickets, have made our ballot so large that due consideration is not given to it. It is important that some plan be worked out to abbreviate the ballot. This is especially true in view of the adoption by the people at last fall's election of the headless or pure Australian ballot. It will now be necessary for the voter to mark for each candidate of his choice, and I am confident that better consideration on the part of the voter can be secured by the adoption of what is known as the Short Ballot.

There has grown up the custom of giving executive officers two terms of office. The apparent reason for this is that people believe one term of two years is not sufficiently long to carry out any definite policy. There is no doubt that many evils in admin-

istration arise through candidacy for re-election. I am thoroughly convinced that only one term should be allowed to elective executive officers, and that if an additional period of service be deemed advisable, the term of service be extended to four years and re-election made impossible. By adopting this arrangement and fixing the time of the state election between the presidential elections, the ballot would be shortened, state politics to a considerable extent divorced from national politics, and voters' attention be concentrated on the direct issues involved.

MINING

There should be legislation to encourage mining. Prospectors should be given every inducement to re-enter the field, cheap water power made available, and every possible means employed to secure a practicable scheme for the reduction of low grade ores.

The geological survey should be continued, analyses of ores provided by the School of Mines, and extensive work carried on to aid more active prospecting and better mining.

There should be effective legislation enacted for the preservation of the lives and health of the workers in the coal mines, and the best conservation of the coal. The expense of administration could very properly be provided for by a small tax on the coal output.

BANKING CODE

A comprehensive banking code, containing the best known guaranty for the protection of depositors, is imperatively demanded.

PROTECTION FOR OUR SECURITIES

Colorado has suffered much in the past because of securities sold abroad and afterwards found to be without sufficient value. This state has made its growth largely through borrowed capital, and we must look to the same source for many years to come for means with which to develop our resources. If we are to secure this assistance, we must see to it that paper offered for sale has substantial backing; that enterprises projected are meritorious, and that securities of all kinds offered to the public represent such value as will command the confidence of the investing world. I hope the General Assembly will enact a measure along the line of the Kansas Blue Sky Law, effective enough to eliminate from this state bad promo-

tion schemes of all kinds. The most effective way to secure sufficient money at low rates of interest to take care of our industrial growth is to make our securities first class in every respect.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Two plans are suggested for the control of public utilities. The railroad commission proposes amendments to the law under which it is operating, to make the act more effective. It is urged that some important advance has been made on account of recent court decisions, and that the surest way to save this advantage is to retain the present law and make it stronger by amendment. The commission, however, suggests no plan for including other public utilities. On the other hand, bills have been prepared, which, I understand, include the very provisions of the railway law already adjudicated and which also comprehend the entire field of public utilities. It seems to me useless to have two commissions. I am advised that all the advantage gained through the action of the courts under the old law can be protected in the new. It is exceedingly important if we are to insure a more liberal policy from the federal government in opening up our natural resources, such as water power, that we must show some affirmative action to control these resources against monopolization. I realize that at the recent election the people voted down two measures for the control of public utilities. It must be remembered, however, that both contained faulty provisions, quite sufficient in my mind to account for their defeat, independently of the real question at issue. I therefore do not regard the vote on these two bills as an indication that the people are opposed to proper regulation of public utilities. I believe there is need of effective regulation of all our public utilities in the interest of good service and just rates.

The time is ripe to abolish the pass and franking evil. The pass system has been defended by some on the ground that it enabled new localities to secure settlers. Certain it is that those neighborhoods that have enjoyed free transportation have not settled faster than those to which it was refused. The need is for a more equitable adjustment under which the traveling public would be placed on an equality, the difference in cost to be used in lowering rates for all or devoted to greater efficiency. To avoid complications, the federal law might be followed.

GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

Perhaps one of the most difficult problems is to determine a more efficient method of administration of the Game and Fish Department. If our streams can be kept well stocked with trout they will prove a great asset in securing summer visitors. To accomplish this result numerous hatcheries must be maintained and a better system enforced to prevent the young trout from destruction. Those placed in charge of hatcheries should be skilled in fish culture, and deputy wardens should be active, industrious men acquainted with the country and with a thorough understanding of game conditions. I have no doubt that the new Civil Service Law will put this department upon a still more efficient basis. To effectively protect our game and fish we must have not only ample laws, but through organization and the press there must be cultivated a public spirit in favor of game protection, for without it no adequate enforcement of the law can be hoped for.

