

INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
OF  
BUREN R. SHERMAN,

GOVERNOR OF IOWA,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

TWO HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

---

JANUARY 12, 1882.

---

*PRINTED BY AUTHORITY OF LAW.*

DES MOINES:  
F. M. MILLS, STATE PRINTER.  
1882.

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

---

### FELLOW CITIZENS:

How best to control the State, minister to the wants, and equalize the burdens, political and social, of the people—is a question, the agitation of which has convulsed the world for centuries, and doubtless will continue for ages to come.

Essays and volumes and tomes have been written, political economists and statesmen, for all time and in every land have given serious study to the subject, and left on record the reflections of vigorous lifetime—yet we have not witnessed even a pause in the discussion, which must go on with increasing interest and power until the end is reached, if happily it ever be, and man's privileges conceded, and his rights guaranteed everywhere the sun of heaven splendors a universe with his rays. This study is an important and ever pressing necessity, and, fraught with so great moment, merits the thorough consideration of every citizen of the land; and it augurs well for the perpetuity of the country that the people throughout all our domain are improving in this respect, and each revolving year develops increased and yet increasing interest in this profoundest of all human reflections.

To us of Iowa the subject comes with renewed force. We are upon the threshold of a new era in our local system. We have just passed the stone marking the completion of another biennial period in our history, and are about to commence the new. The people have again given utterance to their convictions concerning public questions, and their senators and representatives here assembled, have come up clothed with supreme authority to do those things demanded by the

public, or necessary for their well being. I commend, therefore, this subject, in all its length and breadth to your considerate attention, convinced that the grave responsibilities which rest upon you have not been lightly assumed, but that stripped of all taint of selfishness, your acts will be inspired only by motives of loftiest patriotism, and the general good.

As a nation we have experimented for a hundred years upon a government based upon the free will of the governed; and by our own experience, and as well the knowledge gleaned by careful study of history, and from contemporaneous sources, have educated ourselves in the belief that a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, is best calculated for man's privileges and necessities, for thereto belongs all man's precious opportunities. To preserve these rights, and secure these liberties, handing them down in unabridged completeness to those who shall follow, becomes at once our solemn duty, as it should ever be our supremest pleasure; and this done, the plaudits of a generous people will be freely bestowed, as upon servants who, conscious of their high responsibilities, failed not in performance of their whole duty.

I do not deem it necessary at this time to enlarge upon matters which would seem to require legislative consideration, nor would it even be possible within the brief limits of a preliminary address. These have probably been mentioned in the message already given. And yet there are a few subjects, to which, but in few words, I must direct the earnest attention of the members of the General Assembly. Not the least important of these is that of

#### TEMPERANCE.

For many years this subject has been among the foremost in public discussion. The agitation has been continuing and increasing in all civilized countries, until at last it has become a matter of sufficient importance to induce legislative action; and I believe has found place

upon the statute books of all the States of the American Union, and doubtless of all the greater and progressive nations of the earth. It has attained that prominence that it cannot longer be ignored, inasmuch as the people, with more unanimity than heretofore, are moving to secure legislation. Naturally enough, and this is also true of every other public question, the people are divided in opinion as to the best methods to treat the subject, and until some authoritative declaration by them is made, their representatives will be unable to reach the root of the matter. All men desire that temperance shall obtain, yet differing how best to secure it. In order to afford opportunity for expression, and in compliance with what seemed a very general desire of the people, the dominant political party in Iowa, has solemnly declared in favor of submitting to a free vote of the people, the question whether or not a prohibitory amendment shall be engrafted upon the organic law. The last General Assembly passed the resolutions necessary to that end, and as required by the Constitution itself, the same has been referred to the present legislature, and if there adopted, will be submitted to general vote. I am unequivocally in favor of like action. I am in favor of the honorable performance of all proper pledges made to the people; and this question legally submitted, the responsibility rests with the citizen in his individual capacity, untrammelled by party pledges, uninfluenced by party fealty, and free from party considerations. I am in favor of submission for another reason: the right of the people to be heard upon all questions affecting the public welfare. It is the very corner-stone of our political fabric, and the right preservative of all rights.

