

State of the State
Governor James Robertson
January 4, 1921

In compliance with the requirements of the Constitution, it becomes my duty to address you, by means of a Message, setting forth, in a general way, the conditions of the State.

At the outset, I desire, on behalf of our people, to return thanks to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for the many blessings, material and otherwise, that have been vouchsafed to us, during the past two years, as a people and a State. We have been (with few minor exceptions) peculiarly free from devastating storms, epidemics, riots and other calamities. The crop seasons have been exceptionally good and the earth has brought forth a wonderful yield of all those things necessary and desirable for the welfare of our people.

The oil and gas production in this State has reached enormous proportions and Oklahoma has now the proud distinction of leading all the States in the production of that source of wealth.

The lead and zinc mines, and the coal mines and other mineral products have been constantly exceeding all past records; labor, as a general rule, is happy and contented and has been exceedingly prosperous. The State has had, perhaps, less than its share of disturbances in the industrial and economic world. The moral atmosphere in the State is good and the educational institutions are prospering to an extraordinary degree. We now have more than two million people and our institutions, eleemosynary, charitable, penal and otherwise, in numbers are largely in excess of those of our surrounding States, which goes to show that the people of this State have a kindly interest in their unfortunates, defectives and delinquents.

The various State institutions are in fine condition and are functioning properly with a better degree of efficiency than heretofore known. They are meeting the expectations of the people and are receiving the hearty and unqualified support of all who are, in any wise, acquainted with their objects and purposes.

The various Departments of the State Government are also in good condition and functioning properly and are rendering to the people a splendid service, considering the natural handicaps and limitations they are compelled to meet.

The tendency of those living on farms to move to town and engage in non-producing avocations is a subject of deep concern. That problem, however, is not peculiar to Oklahoma, but is found in all the States of the Union.

The recent slump in prices has caused considerable apprehension in the minds of thoughtful people as to the ultimate result, and it has been especially hard on the wheat farmer, the cotton grower, the stock raiser and the banks, but in the last few days, a more optimistic spirit seems to have permeated the commercial world, and I am sure, if we will but analyze the situation properly, taking into consideration and giving due weight to the causes thereof, we will be able to weather the storm here in Oklahoma as well, if not better, than they will in the other parts of the nation.

Here, everyone has plenty to eat and wear and, in most cases, especially with the farmers, a sufficient store of provisions and feed stuffs on hand to enable them to plant and reap another crop.

If people will but take a reasonable and sensible view of the situation and realize that we are in better condition than any other country in the world and that, as soon as the Peace Treaty has been signed and the natural embargo raised from our exports; the markets of the world opened again and credit established in the bankrupt Nations of Europe, we will be enabled to pull through better than any other country in the world.

In a written message, it is impossible to go into details on all the important and interesting subjects that should be called to your attention. Time nor space will not permit this to be done, but there are a few specific matters and things that I feel should be submitted and, with your permission, I will proceed to their consideration.

AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture, being our chief industry, is entitled to our uniform and consistent friendly consideration. There is no danger of overproduction of foodstuffs, but there is grave danger that even the normal production will cease unless the farmer and stock-raiser is enabled to obtain a fair profit on his investment and for his labor. The present situation in that respect, not only in Oklahoma but throughout the entire country, needs but to be mentioned to warrant the foregoing assertion. We should, therefore, give every question that suggests relief to the farmer, our early and careful study and should not hesitate to offer help; provided, of course, that assistance offered is constructive and not merely temporary and paternalistic.

The farmer is not asking charity. All he asks is that he be given a square deal. This he has never had and in all economic disturbances, he is the first to suffer and the last to recover. This is due to multiplicity of reasons and many of his ills are due to his own faults and shortcomings. But, in my opinion, the chief reason is due to his inherent desire to stand alone, to be independent, to avoid thinking along co-operative lines and to avoid proper organization. To be sure, he is now and for decades past has been, the victim of demagogic and selfish organizers, so-called, whose only object in life is to escape honest toil and to capitalize credulity and prejudice, and his chief resource is an unjust and unwarranted appeal to class consciousness which is always fatal to any move for permanent and unselfish result.

The farmer is completely disorganized, insofar as immediate and practical results are concerned. As an illustration of the foregoing, I need but call you attention to the unhappy and unfortunate state of affairs in North Dakota. And yet, one cannot blame the farmers of that State for earnestly endeavoring to better their condition. The non-farmers are the ones who must carry the criticism and, to a very large degree, that is true here in Oklahoma.

So, while I assert that agriculture needs assistance, I would also assert that what it most needs is to be let alone, except that it be furnished with opportunities whereby it can help itself and not be penalized and handicapped by lack of necessary laws or opportunities.

I am constrained to offer these observations because I feel that we are, in fact, facing a very serious crisis in this respect. Not because of present conditions but because of future results that are bound to come unless the crisis is averted, which cannot be done by the farmers but must be done by others. The farmer cannot be expected to continue to raise food stuffs and furnish clothing material unless he makes a reasonable profit; hence, if he cannot obtain a proper market for his product, he will, as a matter of self-preservation, curtail his efforts and be forced back to the primitive conditions when he will provide only for his own immediate needs. This proposition, I take it, is so fundamental that all will agree and none can deny it. The direful result of such a condition (and it is in sight) needs no amplification at my hands. Suffice it to say that such a curtailment in the production of food stuffs spells only disaster of a most grievous character to our own prosperity and happiness. The fainthearted, while compelled to agree with the foregoing general conclusion, will not care to assume the obligations necessary to institute and bring about the required solution; they will say that the problem is either fundamental and beyond our power to solve or they will recur to another, but none the less fallacious position, of saying that the remedy is to be found only in Federal legislation. Alas, this is too largely true but the fault, even then, is, for the most part, our own. The mere fact that the states in recent years have not only failed and refused to resist the unwarranted encroachments of Federal usurpation, but on the contrary have suggested and invited and wholeheartedly assented to it, in the delusive hope that their individual burdens would be lightened and made easier.

While it is true that much, and probably now the chief, relief may come from Congress, there is important and necessary work for the States to do. To that end, may I not hopefully suggest for your consideration at this session a few important things.

It is impossible to correctly approximate the great value of our present Marketing Commission, which, as you know, is a Bureau in the Department of Agriculture. Yet, great as its value is now, it needs your careful attention in order that, by proper development, it may serve the people to a much greater degree. A survey should be made by some appropriate committee, having for its object the enactment of laws that will guarantee-

- a. A more perfect system of standardization by the adoption of uniform grades of all products.
- b. The adoption of uniform containers and packages.
- c. A uniform system of inspection and adequate laws, rules and regulations for the enforcement of these and other provisions.

I feel justified in saying that millions of dollars are lost every year because of the prevailing unfair and standardless system of grading cotton. It is too much to expect satisfaction in this respect by leaving the whole matter to buyers without any relief, in the way of law, to the producer.

Our law on co-operative buying and selling should also be developed with the idea of assisting the producers to more perfectly organized co-operative marketing associations for the purpose of standardization of farm products and organized marketing; for consumers co-operative associations for eliminating unnecessary duplication of service and cost of distribution to consumers and for practical assistance in problems of marketing, business management and other vital questions.

We should have uniform and comprehensive legislation on Transportation, looking to

- a. Prevention of loss and unnecessary delay in transportation.
- b. Easy means for the recovery of losses produced thereby.
- c. Regulation, by license, if necessary, of unfair trade practices of Commission men and cold storage warehouses.
- d. Improvement and enlargement of depot, terminal and warehouse facilities of common carriers and wholesale dealers of food products.
- e. A uniform system of market reports to be supervised by the Department of Agriculture.
- f. Permission to counties to issue bonds for the erection and operation of warehouses for cotton, wheat, broom-corn, etc.
- g. Development of the laws relating to warehouses, warehouse receipts and for the co-relation of same to and with those of the Federal government.
- h. For licensing, under strict regulation, the operation of cold storage plants and the sale (under the health laws) of all cold storage products. Providing, among other things, that the date of receipt of all products should be plainly stamped on either the product itself or the container; also, the market price of the product at the time it was placed in cold storage, etc., etc.
- i. Severe penalties on common carriers for failure to furnish necessary transportation facilities; for failure to properly and quickly transport; for failure to give proper terminal, stockyard, warehouse and unloading facilities, with a general revision of our laws on these subjects, conferring concurrent jurisdiction with the Corporation Commission on the Courts for relief, as the present remedies, for some reason or other, wholly inadequate and are no longer sought by the people.
- j. Provision for the speedy and correct dissemination of market reports by the State for the benefit of the public generally, with heavy penalties for the publication of

false reports, either of market or crop conditions. This could be done by proper co-operation with very little or no expense to the State.