CAPITOL BUILDING

For some time the State Capitol Building has been overcrowded. I believe the new Museum Building should be arranged so that it will accommodate the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals and the Library. By this arrangement, and by the proper adjustment of the offices of some of the boards and bureaus, this crowded condition of the Capitol could be relieved and ample room provided for the conduct of the state's business for many years to come. In this connection it might be well to consider the advisability, in view of the near completion of the new Museum Building, of abolishing the Capitol Board and placing its duties in the hands of a board of elective state officials.

CONSERVATION

I believe in conservation in the meaning of the prevention of waste and monopoly. I am unalterably opposed to it in its definition of preserving things in their natural state undeveloped for future generations. I have no fear of famine from exhaustion of resources. Whenever any resource used by the people has disappeared, human necessity and ingenuity have always found something better to take its place. I am also opposed to putting our lands and resources on a tenantry basis to pay taxes into the federal treasury. We will never be able to settle our lands and improve them properly unless the people can own them.

We can never expect to discover and develop our mines if the hope of ownership is not held out to the prospector and miner. If we are to discover uses for our great variety of new resources, we must offer ample inducement for experimentation and investment. It is safe to predict that little improvement will ever be made on a tenantry basis. The development of every one of our natural resources, land included, has been attended by unusual problems, difficulties and expense. Not one of them was naturally ready for use and all the value that has been added to them has been measured by study, experiment, labor and expense upon which in the average but fair return has been realized.

Before the white man came with his courage and industry to search and dig the precious metals from the mountains, to construct ditches and turn the desert into fertile fields, to replace the wolf and the bear with useful domestic animals, to build cities and towns and country homes, to blast highways through the mountain canons, to harness our streams and convert their power into useful channels, to erect churches and school houses, to establish great educational and charitable institutions, and to rear a splendid social fabric here, there was not a dollar of value in a single natural resource within the boundaries of this state.

The gold had remained undiscovered in the hills, and useless for untold centuries, the inhabitants had no use for coal, the forests were burned to make way for berry patches and hunting grounds. The streams ran uselessly and undisturbed to the sea, and all were worthless. It required the venturesome pioneer, with his intrepid zeal, to lay the foundation of a great state. His laws and customs were built on experience and justice. Upon the foundation so well laid by him, our hardship and genius and industry have measured every dollar's worth of value in our natural resources by a dollar's worth of human toil. We have a right to these resources with which to build our state.

More than half the territory of Colorado and probably more than ninety per cent. of the resources outside of land, are still in government ownership. To place these on a tenantry basis to pay rental into the federal treasury, is to withdraw them permanently from state and local taxation. The people, therefore, who must support county governments and state institutions, must pay not only their own just share of taxes but also those avoided by the federal property. And not only that; the royalties and rentals collected from the government property must necessarily come out of the industry of the people of the state, so

that our citizens are compelled to pay not merely double but to a large extent even triple taxation. Even the police jurisdiction of the state over the government lands is denied, and attempts by our people to protect their rights in the courts have been met by a declination on the part of the United States Courts to take jurisdiction. A double jurisdiction, intermingled as it is throughout our territory, can be productive of nothing but dissension.

A sensible solution of the Public Domain question is to turn the public lands and resources over to the states in which they lie. The citizens of these states have a better understanding of their needs than outside people possibly could have. They have a greater interest than anyone else in a proper administration of these lands. They know the local conditions. We, of the west, have labored under the disadvantage of living under iron-clad laws and rules and regulations wholly unsuited to our best growth. For instance, no person can take up a piece of land simply for a home. Grazing land is not permitted to be entered on a basis of acreage sufficient to support a family. With the great variety of possible uses for our numerous kinds of land, there is law for their acquisition for but few purposes.

Our state lands are handled under a better plan. We have a Land Board acquainted with all possible uses of our land and understanding the needs as to limitation of acreage. It can permit the taking of land for its best purpose, whatever that may be, and in quantities suited to the purpose. There has been no tendency toward monopolization of state lands. They are administered wisely, with intelligent understanding of their best disposition.