#### AGRICULTURE.

Attention is invited also to the desirability of additional legislation in advancement of the agricultural interests of the State, and in better development of our superior agricultural and mineral resources. The majority of the people are persons engaged in such pursuits, and



the investments in such property exceed all other interests. It is important, therefore, that thorough and reliable information be disseminated touching the general subject, and I am impressed with the belief that it is the duty of the State to interest itself more fully in this behalf, to the end that our "foundation principle," the reliance of our people, and their chiefest industry, should receive that considerate attention its great importance demands. Notwithstanding our high rank as an agricultural State—the fifth in the Union—there is no department of our State government devoted, either in whole or in part, to the betterment of these great interests, and I suggest for the consideration of the General Assembly, the propriety of establishing a Department of Agriculture and the appointment of a Secretary therefor, who should be charged with such duties in that relation, and also in respect to the manufacturing and mining interests of the State, as would best conduce to the end desired. The advantages which would result to our entire Commonwealth through the vigorous administration of such a bureau could not be overestimated.

Akin to this matter, and of quite equal importance, is that of

#### TRANSPORTATION.

a subject which rightfully occupies a large share of public attention. Every citizen is more or less interested in its decision. However fertile may be our prairies—however abundant their products—let our infant industries grow into never so grand proportions, and the results of our skilled labor never so great, the ultimate of all these depends upon the public market, and the facilities thereto. Therefore the extreme sensitiveness of the public mind in relation to this great matter, which has heretofore given expression in a feeling that the government should exercise its authority in adjustment of the rights of all its citizens; an authority which has been recognized by the highest court of the country. Experience has seemed to demonstrate that an absolute and inflexible tariff law is equitably impossible, and the

tendency has been towards what is known as the "commissioner system," now being tried in our own as well as several other of the States. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable us to form a conclusion as to the efficacy of this system, and therefore I favor testing it with real thoroughness. The law now upon our statute books is yet new, and may be crude; and time is required to demonstrate the necessity of revision. It is a matter of vital importance to the State, and I commend it to the serious study of the people. During the past year, but two other States have constructed as many miles of new railroad as has Iowa, and at least five millions of foreign capital has been permanently invested in our State through this increase. The commission may, I think, be popularized by bringing it more nearly into intimate relations with the people, and their principal employments, by a requirement that at least one of its members should be a representative of the producing classes, which would more fully install it in the respect and confidence of the people.

I am hopeful that the national government will yet exercise its supreme authority, and through a judicious federal commission effect those adjustments impossible to State action. This done, the whole question becomes of comprehensive and satisfactory solution, and the divergent interests of all parties, and all sections of the country, brought into harmonious and equitable settlement.

It is gratifying also to note the deep public awakening concerning the better improvement of our great rivers, the natural highways of the nation—which so immediately affects all the interests of the great West. This, of course, can only be accomplished through federal action, but I trust our representatives in Congress, who should be in complete accord with public sentiment now so thoroughly aroused to this matter, will take the initiative, and by vigorous presentment secure those appropriations necessary to a proper development of those internal commercial arteries, the resultant of which would tend so much to the benefit of the whole country. Iowa looks with superior

concern upon all these movements, in confident faith that the demands of the West, the granary of the nation, and a very nation in itself, shall receive thoughtful and wise consideration.

#### THE COMMON SCHOOLS.

When, some years since, it was proposed to open wide the door, and give to the children of all classes of the people equal opportunities to education, and that the entire expense thereof should be paid by general taxation, it was seriously and bitterly objected that such proposed legislation was beyond legislative authority, without constitutional warrant, and manifestly prejudicial to the wealth of the country. Experience has demonstrated that the contrary was, and is, true. The experiment has been eminently satisfactory. The education of the masses is the surest reliance of the State, and everywhere free schools exist. Through their powerful enlightening influences and strong progression the integrity of our political fabric, the security to the enterprise of the citizen, and the equality and happiness of the people are solidly assured. Popular education has become firmly entrenched in the confidence of the nation, and there is no feature of our whole system so near to the general heart, nor regarded with such affectionate anxiety as the free public schools of the country. In our own Iowa we have made most gratifying progress in advancement of our schools, which compare favorably with those of any of our sister States; and yet perfection has not been reached. The best minds in the country are constantly engaged in an elaboration of the system, to increase its efficiency and enlarge its scope, thus making it possible for every youth in the land to secure the advantages of superior and thorough education. It is the proud boast of our countrymen that here we have no titles of nobility, no lordly possessions, nor aristocracy of wealth or office. The highest positions, political, business, or social, are equally attainable to all citizens, and that would be a woful day to the republic when the people become careless and ambitionless