The above and foregoing are, in my opinion, of prime importance yet there are many other things of almost equal importance, some of which are:

a. The Department of Agriculture should have an Assistant Attorney General (to be named by the Attorney General by and with the consent of the President of the Board of Agriculture.) That Department has constant use for an active attorney who should be required to devote all his time to the duties of the Department. One man can scarcely do the work required, but it would be of untold advantage over the present system. Experience has shown that little or no assistance can be expected from the various county attorneys. This is due, in many cases such as quarantine, tick eradication, dynamiting of vats, infractions of the pure seed law, etc., to local influence and fear of political injury, etc., and it not infrequently happens that important laws relative to agriculture are becoming worthless because of lack of legal assistance.

b. The pure seed law, which was enacted by the Seventh Legislature and which is of very great value to the farmers and gardeners of the State, was attacked in the Federal court by foreign seed houses and perceptibly weakened. It should be amended. The President of the Board of Agriculture will furnish you data on this subject.

c. A Bureau of Forestry and Parks should be created in the Board of Agriculture. We are rapidly losing all our good timber and are making no effort to replant or otherwise replace it. Our people are careless and unconcerned about planting trees and the establishing of such a Bureau should combine and have jurisdiction over all kinds of trees, nursery, ornamental, nut bearing and lumber producing. In addition, the Bureau should be charged with the duty of acquiring and preserving parks and other natural beauty spots for the State. In the matter of parks, we as a State, have been woefully negligent. We are far behind our sister States in this respect. This is especially true of our towns and cities also. Some of our largest cities are almost wholly devoid of parks. Cities, often, are wholly incompetent to handle matters of this kind. In such cases, the State must act. The poor people of cities have no other places of recreation than the parks and these people are citizens of the State; the State is interested in their moral and physical well-being and the State should provide some easy method where by public parks and play grounds may be secured and developed. There are many beautiful natural parks in the State rapidly going into the hands of private owners, which the State should own. Immediate steps should be taken to preserve them for future use, at least.

d. There are many good reasons why a stringent "dog law" should be enacted. The sheep industry, alone, is sufficient justification for such a statute. I recommended such a law to the last Legislature, but it failed of passage. I submit it again in the hope that it will be given your attention.

The above and foregoing are but a few of the many things we can do to aid this great industry, and I respectfully urge upon you the importance of the subject, and bespeak for it your most careful consideration.

REVENUES.

The Fiscal affairs of the State are in good condition notwithstanding untoward and unusual conditions in the financial world. At the close of the last fiscal year, June 30th, 1920, there was a surplus in the General Revenue Fund of \$2,214,000.00. The collections from special taxes for the past five months are somewhat in excess of the estimate made but this condition was foreseen and expected and should not permit us to become over enthusiastic. The majority of the Board of Equalization, at the time the annual levy was made, anticipated that which came to pass, to-wit: The general slump in prices. The end is not yet, and the more recent events affecting the oil industry authorizes the conclusion that the revenue from that source will rapidly fail, due to decrease both in price and production. The recent action of the Pipe Lines in

curtailing runs can have but one result, viz: The driving of the small and independent producer out of business and the suspension of wild cat activities. Scores of little refiners, during the past 30 days have either ceased or very greatly curtailed operation; the demand for gasoline has perceptibly decreased and I fear the industry is due a great set back and demoralization which will require a year or two of careful re-adjustment to bring stability and equilibrium. What is true of oil and gas is likewise true of lead and zinc. The revenue from the income tax source likewise is bound to be greatly reduced. On the contrary we have been endeavoring to operate the State on a pre-war basis and as a result the maintenance fund of nearly all the schools and in most of the State Institutions will have been exhausted long before the end of the fiscal year. I am sure the surplus existing June 30 last will not supply the actual needs of the State by the time the end of the fiscal year arrives. This state of affairs was known by the State Board of Equalization at the time this year's levy was made.

It is easy to talk against taxes and at times, with some people very pleasant and popular, but when the responsibility of government is looking you squarely in the face; when nearly 6000 state wards look to you for food, clothing, housing and attention; when the schools are nearly ready to close their doors, it is time to make use of a little common sense and to do those things requisite whether popular or not. The mill and one-half state levy about which much has been said, is not only the lowest state levy every made but, in my opinion is absolutely essential unless we desire the credit of the State to be impaired; lose the gross production tax on oil and gas; have the efficiency of government reduced and the due execution of our laws embarrassed. Without it, in my opinion, state warrants will sell at a discount and a funding bond issue will surely result. You must remember that Oklahoma is a young State, yet, and that all our institutions are growing by leaps and bounds; that our diversified industries require whole departments of government that our sister States do not have and which they have no use for; that notwithstanding our wonderful achievements the cost of government is far below the average of our sister states, and that the people, themselves are responsible for the many activities of the State.

I am induced to offer these observations because of an effort put forth in the recent campaign whereby each member of these bodies was subjected, by questionnaire to the query or demand rather, that the legislature rescind and annul the action of the State Board with reference to the levy. It might not be out of place, even here to suggest that though such course was desired it would be the province of the judiciary, and not the legislative, branch of government to act.

EDUCATION.

During the last year, the Rockefeller Foundation made public the result of what is generally understood as a survey of the educational standing of the various States. To the amazement of all, Oklahoma was therein accorded 36th place among the States of the Union. While, in my opinion, this report is unfair and misleading, yet it is a patent fact that our educational system falls short and does not meet our requirements or expectations. The reasons are many and obvious, but, to my mind, the chief reason can be found in the inefficiency of our common schools. I think I can safely assert that the common schools of today are far inferior to those of a generation ago and, what is more demoralizing, under our present policy I can see no good reason to hope for their betterment.

The reasons for this condition are not difficult to locate nor yet are they hard to understand when known. The road question, in my opinion, is very largely responsible for present conditions. Yet, good roads alone will not solve the problem. The solemn truth is that we have endeavored to build our educational system as a pyramid founded on our higher institutions of learning at the base, culminating in the common schools as the apex when, as a matter of course, the common schools should be the base and foundation of our entire system, culminating in the higher institutions, with the University as the high point or peak.

I realize that all will not agree with me in this conclusion, yet I leave it to your judgment to determine whether or not I am correct.

Of course, there are many other and important considerations to be kept in mind in order to arriving at a proper and safe conclusion. For instance, the continually and rapidly growing tendency on the part of our young men and women to leave the farm and go to town, there to engage in occupations other than agriculture. This, however, is a result rather than a cause for, if conditions on the farm were more favorable and if farm life were made more attractive, the invasion of our towns and cities from this source would cease very largely.

The truth is that our cities and towns, because of greater wealth are enabled to offer greater inducements to the young man and woman desiring an education, than the country district, as now formed, can possibly offer. To change this some have the very vicious plan of taking from the more favored localities a part that they now have and giving it to those who have not, while, at the same time, no additional means or better methods of development are given to the undeveloped district and the revenue thus taken would not only not benefit the weaker or losing community, but would destroy the stronger one from which it is proposed unjustly to take it. And, to my mind, this temporary makeshift would, in fact and practice, really cause a distinct weakening and deterioration of the entire system without strengthening any part of it.

Hard surfaced roads will, to a very great degree, solve this problem and good country school facilities and good roads are really but one problem and the solution of one will, very largely, be the solution of both.

Yet there are other phases of this question that must be solved separate and apart from the foregoing. The subject is of such vital importance that Oklahoma, as many other States have done, and others are now doing, must give it better and more careful consideration than can be done during a brief legislative session. It is a subject which will tolerate no mistakes or unwise or fanciful experimentation. What we need now, to my mind, is a careful and thoroughly complete diagnosis of our infirmity. To this end, may I not respectfully suggest that a comprehensive survey of our entire educational system be made by a Commission of experts with ample time and means to investigate, not only our own shortcomings in this respect but the good features of those older states who have groped as we are now groping. This Commission should be given plenty of time and money to thoroughly and completely survey the whole subject and should be required to report not only the facts as they find them, but should make recommendations for the solution of the problems which we have failed to solve. Our continuation as a free state and the perpetuation of our free institutions depend upon the education of our people. We cannot, therefore, shut our eyes to the situation which confronts us and which is recognized and appreciated by all.

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

The Congress has adopted the policy of appropriating funds to be expended in the several states in aiding the state authorities in the construction of permanent highways. There has been allotted to the State of Oklahoma, under this plan of Federal Aid to the States, the sum of \$1,300,000.00 available for the year 1920 that is yet unmatched by State and County funds, and \$2,306,111.00 for the fiscal year of 1921 and approximately \$2,300,000.00 will no doubt be allotted for the year 1922.

Under the provisions of the Federal Aid Act, the State is required to at least meet these allotments of Federal Aid with equal amounts and the combined funds are then expended in the construction of permanent highways under the joint supervision of the State and Federal authorities. Federal Aid projects have been prepared and approved by the State and Federal road authorities covering the Federal Aid available to and including 1920. Should the legislature fail to make the necessary appropriations to cover these allotments totalling approximately \$6,000,000.00 of Federal Aid, the same, although sorely needed, may be lost. It is clearly the

duty of the State, through the Legislature, to provide the necessary funds to cover these allotments of Federal Aid in the construction of permanent State highways and, in addition thereto, to provide adequate sum to be expended in aiding such counties of the State as do not participate in the said Federal Aid in the construction of permanent highways and, in this manner, the benefit of State aid can and should be equalized among the Counties.

Prior Legislatures have wisely adopted the policy of extending State aid to the counties in permanent road construction, but the Seventh Legislature, on account of unfavorable conditions and other causes deemed sufficient, omitted the needed appropriation. This omission should be supplied by this Legislature. We are fully mindful of present financial conditions and the burdens of the people, and believe that not one dollar should be appropriated to any but a most needful purpose. No argument is required to support the statement that permanent need of roads is the greatest need of this State and that money well spent in permanent road construction is the best of investments.

We believe that this is the opportune time to construct permanent roads. The labor is available and deserves employment. The price of materials is assuming a more favorable level.

It is, therefore, recommended that the Legislature give thoughtful consideration to this most pressing need of the people of the State.

In addition to the above, I desire to call you special attention to a few other items, in this connection, which may be of interest.

The question of inspection and supervision of highways and bridges is of the utmost importance, yet no adequate provision is made by the State law for such work. I think you will agree with me that no part of road making or bridge building is more important than proper and complete inspection and supervision. One of the glaring defects in this matter is the question of salaries for engineers. It is impossible to get efficient engineers for \$5.00 per day, especially when the man who pushes the wheelbarrow on the work is drawing from \$6.00 to \$8.03 per day.