If we confess to the world our inability to govern our resources, we can find no fault if the plea is accepted. Of what avail will it be to urge people to come and make their homes among us if we at the same time advertise our unworthiness to give them a sound government. Instead of decrying our own people and institutions, let us rather assert our statehood and all the rights it implies; let us instill into our people a spirit of state pride, a spirit that will make greater institutions, urge us to splendid achievement, insure material prosperity, give to us loftier ideals, and elevate our people to a higher moral plane.

Colorado should join other public land states in protesting against the establishment of a system to collect royalties on our resources for the benefit of the federal treasury. Such a scheme would, if rigidly enforced, mean that this state would ultimately

pay into the federal treasury on coal alone, figuring the present highest rate of royalty, the enormous tax of thirty-seven billion, one hundred million dollars, while we would pay annually on water power alone, when fully developed, twice as much as we now collect in state taxes for all purposes. If any royalty is to be paid it should go into the state treasury, for the reason that it is needed for the support of state and local governments and institutions, and for the more important reason that if the amount of the tax is to be controlled by states not having public lands, it might be used, like the tariff, to prevent us from occupying our own manufacturing field.

The excuse for foisting the reservation policy upon the West is the feigned purpose of preventing monopoly. The real reason is to place our lands and resources upon a revenue basis to the federal treasury. If public ownership of lands and resources is the only means of preventing monopoly, what is to become of that portion of our great country lying east of the Mississippi River and containing vastly more than half and therefore the dominating portion of our entire population? And if those people cannot control the property they own there, how are they to control it here?

The General Assembly should memorialize President Wilson and Congress, setting forth in detail suggestions of changes in administration of the public domain to comply with the best requirements for settlement, development and local taxation.

EMPLOYES' COMPENSATION COMMISSION

The Employes' Compensation Commission appointed by the Eighteenth General Assembly, I am told, has not completed its investigations, and should be continued either to report at the next session of the General Assembly or to initiate a law covering the subject.

FAIRS AND EXPOSITIONS

If we are to make a creditable showing at the Panama Exposition in 1915, the present General Assembly must provide for it. I am advised that all the western states are making unusual efforts to advertise their products and opportunities at this great fair. The people of Colorado will not want to be left behind. Our financial condition will prevent our doing as much as we would like to do, and the situation is complicated from the fact that the exposition will in reality be divided into two parts—one portion located at San Francisco and the other at San Diego. In addition

to this, Colorado intends to provide an attractive pageant to induce visitors to the big shows on the coast to stop in this state, view our mountain scenery, enjoy our unequaled climate, and investigate our splendid opportunities. Whatever funds the state can spare for this great exposition should be placed in the hands of a most competent board, that they may be used to the best possible advantage. To promote this work the several counties of the state might be authorized to assist the general exhibits by financial aid. The state should give as liberal support as its financial condition will permit to fairs and expositions to advertise our mining, live stock, agricultural, horticultural, industrial and business opportunities.

GRAND JURY

When the present law relating to criminal prosecutions was passed, it was not intended that district attorneys should be given so much power. I am of the opinion that it should be mandatory upon the district courts to call a grand jury at least once each year in every county, and that district attorneys should not be permitted to dismiss prosecutions without the consent of the courts.

FEE OFFICES

I have always been opposed to public offices being supported by fees. I realize there are many offices, under present conditions at least, that can have no support otherwise, but I see no reason why such officials should not be required to collect fees without favor, turn them promptly into the public treasury and draw such salaries as may be allowed by law in the same manner in which salaries are usually paid.

SIXTY DAY SESSION

I have never known a session of the General Assembly at which the work could not have been completed within sixty days, and I see no reason why the present assembly cannot finish its business within that time. So long as the legislature is in session changes in law constantly occur and business conditions are more or less disturbed. I therefore hope this assembly will hasten its work to the utmost. I can conceive of nothing that would bring more credit to the members than the accomplishment of needed legislation and an adjournment within sixty days. In this connection I desire to call your attention to the fact that the people removed the limit of the session, hoping that active work would begin earlier and there-

fore be completed sooner, and that the rush of business at the closing hours would not result in the loss of meritorious measures. I therefore urge most strongly that you fix no time for adjournment until your work is completed.