and neglect participation in public affairs. To avert such calamity, and in upbuilding of public sentiment, we must sustain our educational system, which in its aggressive comprehensiveness has already reached out into every hamlet, and filled all classes with new inspirations, and which through all time will prove the very sheet-anchor to our liberties, as the free ballot is the corner-stone to our political structure. This general concern for the success of our common schools is conclusive of the superior culture of our people, which is further evidenced by the fact that the taxes necessary for their support, amounting to over four millions annually, or nearly three dollars per head to our entire population, and quite equal to all other taxation combined, is paid in better satisfaction than any other levy. Your 22,000 teachers are so many powerful and never failing agencies in the elevation of public morals, while the 11,000 public school-houses are so many mile-stones marking the progress of our people into the everlasting sunshine of liberty and virtue.

Therefore, all hail the common schools! the crowning glory of our State—at once the pride and pleasure of its every citizen!

Nevertheless, we have not yet reached the summit. Although nearly a half million children are in usual attendance, and reaping free yet priceless advantages through the educational facilities afforded, there is still a vast number, much too large a proportion of the whole, who do not attend the schools, but are coming up in ignorance, which must culminate in vice. The causes therefor are two fold. No doubt a few are prevented through the inability of parents to provide necessary clothing, but I am persuaded these cases are quite rare. By far the greater number are absent because of the carelessness of their guardians, which is really criminal neglect. I believe the time has come when the State may rightfully interfere in protection of these waifs, and compel their instruction in better ways, and in enkindlement of hope, through awakening the moral senses, and urging a laudable, yet dormant ambition. They have demands upon us, which, in the light



of our advancing civilization cannot, and should not, be ignored. Any legislation, therefore, which will effect to bring these truants into our schools, either public or private, would be in the interest of sound morals and public policy, and thus to good government, and add to the already enviable reputation of the State in matters educational. I trust the day is near at hand, when it shall be the legal, as now clearly the moral, duty of parents to present their children at school, thus saving them from vice, and, better than gold or precious ointments, establishing them in habits of industry—the harbinger of virtue.

#### THE PUBLIC CHARITIES.

Although attention has doubtless been called at considerable length to the public institutions, I cannot forbear a reference to the subject, because of its serious importance. The State of Iowa has been proverbially liberal in the management of her charitable institutions, and our citizens are wont to contemplate with pardonable pride the comfortable and really fine homes which are maintained at public expense for the accommodation of the unfortunates who need the care and protection of the State. We have not, however, done our whole duty. It is painfully evident the accommodations are insufficient, commodious though they be. The State is increasing rapidly in population, and with this growth come also additional burdens. Larger and better provision must be made to meet these demands. This is conspicuously true of both the Orphans' Homes, and the Asylum for Feeble-Minded Children. Additional buildings are greatly needed at each of these places, in order to the comfort and instruction of the inmates, and if these institutions are to be maintained at all, let it be done in a manner commensurate with the purpose, and creditable to the State. Both these charities appeal most strongly to our tenderest regard, and I commend them for special consideration. When appropriations are demanded for any of the public institutions, they should be granted only after satisfactory investigation of the necessity therefor, and then always in sufficient amount to accomplish the desired end. It is neither

economy nor statesmanship to appropriate only half the sum absolutely requisite.

The plan heretofore in vogue for the government of the institutions; viz., by trustees chosen by the legislature, is doubtless as nearly correct as can be devised. So far as my knowledge extends, the several boards have performed their duties in a manner creditable to themselves, honorable to the State, and probably with considerable economy. I have no disposition to disturb that system. However, believing that uniformity should obtain in the management of all public charities, and that supervision is desirable in respect thereto, I am in favor of a State Supervisory Board, to be appointed from the ranks of the experienced business men of the State, who should be clothed with authority to visit every State institution and inquire into its general condition and management. There can be no doubt but such a board, properly constituted, would richly repay its cost in the additional information which could be obtained, and that from an unprejudiced source—information so necessary to the General Assembly, in order to legislative action. Such a commission would prove a most valuable auxiliary to the Executive, who should have power, on approval of their recommendations, to compel compliance thereto. Thus uniformity, that great desideratum in all public matters, would be secured, and through uniformity, a better economy everywhere obtain. The cost for the support of the several State institutions, for the last term, not included in the Agricultural College, nor the Hospitals for the Insane, was over a half million dollars, and the expense of such a board would be trifling compared with the benefits which would inevitably flow therefrom. I am also decidedly of opinion that