During the year, the Division of Engineering in the Highway Department has been completely reorganized and we are obtaining better service and greater efficiency therefrom than every before in the history of that Department. And yet, unless additional aid is given to maintain this organization, we might almost as well eliminate it completely.

There has been some complaint concerning the method of collecting automobile license money. There are some who think this duty should be performed by the counties. I sincerely hope that no such change in the law will be permitted as it would only tend to inefficiency and confusion.

I desire to call you attention to the present efficiency of Registration and License division of the Highway Department. At the beginning of the present biennium, when it was uncertain whether or not House Bill 509 would be effective, on account of a referendum petition having been lodged against it, the Department, obviously, could not contract to procure and furnish tags until the matter had been settled in the courts and, by reason of this, there was considerable complaint and confusion because tags could not be secured. But the last year has shown what organization will do and the improvement in the coming year will be even more marked than that over last. The tags for the next year have already been purchased and delivered; applications are already being received and there will be no perceptible delay in the delivery of the same.

In this connection, it might not be amiss to call you attention to the fact that the Highway Department has collected, during the past year, for automobile registration fees, the sum of \$2,293,787.51, and has issued license tags to the number of 201,697. Ninety percent of these fees have been paid back into the county in which the automobile is located, while ten per cent is paid to the general revenue fund of the State, which more than pays the operation of the entire Department.

TEACHERS' PENSION FUND.

Chapter 79, Session Laws of 1919, is an Act providing for a Teachers' Retirement and Pension Fund, a very much needed law, but which, unfortunately, does not provide the necessary funds to enable it to properly function.

I suggest that this Act be amended and vitalized by providing for the creation of a fund that will properly care for the objects, and purposes of the law. Such a fund can easily be provided for by requiring a compulsory fee from all teachers and by proper contribution by the State. It is, in fact, a plan of Insurance without which teaching, as a profession, will never materialize. This fund can be so created as to be little, if any, burden to the tax payers and it would do much, in my opinion, to build up the profession. As it is now, a teacher must, in a few short years, abandon his or her life's work in order to go into other lines of business to gain a competence and provide for old age.

PROFITEERS.

During the war when conditions in the commercial world were so much upset, the people, not being able to help themselves, were made the victims of a new class of offenders, commonly denominated profiteers. At that time, it was impossible to separate the wheat from the chaff or to point out who was or who was not guilty of wrong-doing. The people, always patriotic, were willing to bide their time until readjustment could be made and until conditions became normal.

It is now more than two years since the armistice was signed, yet the profiteer is still in our midst. I do not care to be misunderstood in this respect. High prices do not necessarily prove profiteering. But there is a class of men, to be found in all lines of business, who are not satisfied with a reasonable profit, but who insist on an unconscionable return. Readjustment and normalcy have not yet become perfect, yet conditions are so changed that it is now easy to determine who is, and who is not, a profiteer. I believe that a good strong statute on this subject should be enacted, not specially for the purpose of punishment but a preventative. Define by law the crime of profiteering, and fix a heavy penalty and let every case depend upon its own facts. This should apply especially to building material, rents, food stuffs and fuel. I believe its effect would prove immediately salutary. Certainly no honest man could complain of this and the other class should not.

PETROLEUM EXPERIMENT STATION

Under the provisions of Chapter 99, Session laws of 1919, an appropriation of \$25,000 was made for the purpose of aiding in oil and gas extension work at the experimental station of the United States Bureau of Mines at Bartlesville.

Reports have been made to the Governor from time to time of the progress of this work and I feel that I am justified in saying that no greater returns have been received from any public money expended than from this source. The oil industry of this state has reached tremendous magnitude. It is of great importance and the work of the Extension Bureau has for its purpose the solution of the new and intricate problems of that industry.

As one incident only to the character of the work performed, I call you attention to the result of one investigation in which it was disclosed that the recovery of gasoline from the residual gases from compression plants has been increased to something like 750,000 gallons per year. This is only one of many experiments and discoveries that have resulted from this appropriation. Among others, I might mention natural gas conservation; recovery of gasoline from still vapors; fractionating towers for the yield of additional product; evaporation losses; investigation of low pressure in gas burners the saving of oil wells and oil recovery; water problems, etc.

I invite you attention to the report of this Bureau and ask that a liberal appropriation be made for a continuation of this very important work. An industry that produces as much revenue

to the State as that of oil and gas is surely entitled to the favorable consideration of the Legislature.

CONDITION OF OUR SUPREME COURT DOCKET

This has been a live subject since statehood. The Legislature, at one time, provided for a Supreme Court Commission which served a useful purpose but which, later on, was abolished, and the number of the Supreme Court Judges increased in the hope that the Court would be thereby enabled to dispose of the accumulated cases on its docket.

This hope has not been realized and our Supreme Court docket today is two or three years behind and, judging from the number of new cases being filed, it is very doubtful whether the Court will ever be able to catch up with its work.

This is a subject that demands attention. We are all anxious to prevent the multiplication of Courts and officers, but we must bear in mind that Oklahoma is yet a new State with many novel and perplexing questions arising daily for solution; that we have a population of more than two million people; that our industries are more varied than those of our surrounding states and that, on account of these reasons, there is more litigation in Oklahoma according to the population than in any of our surrounding states. It seems to me to be merely a matter of good business to provide ample machinery whereby this litigation may be speedily disposed of. It is better for all concerned and especially the State, to have the dockets cleared up, because a congested docket invariably puts a premium on useless appeals if for no other reason than to gain time.

As to the solution of this vexatious problem, I am loath to make a recommendation. I am submitting the matter to you, therefore, in the hope that it will receive your careful consideration and that, out of a multitude of counsel will come such wisdom as will discover and develop a plan that will meet the needs of the situation.

NEW BUILDINGS.

I know that many new buildings are needed at the various state schools and institutions. In order that these institutions may develop and properly function, it is essential that they be furnished adequate facilities. To refuse them the things needful in this respect is not in keeping with the Oklahoma idea of progress. This is simply a business proposition, and I submit their needs for your serious consideration.

The eleemosynary, penal and charitable institutions are all, at this time, very much overcrowded and several are now compelled to refuse admittance to patients because of lack of room. If that is the way the people of Oklahoma desire to treat their unfortunate and dependent wards, then it will be all right and proper to refuse to supply their needs.

This is a matter entirely in your hands. I must, however, designate a few instances where new buildings are very much needed.

The Federal Soldiers' Home; additional buildings for the Girls' Training School at Tecumseh; development (or abolition) of the Western Home for White orphans at Helena; Ward or cell building for female prisoners at McAlester; for the Boys Training School at Pauls Valley; School for the Blind at Muskogee; School for the Deaf and Dumb at Sulphur; additional buildings for the Hospital for the Insane; additional buildings for the Institute for the Feeble-minded at Enid.

If it be your desire, I shall be happy to have the Superintendents of these various institutions appear before your committees, and I also refer you to the various reports on file showing essential facts and I will be glad to furnish such other information as you may desire on the subject.

CAPITOL GROUNDS

This is a subject of great interest to all. It is a work that cannot be neglected. Under the provisions of Chapter 298, Session Laws 1919, the Legislature, in effect, took the matter of planning for the improvement and beautification of the grounds into its own hands and instructed the Board of Affairs to make a contract with Mr. George E. Kessler, of Kansas City, Mo., which was done and all work since then has been in conformity with his plan.

A large amount of work has been performed, much of it not being noticeable because of the change in the plans which required a large part of the work theretofore performed to be undone. Steady and marked improvement has been made however, and the design when completed will, without doubt, meet the approval of all.

By the provisions of said Chapter 298, supra, authority was given the Board of Affairs, on the approval of the Governor, to sell certain tracts of the Capitol building grounds and to use the proceeds to defray the expenses of improvement. Some of the land was sold and paid for and the money used accordingly while much of the land sold has reverted to the State because of the unwillingness of the purchaser to complete the payments therefor. A full and complete report of all the doings of the Board of Affairs is separately submitted for your consideration.

I desire also to call your attention to the paving on tracts and to say that the paving cannot be completed according to plans without additional appropriation.

Also, the granite facing of the retaining walls and steps leading into the building cannot be completed because no appropriation was made therefor by the last Legislature.

The high cost of labor and material has made this work exceedingly difficult and, had it not been for the convict camp located on the grounds, very little progress could have been made.

In carrying out the express provisions of the law in regard to the Capitol grounds, I desire to call you attention to the fact that no agreement with the owners of the additional land could be reached and the State was compelled to resort to condemnation proceedings; the viewers (appointed by the District Court of Oklahoma County) placed a valuation of \$79,300.00 on the Culberson tract and \$80,375.00 on the Harn tract. The Board of Affairs felt that the price was excessive and I ordered an appeal to be taken to the District Court by the Attorney General where the cases are now pending.

It is my judgment that these improvements should be finished at an early date; additional information concerning plans and estimates will be forthcoming on request to the Board of Affairs.

SANATORIA FOR TUBEROULARS.

The last Legislature appropriated \$150,000 for the establishment of three hospitals for the treatment of those suffering from tuberculosis. The high cost of material and labor made it impossible to complete these institutions. The fact is, that it will take the amount appropriated to properly complete and put into operation one institution for this purpose. It should be understood that, unless an institution of this character is fully developed and properly equipped, it is worse than useless and of practically no value.

One of these institutions is located at Clinton and is practically completed, so far as the available money will permit. Another is located at Talihina but the contract for the same has only been let and the work has not yet started. The one for colored people at Boley is practically completed and will soon be ready for occupancy.