ECONOMY

With \$126,000 of interest on the state bonds in settlement of old debts, with \$115,000 to pay for advertising the initiated and referred bills at the last election, with a demand for \$100,000 for the big expositions of 1915, with added expense to keep pace with the growth of our educational and other institutions, and with the necessity of keeping taxes within reasonable bounds, there is every obligation to hold appropriations and expenditures of all departments of the state at the lowest possible point consistent with efficiency. The estimated state revenues for the present period are no greater than those of the last.

During 1911 and 1912 \$155,000 of surplus funds were received from previous years. No considerable sum of this kind may be expected during the present administration for the reason that anything collected for the past two years must go toward paying the over-appropriations for that period. The Tax Commission will probably be able to bring about considerable increase in the revenue, but it will take a large part of this to offset the transfers received by the recent administration from those which preceded it.

One thing is certain, if our institutions are to continue to grow, there must be greater receipts to sustain them. Our financial system has always been faulty. When we became a state, the territory was in debt, and we had to start out by living on the future, or more correctly speaking, on the estimated revenues. We are still operating on the same plan. From the very beginning, with pressing needs for new and growing institutions, there was always strong inducement to chance over-appropriations, resulting in moral but illegal obligations. To emphasize the matter, our plan of assessment has been ineffective. When the state was organized there were no great inter-county industrial properties. County assessors were provided to assess the property in their several counties; boards of county commissioners were assigned the duty of equalizing the assessments within their respective jurisdictions; it was made the duty of certain state officers to equalize valuations

among the counties. This plan seemed satisfactory, until the Legislature invested the State Board of Equalization with the power to assess inter-county property, such as railway and telegraph lines. The county assessors became dissatisfied, claiming that the State Board of Equalization assessed the railroads and other inter-county property too low, and asserted that it had no right to sit in judgment upon its own work as compared to that of the assessors. As a result, counties that were rich enough to live upon ordinary county levies made a lower return of valuation to avoid state taxes. The result was a great inequality, and often counties least able paid the highest rate of state taxes. Disputes taken to the courts resulted in decisions making equal valuations among the counties practically impossible. Repeated efforts at legislation have accomplished little. Laws compelling assessment at full valuation have been ignored, and because the law has not been complied with in this respect it is frequently difficult to enforce the collection of taxes. Indeed, some corporations have assumed to determine themselves how much of their taxes they would pay.

The Eighteenth General Assembly authorized a Tax Commission to assess inter-county property, search out assets that have been dodging taxation and equalize values throughout the state. It has been appointed and at work only a few months, but it is already materially improving the old system. Whether we meet with the same difficulty encountered by the old board remains to be seen. This commission seems to be working in harmony with the assessors of the state and if it can continue to do so, I have no doubt conditions will be much improved.

Before we can hope to have permanent benefit there must be either a reversal of court decisions relating to revenue, or constitutional amendment. It is admittedly a bad condition to advertise high rates of taxation. Surely it would be a better method to assess all property at its true value and be able to announce low rates of levy. Having complied with the law of assessment, collections could be enforced. There seems to be little involved in all the disputes over this matter except the state tax which is small. If we can once establish a system of equality in valuation so that everyone will pay his just share of taxes the trouble will disappear. To bring this about there must be a spirit of fairness displayed, a spirit of patriotic loyalty to the support and growth of our institutions.

Considerable saving might be made and greater efficiency secured by consolidating boards whose duties are similar. For instance there is apparently no good reason why we should maintain an agricultural board and a horticultural board, both occasioning considerable expense and each working in the other's field. Even if there are no salaries for the members of such duplicate boards, there are always executive officers and traveling and other expenses. If we are to conduct this state government upon a business basis, such overlapping of work and consequent added expense is entirely inexcusable.

CONCLUSION

The present General Assembly can exert tremendous influence for the good of Colorado. If it shall provide a policy for economical and business-like administration; if it shall take action to protect our mining, irrigation and other securities; if it shall insure ample control of our natural resources in the interests of the people; if it shall enact laws that will place us in the fore-front in true governmental progress; if it shall guarantee safety to capital and protect the rights of labor it will bring confidence at home, command respect abroad and place the state upon the road to certain prosperity.

I hope to work in harmony with every member in the important business just begun and confidently expect decisive results for the betterment of our splendid state.

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