#### THE PENITENTIARIES

should be placed under the same plan of government, and trustees chosen therefor. The cost of maintaining the prisons is steadily increasing, parallel with the growth of the State, and already amounts

to more than is expended for all other of the institutions, the hospitals alone excepted. A single board would suffice for both prisons, and if proper men were appointed to that trust the result could not but be gratifying. I venture to suggest, also, a reform in the manner of conducting our prisons, in respect to the hire of convicts. Penalties inflicted are for a double purpose; first, the punishment of the convicted party, and his possible reformation; and secondly, to deter others from like offenses. They should never be visited upon the innocent; and yet under our practice often fall heaviest upon the guiltless. The cases are frequent, where through the crime of the father, the wife and children are left penniless and destitute, and frequently dependent upon the cold charities of a strange world; a change whereby a part of the wages of the convict could be appropriated to the relief of his needy family, who undoubtedly have the first claim upon his services, and thus save them the experience of the alms-house, or a fate worse than death itself, would be in the interest of good morals, not to say of common humanity, and would, I believe, be approved by the people. I respectfully submit the proposition for consideration.

In another respect improvement can be made as to all public institutions—and that regarding the purchase of supplies. These expenditures should be made only after competition in open market, and upon estimates made and published. The practice of buying in piecemeal is reprehensible, because it is not only extravagant, but tends to looseness and loss.

Before leaving the subject I must briefly refer to what I believe to be mistaken practice in our treatment of

#### THE INCURABLE INSANE.

Because of the crowded condition of the hospitals it has latterly become frequently necessary to return to the proper counties those of the patients who are considered incurable, in order to make room for recent cases. These are usually confined in the alms-houses, and not

infrequently in the common jails; in either case an unfit place, where suitable attention cannot be given them. I do not believe such practice to be in keeping with the spirit of the age, nor consistent with the dignity of the State. If our hospitals are not sufficiently commodious, others should be built; but do not commit these incurable, and often dangerous, unfortunates to the tender mercies of the jailer, nor expose the inmates of our poor-houses to the peculiarities of madmen.

#### THE HIGHWAYS.

There is necessity for revision of our laws relative to the care of the public highways. With the best natural roads in the world it is painfully evident that the roadways of the State are not such as ought to be maintained. The experience of the past year has demonstrated that fact, and everywhere complaint is made that the sorry condition of the highways has very seriously interfered with the business of the people and their common convenience. The road taxes levied the past year amount to a vast sum, over a half million, exclusive of polls, and sufficient, properly expended, to bring a handsome return in improved ways. The trouble is, the work is done in piecemeal, frequently under incompetent and oftener careless supervision, and in large part by those who have no care in the matter save to put in the time and obtain credit for the day. I believe a betterment would result if the road taxes were payable in money as other taxes, and the expenditure made under authority of a township road-master who should be held to the same rigid accountability for faithful service as other officers. Any legislation in the direction of more efficient highway service would be hailed with sincere gratification by the whole people. The subject is one of grave importance, and merits the serious attention of every citizen, especially of those charged with the making of the laws.



## THE NEW CAPITOL.

I would be remiss in duty did I fail to speak of the necessity of an early completion of the new capitol. Already over a decade of years has been consumed in the work, and the end not reached. It is perfectly apparent that the old building now in use is extremely unsafe, either as a depository of the public records, or to the lives of the public officers who must remain there; and, therefore, the real necessity of speedy completion of the capitol, at least to the extent that it may be used to preserve the archives of the State. I feel sure the General Assembly will not assume the responsibility of further delay. The public records and the library of the State are of incalculable value, which, if lost, could never be replaced. I am not willing by silence in this regard to incur any responsibility in the matter. Everywhere the people are aroused to the importance of this work, and do not hesitate to express disappointment at the slow progress made. The State owes it to herself that this improvement proceed with greater dispatch than has heretofore characterized its progress.