That there is great need of institutions of this character, is generally recognized by all, but I must insist that the people should not expect much from these institutions unless they are willing to properly equip them.

I suggest that, when the proper committee takes up the consideration of this subject, they will call to their assistance such well-known men as Hon. E. K. Gaylord; Hon. J. F. Owen; Dr. L.

J. Moorman; Dr. A. R. Lewis, State Health Commissioner, and others as their advice and suggestions on these matters are of great value.

PARDONS AND PAROLES.

I have long been in favor of a Pardon and Parole Board. My experience during the past two years demonstrates, to my mind, at least, the need of additional assistance in the handling of this very important subject. Such a Board, however, in order to be of any real value must be practicable in its workings. Some attempt to create such a Board has been made but, to one familiar with the situation, the remedy offered was so ridiculous and so unworkable that its adoption would have been a calamity and would have defeated the very object it sought and, in fact, would have been wholly inoperative.

The exercise of this great power by the chief executive deals with one of the most sacred rights of the individual citizens and encroachments, from whatsoever source, should be carefully scrutinized and the right jealously guarded. But with the great increase in our population and the increased number of men and women confined in our penal institutions, it is a physical impossibility, with the present force, to give that care and attention to all worthy cases, which they should have.

In this connection I may, with propriety, I think, call you attention to the inadequacy of our laws dealing with these unfortunate members of society. We should have an indeterminate sentence law and provide therein for the discharge of prisoners when, in the opinion of the Warden or Superintendent, the object of imprisonment has been attained; this would save the Governor a world of worry and unnecessary labor and would prevent demagogical criticism of a very useful and necessary function of government.

A Pardon and Parole Board, to act in conjunction and harmony with the Governor, for the purpose of investigation and advice, can be created without an amendment to the Constitution. But this Board should not be composed of elected State officials, who already have more work than they can perform. It should be made up of persons interested in the welfare of the State and who have a sensible appreciation of the principles of justice and equity. In order to secure such a Board, provision must be made for ample compensation and the members should devote a large part of their time to the duties of such office.

In addition to the duties above mentioned, provision should be made for at least two parole officers to work out of the prisons and whose chief duty should be to check up paroled prisoners, receive and examine their reports and aid them in securing proper employment. No money expended would bring greater or better results. It is the duty of the State to aid these unfortunates and reclaim them to good society, but under present arrangements, it is impossible to get the best results because of lack of time and assistance.

I should be glad to confer with any committee of either House on this very important subject and to furnish detailed information relative to any phase of it.

OKLAHOMA STATE REFORMATORY.

When the penal institution of Granite was created, it was the purpose of the Legislature to provide a place where young and first offenders might be confined and their reform brought about. For reasons then deemed sufficient, however, the place was made a general prison and all classes of convicts were placed therein. Recently, by executive order, this institution has been transformed into a Reformatory in fact as well as name and a determined effort is now being made to carry out the original intent of the Legislature. None are now confined at that place except they be under 23 years of age and who have had but one conviction and who are serving less than ten years. A school has been established; the rock crushing plant discontinued and it is the hope of those in charge to employ those confined therein largely in agriculture, stock and poultry raising, horticulture and such industries only as are necessary to most efficiently operate the plant.

Nearly 400 young men are now confined at that place and I am happy to inform you that no class of people are better pleased at the change of policy than the boys themselves.

It is the hope of the management to convert the farm into a pure seed farm and plant and raise pure seed for the benefit of the farmers of the State; to specialize in poultry, not only from a pure breeding standpoint, but as a commercial enterprise for the benefit of the State; to develop arborculture and horticulture, specializing in those trees, vines, shrubs and other plants that are peculiarly adapted to the climate of this State and last, but not least, to reclaim these young men to good citizenship and make them useful members of society.

An appeal has been made to the good people of the State in this last behalf and I am deeply gratified to know how many people have responded and how many are actively interested in the work of salvaging this large supply of human wreckage.

In order to enable the State more fully to complete the programme thus mapped out, I urge that the committees having jurisdiction acquaint themselves fully with the detailed plan and to study the reports of the Warden in order to more thoroughly understand the needs and requirements of the institution, for surely, there is no greater work to do nor one that will bring greater profit to the State.

BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AND IDENTIFICATION.

It is very necessary that a Bureau of Criminal Investigation and Identification be established at the Penitentiary at McAlester. Such an organization is needed not only by the State, but especially by the sheriffs, policemen and other peace officers of the State.

It can be established and maintained much cheaper and more efficiently at the Penitentiary than any other place and, by its use to the peace officers, the cost of its organization would be repaid many times each year. While, as a preventative of crime, its benefits would be of untold value.

Nearly all the help required to operate this Bureau could be furnished by the convicts, under the proper supervision.

I trust you can see your way clear to investigate this matter and to act favorable upon the suggestion that its establishment be authorized.

STATE MILITIA.

It is with genuine pride that I call your attention to the splendid organization, both as to personnel and equipment of this very important department of our state government. Many words of praise have been uttered in reference thereto by the War Department and Regular Army Inspectors.

Recently by reason of Federal assistance the organization in this State has been largely extended and increased and due to its efficiency and standing great honors have been accorded this State by way of the establishment of Divisional and Brigade Headquarters, and the addition of large equipment. I refer you to the comprehensive report of the Adjutant General for particulars.

POLICEMEN'S AND FIREMEN'S UNIONS.

I think a statute should be enacted that will prevent public money from being paid to any Policeman or Fireman who belongs to a Policeman's or Fireman's Union as such. I have no objection to a union man serving as policeman or fireman, provided, his membership is in the some other trade or craft. To my mind it is an exceedingly dangerous thing to permit Policemen and Firemen to serve the public when thus otherwise obligated. It is impossible for them, in time of strikes and riots to be and remain impartial, when if they are true to the obligations to of their union they are bound to aid and sympathize with the strikers. Policemen and Firemen are public servants and their first and supreme and continuing duty is to the people. This is not designed as a blow at union labor, unless union labor interprets it in that way. I am and always have been a

friend and supporter of labor unions, I believe they serve a useful purpose, and that by reason of their existence labor conditions and wages have been improved. I do think, however, that government must be neutral and impartial and it cannot remain so while such unions as these exist.

LYNCHING.

During the past two years, three cases of lynching occurred in this State; one at Tulsa where a white boy nineteen years of age was taken from a jail located in the top story of the Court House, and one at Oklahoma City, where a negro boy, who, if guilty of any offense, was subject to the jurisdiction of the Logan County authorities, was taken by a small mob and put to death, and one at Holdenville, which occurred recently where a negro was hung for a crime of rape.

Lynching and mob law, no matter how great the provocation, can never be condoned or justified, and it is to the lasting disgrace of the good name of this State, that the foregoing events were permitted to occur. This is especially true with the lynchings that occurred at Oklahoma City and Tulsa, both of which could have been prevented by the use of very ordinary care on the part of the sheriffs of the respective counties. I am inclined to the belief as much as I regret to express it that these two lynchings were permitted to occur, not only with the tacit understanding of the sheriffs in these two counties, but also that the success that attended the lynchings was made possible by and through the connivance, and through participation of officers who were under oath to uphold and protect the law. Investigations were ordered in each case, and were conducted by the Office of the Attorney General, but no results have been secured, and it is doubtful whether the guilty ones will ever be punished therefor.

In the connection I desire to recommend that a statute authorizing and empowering the Governor in case of a lynching, especially where a prisoner is taken from the custody of an officer of from any prison, to immediately and summarily suspend such officer until he can be tried on the charge of failure to perform his duty.

Nearly always, as in the two cases last above referred to, all the machinery of the law relative to securing evidence is in the hands of the sheriff and his deputies, and is either destroyed or covered up, and an alibi manufactured for the purpose of preventing prosecution.

STATUTE OF SEQUOYAH

The Third Legislature provided for the placing of the Statue of Sequoyah in Statuary Hall in the Capitol at Washington; our two Senators and five Congressmen were empowered, at that time, to make and enter into a contract for the same with Mrs. Vinnie Ream Hoxie.

This contract was duly executed and the Statue completed and accepted and now occupies its place as designed. The work took more time than was expected and the constitutional limitation of 30 months elapsed before the claim therefor could be presented and, as a consequence, the appropriation reverted and the amount has never been paid. Since then Mrs. Hoxie has died and the claim is now owned by Brig. Gen. R. L. Hoxie, her husband, who personally advanced the money necessary to procure the statue and he has vainly tried to secure payment thereof.

I am transmitting to the Speaker of the House of Representatives all papers connected therewith. This claim should be satisfied. The great State of Oklahoma can ill-afford such a condition to exist. I call your attention to Chapter 142, Session Laws 1910-11, also Message of Governor Williams, 1919 House Journal, Page 118, and the accompanying documents for information bearing on this subject.

PUBLIC UTILITIES.

Much dissatisfaction has been experienced on the part of both the patrons and owners of our public service corporations during the past two years. A very large part of this, however, is directly traceable to the war and its attendant confusion. During that period, unusual and, at

times, extraordinary demands were made on these institutions and, as a result, they were crippled and rendered inefficient. So long as these conditions were due to these reasons, the people were patient and bore their added burdens uncomplainingly; in fact, they waited for an unreasonable length of time for readjustment to come before they began to seriously complain. In this, however, they were justified for it has been the policy of the State to add no extra burdens on these instrumentalities until sufficient time has been given them to get firmly on their feet again and meet the unusual demands and conditions due to increased labor and material.

I regret to say, however, that these servants of the people do not appreciate the forbearance show them; for, while they have been granted increase after increase in the matter of rates and have been shown ever possible consideration by the State and its agencies, yet the service rendered, as a general rule, has not only been poor, but, in many cases, has been exceedingly bad. In some instances, even at this date, there is such inefficient service rendered as to provide much just criticism.

Experience teaches that, in such matters, the people are long suffering and patient; that they are anxious and wiling for these concerns to be prosperous and to charge and receive such reasonable rates as will allow, not only a fair profit on the actual investment, but sufficient to enable them to properly develop their properities, yet, I am constrained, also, to say that there must be a marked improvement in the character of service rendered else the people will lose patience, become intolerant and cause things to be done that will be disastrous, not, only to themselves, but to the institutions whose duty it is to render reasonable and necessary service.

May I not suggest to you that this is a matter of extreme importance and one that should receive at you hands a searching and impartial investigation, not for the purpose of revenge or punishment, but for the purpose of aiding all concerned in the development of these instrumentalities and the character of service rendered the people.

I might add further in this connection that there seems to be a growing suspicion, on the part of our people, that the remedies provided by law to correct the abuses referred to above, are inadequate and that the State, instead of protecting the individual, is gradually assuming the position of guardian of special interests to the detriment of the common good. That such a feeling is becoming more common, everybody, except the public service corporations, seems to recognize. This is extremely unfortunate, as it will, unless corrected, ultimately result in disaster to all concerned.

LABOR

Conditions during the past two years have been ideal for the laboring man. To be sure, the price of rent, clothing and food has been very high but, to my mind, no higher than wages. There have been many disturbances in the labor world, but most of them have been local and have affected a comparatively small number of persons.

Our laws relative in this subject are, as a general rule, humane and just. Considerable sentiment has been engendered in certain parts of the State for the enactment of a law similar to the Industrial Relations Court Law of Kansas. I do not believe such a law is wise or sound and hope there will be no unnecessary agitation of the subject. There are a few thoughts, however, in this connection which I may suggest for your consideration.

Our arbitration law is of little value as now written. What is most needed in cases of industrial troubles is an enlightened and impartial public sentiment. In order to prevent one-sided and biased reports becoming current, there should be some tribunal clothed with power to subpoena witnesses and to make an impartial investigation and publish a report in order that public sympathy and public sentiment may aid in the solution of the problem involved. I believe some such plan will tend greatly to stabilize conditions and protect the innocent and force the wrongdoer to a satisfactory settlement.

TRUCK ACCOUNT

Shortly after the adjournment of the Seventh Legislature, the Federal Government, through the Department of Agriculture, proposed to give to the several states large quantities of War Material to be used on the highways. Accordingly, requisition was made for the portion allotted to this State; in fact, Oklahoma was among the first of the States to apply for and receive this material. Inasmuch as the Seventh Legislature had no knowledge of the gift of this material, no arrangement and no appropriation was made for the handling of the same, so that, when one whole train load of trucks arrived, the Highway Department, without a dollar that could be used for that purpose and without a man available, and with no storage facilities, was compelled to improvise a system for the handling of this property. On my advice and with my approval, the Commissioner of Highways borrowed from the Liberty National Bank of Oklahoma City, the sum of \$20,000 which was placed in and used thereafter as a revolving fund and which has enabled us to secure, without the cost of a penny to the State, approximately one and three quarter million dollars' worth of new or practically new, material for the use of the State and its various agencies.

The Department has been unnecessarily embarrassed in the handling of this material by some who desired to handle the money through the regular channels. Had the Department been compelled to do so, we would not have been able to secure our apportionment of material but the same would have been lost to us. We were under obligation to pay freight, loading and unloading expense and necessary repairs. This was a requirement of the Government.

By and with the advice of the State Engineer and others qualified to know, a system was adopted whereby a reasonable charge to counties and other municipalities was made on this material, such charge being estimated at what was designed to be the pro rata share of expense on each item of material. The counties were glad to get the material for such a small charge and, so far as I know, everybody is satisfied.

Due to the manner in which the material was handled, however, and the smaller repair charge than was anticipated, it was found that the revolving fund made a profit and, on December 27th, 1920, there was in said fund the sum of \$38,165.21.

Had the Department been compelled to deposit these funds in the Treasury and wait for it to be re-appropriated or had we been unable to handle these items through and by the improvised revolving fund, the State could not have taken advantage of the war material thus offered. The balance of the fund is on deposit with the liberty National Bank of Oklahoma City, subject to your orders. Regular interest on the daily balance has been paid at the rate of 3 per cent as provided by law in similar cases.

In addition to allotting Trucks to all counties desiring same, I have awarded to each of the State institutions, such number as they could use with advantage, effecting, thereby, increased efficiency in their service. This latter allotment is temporary only, and on condition that the trucks be used on the highways adjacent to the institution for a reasonable amount of time each year.

There yet remains on hand a large store of road building material, including many trucks. Having no storage facilities, much of this is exposed to the weather. I am submitting as a separate document a full, complete and detailed inventory, audit and report of this transaction and respectfully request that you give the same such attention as its importance requires.

It is only just to here express my thanks to the Liberty National Bank for the courtesies and favors shown the State in furnishing the necessary money and facilities for handling this account.

This division of Highway Department has not yet completed its work; there is much valuable material to be received from the Government. I recommend, therefore, that a small revolving fund be provided by law for this purpose.

SALARIES

Six months ago I was of the opinion that a general revision of our salary schedule would not only be proper but absolutely necessary. It is a matter of common knowledge that public servants in Oklahoma are inadequately compensated. This applies to both county as well as State. However, events of the past 90 days have forced me to consider the situation from a different view point, and it is my present judgment that we should go very slowly in the direction of a general increase in salaries. There are few officials, however, whose salaries should be increased even at this time. The salaries of District and Superior Court Judge should be increased to \$5000.00 per year with expenses when out of their district on official business. There are some other places in the State Government that should be cared for but I will suggest them, at the proper time, in the Budget.

I feel that provision should also be made for a reasonable increase in the salaries of county officers, as in most cases the present sum allowed is wholly inadequate and will not attract or hold efficient men and women.

RETIREMENT OF STATE BONDS.

On December 27th, 1920, the State had outstanding the following bonds:

1908	Issue	\$ 980,000.00
1913	Issue	<u>1,992,900.00</u>
	Total	2,972,900.00

During this fiscal year, the State Treasurer under and by authority of Chapter 207, 1919 Session Laws, purchased \$889,100.00 of the 1913 issue and \$42,000.00 of the 1908 issue at 95 cents on the dollar in the open market. This discount did not represent an impairment of the credit of the State, but on the other hand, the opportunity to retire the bonds at a discount was the result of prevailing conditions of the market affecting Liberty and all other bonds. These bonds have been cancelled with a discount saved to the State on the bonds so far purchased amounting to \$46,555.00 while the unpaid interest coupons attached to same and cancelled, amount to \$372,050.25. Such amounts are saved to the tax payers of Oklahoma.

The sinking fund will be continuously used for the purpose of retiring the State's indebtedness unless otherwise provided by law. It is a matter of public interest that such a large part of the State's indebtedness has been redeemed, and I trust that Oklahoma may soon be in a position to say that it is entirely free from debt.

There is, at this time, Public Building Bonds outstanding in the sum of \$1,825,000.00, but it can not be said that this is a debt of the State inasmuch as it is a charge against specific public lands.

SCHOOL LAND DEPARTMENT.

It is a genuine pleasure to be able to compliment those in immediate charge of this important department. Few people realize the magnitude of this great agency of the State. I call your attention to the detailed report of its activities which is submitted herewith as a separate document. I cannot refrain from submitting a few facts, relative thereto, for your immediate information.

During the time between January 13, 1919, and June 30, 1920, the Secretary has received 51560 separate cash items, or a total of cash, in the sum of \$15,696,163.80; There has been collected from the sale of land and town lots the sum of \$198,017.22, on notes on land previously sold \$2,398,154.54 and rents on State lands \$323,490.17; During this period approximately 187300 acres of land have been leased for oil and gas purposes by the State and the following sums have been received: Bonuses, \$1,448,732.81; Royalties, \$765,088.05 and Rentals \$187,897.36, making a total of \$2,401,718.22. As fast as the money is received from the sale of lands and from the returns of oil and gas leases, it is transferred to the Loan Division and loaned to the farmers of the State at the rate of 5 per cent, per annum, interest. During the above

period, we have made 3268 loans, same totaling the enormous sum of \$7,495,384.00; During this period, the total amount of interest collected was \$2,934,716.49, of which sum there was apportioned to the common schools of the State \$1,986,135.81, to the State University. A. & M. and other colleges \$396,174.81, the balance of said interest being credited to funds held in trust by this office; while the income from this office is either distributed to the schools of the State, or credited to trust funds, the general revenue of the State has received from fees, for application for loans, examining titles, making transfers, certified copies of patents and other records, the sum of \$58,597.75.

HOME OWNERSHIP LAW.

Chapter 194, Session Laws of 1919, is a law to promote and encourage Home ownership. It did not become operative until July 1st, 1920, yet, during the brief time it has functioned, it has demonstrated its usefulness and the results, so far, have been highly satisfactory.

By the provisions of the Act, a direct appropriation of \$250,000 was made available for loan purposes, augmented by the sum of \$260,125.69 (refunds and escheats) but which latter can be used only as a guaranty fund. The first loan under the provisions of this Act is made out of the common school funds; The second loan out of the Home Ownership Fund. Since July 1st, 1920, loans have been made aggregating \$95000.00. Literally thousands of applications are on file and this sum must be augmented by some means in order to meet the requirements of those who desire to become Home Owners.