Various other measures, more or less important, will be presented, and I bespeak for all the earnest and unselfish consideration of the General Assembly to the end that nothing be formulated into the laws, save in betterment of the people, and in development of the best interests of the State. The wants of the people, and the necessities of the State have vastly increased with each advancing year, and to meet these demands will require the greatest diligence and the exercise of every talent of our law-makers. Extraordinary efforts are necessary to secure results, before this of comparative easy accomplishment. As the people advance in knowledge, becoming more familiar with public affairs, and devoting more time and critical attention thereto, the more is expected of public officials; therefore my suggestions, in confident hope that the present legislature shall come up to the full measure of intelligent expectation.

The Iowa of to-day is a very empire, the joy of its every citizen, and containing within itself all the essential elements of political and personal greatness, which needs only the watchful and liberal care of the State to make it the realization of the hope of the most sanguine of its people.

Our growth in population and development, in resources and possibilities, has been without parallel, and it is not too much to say that our people have been exceptional in prosperity, as unrivalled in business energies. Our prairies, so lately a wilderness, are teeming with a population unusually intelligent and industrious, being constantly added to from the over-crowded East; and in the near future the many thousands of untilled acres, fertile beyond description, and only awaiting the touch of the husbandman, shall be made to laugh in abundant harvests, alike the joy and profit of the hardy pioneer. The products of our soil, yielded in such wonderful abundance, are sent to the uttermost parts of the globe to make glad the inhabitants of earth, and our very name has finally become the synonym for superiority and plenteousness, and the enterprise of the people has accomplished results none the less astonishing to ourselves than a marvel to the nation.

It was but yesterday that it was a debatable question, the propriety of a railroad through the State; to-day there are six completed and competing lines the entire length of the State, from the Mississippi to the Missouri; while the transverse lines and their divergents, reaching into the remotest parts of the State, evidence the growth and needs of the country. The aggregate of these is sufficient to gird with bands of iron one fourth of the earth's circumference, and all burdened with a constantly increasing traffic, beyond their capacity to perform. Yet new routes are being surveyed and additional work done, with even more rapidity than heretofore, until within the present year every county of our ninety-nine will be blessed with commercial facilities, thus practically annihilating space, and bringing every farm into immediate relationship with the business centers of the nation. Con-



gratulating you, people of Iowa, that your record as a State is practically beyond adverse criticism, and felicitating ourselves, as well we may, that our lot has been cast in such pleasant places, and among a people whose heroism in war received the homage of a world, as their accomplishments in peace have been the pride of the whole country, I forbear further comment.

To you, Senators and Representatives, is committed the care of all the varied yet vast interests of your constituencies. Coming so immediately from the people and imbued to completeness with a knowledge of the public necessities, I do not doubt your fidelity to your high trust, and that on the adjournment of the Nineteenth General Assembly the people will have cause to hold you in exceptional esteem, because of your sagacity and fidelity.

To me is intrusted the enforcement of the law. Recognizing with profoundest gratitude the confidence of the people in promoting me to the highest position within their gift, it shall be my chiefest aim to merit their generous favor. Having no other, as I could have no worthier, ambition I shall strive by faithful earnestness, and with all possible impartiality, to do my whole duty, so that it may truthfully be said of me, he was "faithful to his trust."

*Fellow citizens*, the success of all government depends at last upon the loyal efforts of the individual citizen. However perfect our system, however wholesome the law, however favored in surroundings, if the citizen be indifferent, and through his indifference the government falls into the hands of the few, thus sapping the very foundations of our theories, the superstructure must inevitably fall. I hold the doctrine that each who assumes the responsibilities of citizenship has grave duties to perform, from which he could not, and should not shrink; and so long as the citizen is vigilant in the demands and exercise of his political rights, no danger can ensue; the liberties of the people are secure, and the permanency of free government is assured.

BUREN R. SHERMAN.

# BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

## AUDITOR OF STATE,

TO THE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF IOWA.

OCTOBER 1, 1881.

---

W. V. LUCAS,

AUDITOR OF STATE.

---

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

DES MOINES:

F. M. MILLS, STATE PRINTER.

1881.