In these days of tenantry, the State and nation can do nothing of greater benefit than to encourage heads of families to become owners of homes and to the greater development and vitalization of this great idea, I invite your most earnest consideration.

AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC.

The enormously increased number of automobiles and the undoubted permanency of the traffic has brought many and complex problems which we have not yet had time to discuss or solve. The law of the road, especially in relation to motor vehicles, needs a complete revision. The failure of towns and cities to properly regulate this traffic is to be very much regretted and, to my mind, the State must re-enter the field and assume supervision, at least, in the interest of public safety.

Here in Oklahoma City (and the same is true, in a greater or less degree, in all towns and cities) the death toll, due to wilfull carelessness in handling automobiles, reaches unusual and exasperating numbers. While it is primarily the duty of municipalities to handle this subject, the State, nevertheless, retains jurisdiction sufficient to assist in bringing relief and it is my firm conviction that some general law should be enacted regulating

- a. The general conduct of all cars on all public throughfares.
- b. A system of licensing drivers which will, among other provisions, prohibit the inexperienced, incapable and wilfully reckless person from driving cars.
- c. Provide for the arrest and detention for 20 days or more any car causing an accident or guilty of negligence, such detention to be at the expense of the car, regardless of driver or owner and to be in addition to penalty for driver or person chargeable with the accident or damage.
- d. Provide that, in all cases of damage occasioned by automobile, the car causing the same shall be immediately taken possession of and held to indemnify the person damaged, insofar as possible.
- e. Add by statute to all policemen, constables, deputy sheriffs, and sheriffs, as well as all special officers, the specific duty of enforcing state laws on this subject and provide an easy method of redress for any person aggrieved against any officer failing to do his duty.
- f. A more stringent and workable anti-automobile theft law. It is too easy for a thief to sell a stolen car. The law in this respect can be easily developed and made operative.

RED RIVER CASE.

With the discovery of oil in the Burkburnett field on the south side of what is commonly denominated the Red River, came a controversy relative to the ownership of the bed of said Red River. This controversy reached its climax shortly after the adjournment of the Seventh Legislature. Its seriousness was not anticipated by anyone prior to the time of the adjournment of the Legislature, and naturally preparations were not made looking to such a contest as that which shortly followed. As soon as oil was discovered in the bed of the River, great confusion ensued, and for a period of several months it looked almost as though civil war could not be averted between the States of Texas and Oklahoma. Frequent request and demands were made on me by the judges and sheriffs in Oklahoma Counties affected, for military aid in order to avoid an armed conflict. Frequent conferences were held between the authorities of the two States, looking to an amicable settlement of the difficulty. After ascertaining that such settlement with the Texas authorities could not be obtained. The Attorney General was directed to prepare and file an original action in the Supreme Court of the United States, praying that the boundary line be definitely fixed, and that the State of Texas and citizens be enjoined from interfering with property belonging to this State and with our citizens. The Supreme Court took jurisdiction and the United States Government intervened. At the same time application was made for the appointment of a Receiver. The Supreme Court appointed Mr. Frederick A. Delano, as Receiver, who immediately took possession of the disputed territory, and now holds the same by virtue of an order issued by the Supreme Court of the United States. In the meantime Texas has answered the bill of complaint filed by the State of Oklahoma, and the United States has also answered and set up its claims.

The case has been hard fought, and is one of very great importance to the people of this State. An oral argument in the Supreme Court, December 13th was had, and we are expecting a decision in the very near future.

The Attorney General has used a goodly part of his contingent fund in this matter, and in addition thereto, I have issued a deficiency certificate in his favor in the sum of \$15,000.00 for the purpose of defraying the necessary expenses of this action.

It is the contention of the State, that under the provisions and treaty between Spain and the United States, that the south bank of the Red River, as it existed at the time the treaty was signed, is the true boundary line between the State of Texas and Oklahoma. The correctness of our position in that respect can hardly be questioned, and while it is impossible at this time to say when this litigation will be ended, and just what the cost thereof will be, yet I hope that before the session closes, additional information may be had that will enable you to make suitable and ample provisions for the protection of the State's sovereignty.

I might add I am reliably informed that the State of Texas has appropriated \$100,000.00 for this purpose, and that the Government of the United States expended something like \$60,000.00.

CONFEDERATE PENSIONS.

The appropriation made for Confederate soldiers' pensions by the Seventh Legislature was insufficient to carry out the instructions and intentions of that body. The demands will require \$400,000.00 per year for the next biennium and I respectfully request that necessary appropriation therefore be made.

In this connection, permit me to suggest that this burden will not be on us very long. These old heroes are all very old men, the majority being over 80 years of age, and the pitiful little sum given them, while thankfully received, is scarcely sufficient to enable them to keep body and soul together. I know the generosity of the people of this State will warrant you in making provision for their comfort and needs during the few years they are permitted to remain with us.

HOSPITAL FOR DISABLED SOLDIERS.

There is an insistent demand for adequate hospital service for our soldiers who served in the world war. No provision has been made by the State to meet the ever-increasing requirements of these soldiers and the service offered by the Federal government is not only inadequate, but, for many reasons is wholly unsatisfactory.

I need not remind you of the deserts of these young men. We were exceedingly proud of them when, in the dark days of the war, they abandoned their professions, their business or other avocation and offered their all on the altar of their Country. We, who remained at home, were profuse in our promises to them and their dependents, to care for them and to show them every preference upon their return. They fulfilled their obligations nobly, and, by their efforts and sacrifices, saved civilization. That part is safe, as history will accord them just and honorable record. But our part of that terrible struggle is not yet complete. We owe them the solemn and continuing duty of caring for them in sickness and adversity. It is up to us to make good, even as the soldiers made good and we will not be free from censure until their wants are fully supplied.

My information leads me to believe that one of the pressing needs is a hospital of not less than 500 beds, wherein our own soldier boys can be properly cared for and restored, so far as possible, to health and happiness. The federal government has promised to equip and maintain the same at Government expense and to pay the State, as rental therefor, the sum of ten per cent of the cost thereof, for a period of ten years, thus leaving the State the owner of the hospital fully equipped at the end of that period. There is great need of such an institution and we are obligated to provide the same and I feel sure that the wishes of the soldier boys in this respect will find a patriotic and ready response from the members of the Legislature.

SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL.

Under the Provisions of Chapter 4, Session Laws of 1919, I appointed Mrs. Thos. H. Owen, Gen. Roy Hoffman, Dr. Chas. Evans, and Hon. Geo. F. Southard as members of the Soldiers' Memorial Commission.

During the past year, the Commission has held many meetings and has accomplished much in the perfecting of plans to carry out the object of of the statute. A full and complete report is ready for submission to you and will be submitted separately and I most earnestly request that due consideration be given to this most worthy project.

HEALTH LAWS.

The last Legislature developed the Health Department considerably, and by reason thereof much good has been accomplished for the people of, the State in the prevention and eradication of disease and sickness. The Department is yet under-developed, and needs assistance to enable it to more completely function.

I also call attention under this head to the appropriation that was made for co-operation with the Federal Government in the development of the bureau of interdepartmental hygiene for the treatment of venereal diseases. I suggest that the proper committees consult with the State Commissioner of Health, Dr. A. R. Lewis, and with the Federal Director, Dr. J. C. Mahr, concerning the many activities of this Department, and I bespeak for this department your cordial assistance, and support in the matter of necessary appropriations to continue this good work.

SPECIAL SOLDIERS' RELIEF.

Under the provisions of an Act passed by the extraordinary, 1920, session of the Legislature, an appropriation of \$20,000.00, to be expended under the order of the Governor was made for the immediate relief of soldiers of the late war. I have expended of that sum only Three or Four Hundred Dollars, and this only in extreme emergency cases. The demand made upon me for relief under the provisions of this Bill were so great that it was utterly impossible to meet the same without discriminating unjustly between the various claimants. I have, however, utilized the State University Hospital as far as possible in the treatment of these cases, but its capacity

being limited, it is not in a position to handle the large number of deserving soldiers who require treatment. Our hospital facilities in this respect are totally and wholly inadequate, and I am calling your attention to this fact in order that you may, if you so desire, direct the expenditure of the balance of this fund in some other manner than that which I have seen fit to use it for.

BUILDING AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS.

I recommend an amendment to our banking laws that will permit the various Building and Loan Associations of the State to recommend the appointment of qualified persons for the position of Building and Loan Auditor, and I also suggest that, in order to secure the services of qualified persons for the place, the salary (paid by examination fee) be increased to not less than \$4,000 per year and expenses.

The State should render every possible aid to these worthy institutions and inasmuch as they pay the expense, they certainly should be allowed all reasonable and necessary assistance.

BANKING LAWS.

The only change in our present banking laws that I care to recommend is that part which regulates the number of Bank Examiners and their salary. With more than 600 State Banks it is impossible with the eight examiners allowed, to keep the work up to date and this is especially true when the salaries paid for this work is considered. It is impossible to keep competent help long under present salary schedule. Inasmuch as the salaries can be paid for examination fees and inasmuch as the banks carry this burden anyway and are demanding this change, I can see no good reason for refusing to make it.

DEFICIENCIES

Under the provisions of law, I have issued the following Deficiency Certificates which are now outstanding and should be cared for, to-wit: Deficiency Certificate issued for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1920, in addition to those that were cared for by the Extraordinary Session of the Legislature.

No. 42.	March 11, 1920, in favor of Pension Commissioner. For necessary clerical assistance, supplies and traveling expenses, on account of no adequate provision having been made therefor by the Legislature	\$1,000.00
No. 43.	March 13, 1920, in favor of Ida Rolater, as a settlement for the release of the old University Hospital and Medical School, said release being acquired through a compromise by the State Board of Affairs and the Board of Regents of the University on one side and Ida Rolater on the other. In the year 1911, the State entered into a contract with Ida Rolater for the use and occupancy of a hospital for the benefit of the medical school, said contract to run ten years at a rent of \$500.00 per month, the State to maintain and keep all repairs on said hospital. After the new hospital was completed, the State no longer desired the use of the old one, although the lease did not expire for nearly three years and it was for the purpose of canceling said lease that this settlement was made. The settlement was approved by me as being for the best interests of the State and this deficiency certificate was issued accordingly, without which no settlement could have been made.....	\$17,748.13
No. 44.	March 19, 1920, in favor of the Highway Department for operating and expenses. For details see certificate.....	\$20,000.00

No. 45.	March 22, 1920, in favor of the State Treasurer for additional help	\$1,200.00
No. 46.	April 8, 1920 in favor of the A. & M. College for the purpose of equipping the new chemistry building and to aid in maintaining the summer school; also, for the purpose of equipment from the Government for the Engineering Department. The Engineering building had been completed and was ready for occupancy but no funds had been provided for its equipment. The loss of the use of the building for one year would have followed had not equipment been provided. There would have been no summer school without the provision hereby, made. \$1223.00 was used for the purpose of purchasing equipment from the United States Government which was secured at the nominal cost of fifteen cents on the dollar.....	\$16,223.20
No. 47.	April 7, 1920, in favor of Department of Labor for aid in the operation and maintenance of the several free employment Bureaus in this Department.....	\$500.00
No. 48.	April 6, 1920, in favor of the Northwestern State Normal This aid was rendered necessary in order to enable said school to finish its term, the maintenance fund provided by the last Legislature being only \$8,000.00. The Deficiency was recommended by the President of the School, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education.	\$3,000.00
No. 49.	April 8, 1920, in favor of various District Judges of the State	\$11,000.00
No. 50.	April 10, 1920, in favor of the Insurance Commissioner For the purpose of vitalizing and putting into effect the State Hall Insurance law, Chapter 212, Session Laws of 1919, and for which, for some reason, the Legislature failed to provide.....	\$1,044.50
No. 51.	April 10, 1920, in favor of the Oklahoma State School for Blind For support and maintenance for said institution for the balance of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1920.	\$8,000.00
No. 52.	April 10, 1920, in favor of the State Training School for Boys at Pauls Valley	\$10,000.00
	For Maintenance and improvement.	
No. 53.	April 10, 1920, in favor of the D. B. & O. Institute located at Taft, Oklahoma.....	\$3,600.00
	For the balance of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1920.	

No. 54.	April 10, 1920, in favor of East Central Normal, Ada For equipping the new building so that it could be used, no appropriation for this purpose having been made.	\$4,000.00
No. 55.	April 10, 1920, in favor of Board of Managers for the Eleemosynary Institutions..... For traveling expenses of the State Agents employed by said Board.	600.00
No. 56.	April 10, 1920, in favor of the Board of Managers for the Eleemosynary Institutions..... For traveling expenses, etc.	\$600.00
No. 57.	April 10, 1920, in favor of the State Board of Public Affairs..... To cover expense occasioned by changing fuel from gas to coal at the State Capitol Heating Plant, which expense could not have been anticipated by the last Legislature.	\$9,000.00
No. 58.	April 13, 1920, in favor of E. W. Hardin, Secretary of the State Insurance Board, for deficiency in salary	\$742.92
No. 59.	April 13, 1920, in favor of State Board of Agriculture For traveling expenses of State Veterinarians for the purpose of putting into effect the provisions of the law relative to eradication of tuberculosis from live stock. No special appropriations was made for traveling expenses.	\$1,000.00
No. 60.	April 13, 1920, in favor of Confederate Soldiers' Home Ardmore, Oklahoma, for Maintenance.....	\$5,278.40
No. 61.	May 4, 1920, A. & M. College, Stillwater..... For paving certain streets on the campus.	\$6,500.00
No. 62.	May 6, 1920, in favor of Confederate Soldiers' Home, Ardmore, Oklahoma..... For maintenance for balance of fiscal year.	\$2,500.00
No. 63.	May 10, 1920, in favor of the State Fire Marshal, for necessary expenses in the prosecution of work in that department.....	\$1,000.00
No. 64.	May 20, 1920, in favor of the State School of Mines, Wilburton, Oklahoma This deficiency certificate and several others hereinafter mentioned that were issued in favor of this school, are not, in fact, deficiencies at all. This School has been designated as a school to which a large number of disabled soldiers have been sent by the Federal Government for educational purposes. The Government pays their tuition but the revolving fund law, which applies to the conduct of the revolving fund of this school does	\$1,259.87

not permit the expenditure of this fund for any other purpose than for teachers, and it became and was necessary that the money received from the Federal Government be used for other expenses than the employment of teachers and, there being no other way that the school could avail itself of the money derived from the Federal Government, and it being essential that the school be reimbursed for the expense it was put to by the soldiers, it became necessary to cover the money thus received from the Federal Government into the State Treasury, all of which has been done, and in lieu thereof I have issued Deficiency Certificates from time to time for an amount equal to, but not in any exceeding, the amount thus received from the Federal Government. By so doing, the school has been able to operate and care for the soldiers.

No. 65.	May 22, 1920, in favor of C. A. & N. University at Langston For expense of furnishing new dormitory for which no appropriation had been made.	\$9,250.00
No. 66.	June 7, 1920, in favor of the Pension Commissioner To pay Deficiency in Confederate Pension appropriation.	\$35,000.00
No. 67.	June 7, 1920, in favor of University Preparatory School, Tonkawa..... For the purpose of equipping Wilkin Hall, a new building for which no appropriation has been made.	\$18,739.66
No. 68	June 12, 1920, in favor of Commissioner of Highways For salaries and maintenance of Department.	\$5,000.00
No. 69.	June 18, 1920, in favor of D. B. & O. Institute, at Taft, Oklahoma..... For outstanding indebtedness against said institution.	\$6,973.58
No. 70.	June 18, 1920, School of Mines at Wilburton..... See explanation Deficiency Certificate No. 64. The following Deficiency Certificates were issued for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1st, 1920:	\$1,507.98
No. 1.	July 19, 1920, in favor of the Department of Labor for the use of Emergency Employment Bureau. On representations made, I find that the appropriation available for this purpose was not sufficient to carry on work and inasmuch as it is a matter of great and pressing importance, I granted the Deficiency Certificate and thus enabled the work to be carried on.	
No. 2.	July 19, 1920, in favor of the Highway Department The last Legislature, thinking, perhaps, that the road bond issue would carry and that the department would be financed by that	\$10,000.00

method, failed to made the necessary appropriations for the conduct of the Highway Department and I have been compelled, during the year, to issue Deficiency Certificates from time to time and in such sums as would enable that Department to function.

No. 3.	<p>July 22, 1920, in favor of the Superintendent of Public Instruction</p> <p>For salaries and traveling expenses of Highschool Inspectors. By an inadvertence, this item was omitted from the last general appropriation bill and inasmuch as it had always been the practice of the State to require this work to be done and it being a very necessary and important work, and one that cannot well be neglected, I issued this certificate accordingly.</p>	\$9,700.00
No. 4.	<p>July 22, 1920, in favor of the State Board of Agriculture to care for some contingent expenses that had not been properly filed in time to be paid in regular manner.....</p>	\$276.32
No.5.	<p>July 27, 1920, in favor of the State Highway Department for salaries and maintenance of the Department.....</p>	\$20,000.00
No. 6	<p>July 31, 1920, in favor of Oklahoma College for Women.....</p> <p>For furnishing and equipping the new dormitory, without which assistance, the new building could not have been used this year, and, inasmuch as the same was completed and ready for occupancy, I felt fully justified in making this provision for its use.</p>	\$11,000.00
No. 7.	<p>August 12, 1920, in favor of the State Board of Medical Examiners.....</p> <p>Because of a wholly inadequate provision by the last Legislature for the necessary expenses of the Board. Inasmuch as the fees collected by the board are covered into the State Treasury and the Board must depend upon specific appropriations for its expenses and the fees, as I am informed, exceed largely the expenses but cannot be used until appropriated by the Legislature, it became necessary to provide this means whereby the Board could operate.</p>	\$2,000.00
No. 8.	<p>August 19, 1920, in favor of Judge W. A. Collier, Pardon and Parole Attorney.....</p> <p>For traveling expenses incurred during fiscal year 1919-1920, but which claim was not presented in time for payment before the end of the fiscal year but which had been incurred prior thereto.</p>	\$34.58
No. 9.	<p>August 21st, 1920, in favor of the Attorney General</p> <p>For necessary expenses in Red River litigation. This litigation began after the adjournment of the last Legislature, and no</p>	\$15,000.00

appropriation was made therefore, and it became necessary for the State to protect its rights. I am reliably informed that the State of Texas, has appropriated and expended \$100,000.00 for this purpose, and that the Federal Government has spent upward of \$60,000.00.

No. 10.	August 30th, 1920, in favor of the Oklahoma State School of Mines at Wilburton..... For explanation see No. 64.	\$1,491.62
No. 11.	September 2, 1920, in favor of Oklahoma Military Academy at Claremore..... For the same reasons and for the same purposes as No. 64, relating to the State School of Mines.	\$622.68
No. 12.	September 8, 1920, in favor of the State Board of Agriculture For emergency funds to eradicate an anthrax epidemic in Pittsburg County.	\$10,000.00
No. 12-A	September 18, 1920, in favor of the State Board of Public Affairs To enable it to carry out the provisions of Chapter 298, Session Laws of 1919, in which Act no provision was made for the payment of taxes or for furnishing abstracts to the land authorized to be sold by said Chapter, and which could not be put on the market or the purpose of the Act carried out without provision being made to pay back taxes and furnish abstracts, and this certificate was issued for such purpose.	\$3,000.00
No. 13.	October 11, 1920, in favor of Chas. W. Dawson, Architect and Supervisor of Barracks Building at O. M. A..... This building should have been paid for in the regular course, but for the inability of the contractor to secure material on account of war conditions, and failure to secure material delayed the completion of the building beyond the fiscal year, and this claim could not be filed or otherwise cared for until after the close of the fiscal year.	\$754.06
No. 14.	October 12, 1920, in favor of the State School of Mines at Wilburton For explanation See No. 64.	\$1,763.87
No. 15.	October 18, 1920, in favor of the State Board of Agriculture For additional aid in preventing the spread of an epidemic of Antrax in Pittsburg County.	\$10,000.00
No. 16.	October 20, 1920, in favor of the Northeastern State Normal, Tahlequah.....	\$1,000.00

Under the provisions of House Bill 390, Chapter 240, Session laws of 1919, there was appropriated \$7,500.00 for the erection of a Home for the President of said School. Owing to the high cost of material and labor it was impossible to complete the building notwithstanding the fact that Prof. W. T. Ford, drew the plans and personally supervised the construction, preparing and using a large amount of second hand material which would otherwise have been wasted. In order to enable him to occupy the building it was necessary to expend an additional \$1,000.00.

No. 17.	October 18, 1920, in favor of the School of Mines at Wilburton .. For explanation see No. 64.	\$1,347.75
No. 18.	October 24, 1920, in favor of the Oklahoma State School of Mines, Wilburton..... See explanation No. 64.	\$1,641.99
No. 19.	November 29, 1920, in favor of the State Highway Department...	\$2,500.00

I am submitting herewith the original certificates, together with the evidence produced showing their necessity.

There is another item, for which no certificate was issued, but which should be cared for. It is a claim in the sum of \$7309.45 in favor of the Pinner Construction Company of Tulsa for final estimate on the barracks building at the Oklahoma Military Academy at Claremore. On account of inability to obtain shipments of material, the completion of the building was delayed until after the close of the fiscal year and claim was rejected solely on that account. There was sufficient money appropriated to pay the same but, because the claim was not presented in time, it was rejected. This is a just claim and the Company should be paid at once Original papers will be submitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

EXTENSION OF TAXES.

On account of the stringency of the money market, considerable demand exists for the extension of the date upon which taxes may be paid without penalty. So far as the State is concerned, such an extension can be made without injury, but, as to the various counties, cities, towns and school districts being able to stand an extension, you are in a better position than I am to know, and I submit the matter to you without recommendation except as above.

CODE REVISION.

Under the provisions of the Constitution, a revision of the Code should have been authorized at the last session of the Legislature, but, for some reason or other, it did not materialize.

This is a matter of grave importance, not only to the Bench and Bar but to every individual citizen. The laws of the State should be revised and codified, annotated and placed in one or two convenient volumes, and, inasmuch as this is a constitutional requirement, thus formally I call your attention to the matter and request that the subject be properly cared for.

NOTARY FEES.

The fee for Notary Public Commissions is now Two Dollars, which pays only about one-half the cost. This fee should be raised to Ten Dollars in order that the State should be fully reimbursed for the services rendered.

STATE CLAIMS AGAINST THE STATE.

I do not recall any claims against the State during this administration that have not been paid or that are in dispute as to their legality, but since statehood, every legislature has been compelled to spend much valuable time in the consideration of many disputed and some illegal claims. The same thing will happen again at this session.

There are some outstanding claims against the State that should be paid. It is almost impossible for the Legislature to determine which are, and which are not, just.

I, therefore, recommend that jurisdiction be conferred upon the Supreme (or some other) Court and that permission be given these claimants to sue on their claims. Surely, if the State owes an honest debt, it should be paid, and if it is an illegal claim, the Legislature should be informed in order that no further consideration be given to it.

WATERPOWER SITES.

In a very short time, all available water power sites will become valuable and most of them developed. It is of prime importance that necessary laws be enacted on this very important subject, looking to the development and conservation of this great source of energy and providing for the regulation of the use of the same, and to prevent these sites and this valuable power from going into the hands of a monopoly, as there is grave danger that it will do unless some action is taken by the State to prevent.

REVOLVING FUNDS.

I recommend that revolving funds be created in all state schools and institutions that are not now thus provided. To those of you who are unacquainted with this method of conducting the smaller business of these institutions, I suggest an investigation of the merits of the plan, well knowing it will meet your approval.

Nearly all state institutions are so equipped but a few are not and their efficiency will be greatly enhanced by the installation of small revolving funds.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS.

Our primary election law should be re-written. Personally I doubt the wisdom, in a government such as ours, of a mandatory primary law unless it be so perfected as to remove the many serious objections that we see in practically all those States that are following such procedure.

The main objection I have to our present primary law is that it defeats the very purpose of its original design by reason of the pernicious practices that have grown up and which now exist, and which, seemingly are incurable under the present law. I refer especially to the condition that permits unprincipled and designing men to engage the voters in a useless and, at times nauseating discussion of personalities, losing sight quite entirely, of the principles of government for which the candidate stands.

I recall with a feeling of shame the recent and other primaries in this and other states that degenerated into mud-slinging and abuse to such an extent that, after the primary was over, the people had no idea as to what principles and theories of government the candidates stood for. This tends to feuds, factions and ill feeling generally among the partisans of the various candidates, all of which might be tolerated were it not for the fact that the government, national, state and county, suffers by reason of these conditions.

If the present primary law is to be retained, it should be amended in many essential particulars, among which I might mention that sever penalties should be provided for the false and willful circulation of slanders concerning candidates. I do not mean to infringe, in the slightest degree, upon the liberty of free speech or free press, but this liberty should never be permitted to degenerate into a license and I would provide as they have in some states of the Union, that any candidate who wilfully utters a falsehood of and concerning his opponent should become immediately disqualified to receive the nomination himself.

I might go on and point out what, to my mind, are many other serious and vital defects in the present law, but neither time nor space will permit. There are matters that are apparent to all and are recognized by the people everywhere.

I believe our present law can and should be amended to provide a preferential convention with the delegates chosen at a direct primary. I have no pet scheme or plan in this respect, however, I am no longer personally interest in the subject, but, in the interest of good party government and in the interest of good government generally, I feel that the time has come when the people should have some protection to this very important matter and I, therefore, invite you closet and most careful consideration of the subject, in the hope that you may be able to formulate some plan that will eliminate the many patent objections that can be urged against the present system and to provide some method that will give the people a better opportunity to choose from the various candidates those who are best fitted, best qualified and most deserving to serve them in public office.

CONCLUSION.

The foregoing are some of the more important topics that I desire to call your attention to at this time. I shall, from time to time, as occasion and circumstances permit, avail myself of the privilege of submitting supplemental views on subjects omitted herefrom.

I desire to assure both Houses and each member, personally, that it is my earnest desire to co-operate wholeheartedly with you in the accomplishment of your manifold duties, and to render you every assistance that I can. You have an onerous and exceedingly difficult position to fill, yet I have the utmost faith in your patriotism and sound common sense and believe that you will be able to overcome all difficulties and to render the State and its people valuable service.

I remind you again of the dignity and importance of your position and urge upon you the necessity of permitting nothing to be done in your Body that would in the least detract from the same. Legislators, like other public servants, are compelled to meet many vexatious and unnecessary problems and to hear unjustified criticisms. This is one of the penalties that a public servant must pay, but there is no higher nor more important duty that can be rendered than that which you have been chosen to perform. The happiness and welfare of future generations depend upon the manner in which you discharge those duties, and, knowing you all as I do, I congratulate the people of the State upon their wisdom of selection.

I suggest that you take ample time for the performance of your duties and remember that "Rome was not built in a day," and that, while you may not be able to accomplish everything you now expect, yet that which in accomplished should be the result of a mature and ripened judgment.

I wish you each and all unqualified success and trust that the session may be harmonious and of great value to the people and the State.

Respectfully,

J. B. A. Robertson, Governor.

About Digitizing the Governors' State of the State Addresses

Section 9, Article 6 of the Constitution of Oklahoma provides as follows:

“At every session of the Legislature, and immediately upon its organization, the Governor shall communicate by message, delivered to joint session of the two houses, upon the condition of the State; and shall recommend such matters to the Legislature as he shall judge expedient.”

From statehood in 1907 to present, the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors have been recorded in pamphlets, booklets, and Senate Journals. One could not foresee the toll that time would take on the earliest of these documents. When these items first arrived at the Oklahoma State Archives, the leather bindings had dried considerably, cracking the spines significantly. Due to the acidity in the paper, many pages have darkened with age. Some of the more brittle pamphlets crumble at the slightest touch.

Thus when we decided to digitize these materials, we faced two challenges: the safety of the original documents and ease of viewing/reading for patrons. Our primary objective was that the unique and historic qualities of the documents should be reflected in the website. However, older fonts would not digitize clearly when scanned and even using a flatbed scanner could cause the bindings to worsen. An image of each page would increase download time considerably and any hand-written remarks or crooked pages could be lost. We decided to retype each document with every period, comma, and misspelled word to maintain the integrity of the document while placing some unique images of the documents online. Patrons can download the addresses quicker and view them clearer as well as save, print, and zoom with the Adobe Acrobat Reader. We have learned much from our efforts and we hope that our patrons are better served in their research on the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors.