

**MESSAGE OF HIS
EXCELLENCY JOHN H.
BARTLETT, GOVERNOR
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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Message of his excellency John H. Bartlett, Governor New Hampshire by New Hampshire Governor

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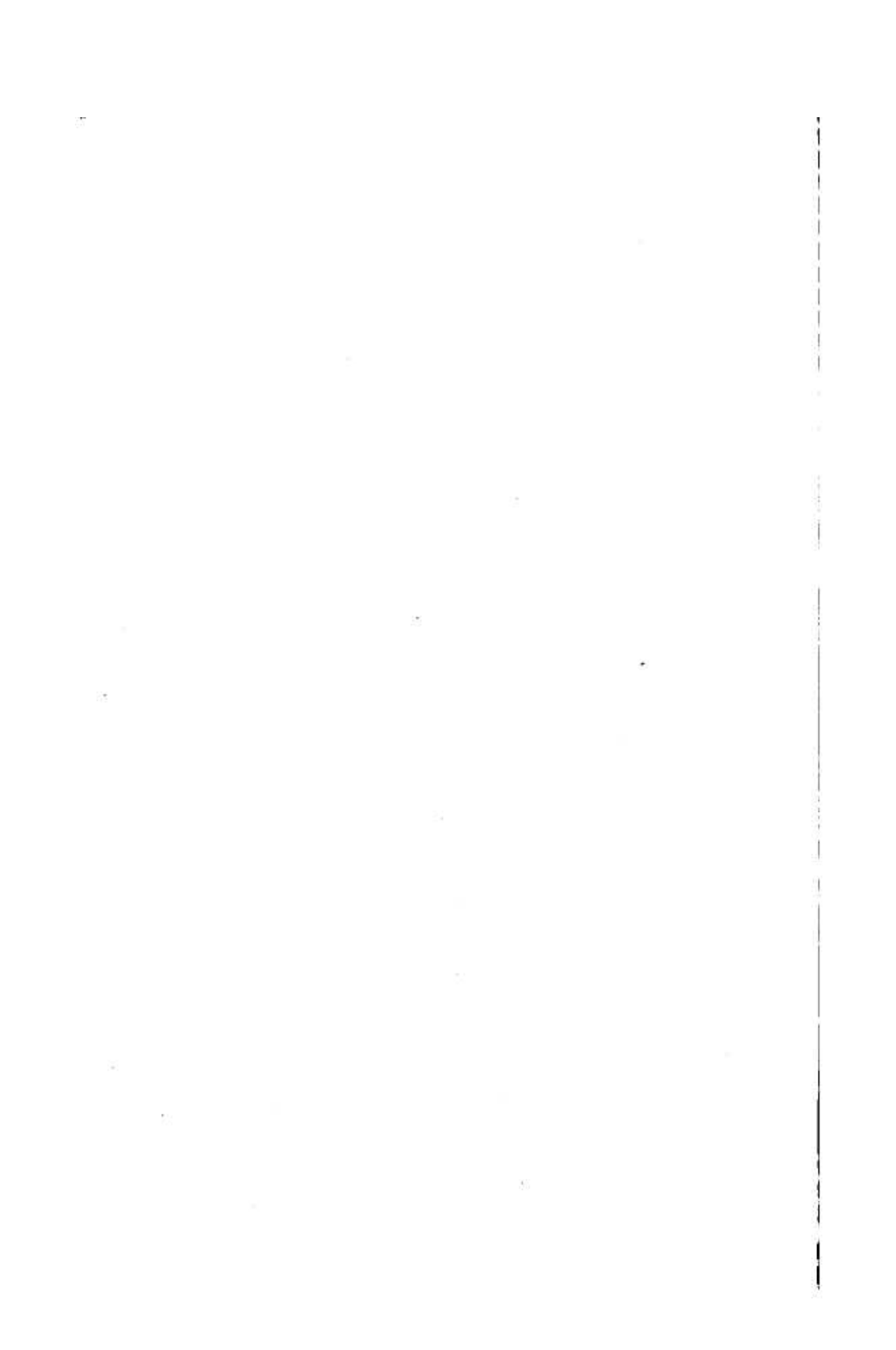
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NEW HAMPSHIRE GOVERNOR

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EXCELLENCY JOHN H.
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New Hampshire. Governor.

MESSAGE

OF

HIS EXCELLENCY

JOHN H. BARTLETT

GOVERNOR OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

TO THE TWO BRANCHES OF

THE LEGISLATURE

JANUARY 2, 1919

JANUARY SESSION

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GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

Senators and Representatives:

My first impulse is to express to you and your constituents a word of thanks for the great confidence with which you have summoned me to take this sacred oath, and for the loyal support which you have promised me.

With hearts of gratitude for the glorious dawn of peace, with a new sense of brotherhood, with an impelling feeling of thanksgiving to Almighty God, we are assembled here to again exercise and enjoy those sacred privileges of self-government which have been so securely preserved to us by the valor and blood of our sons, both living and dead.

A NEW DAY.

The voices of a splendid people have called us here as the new representatives of a new day.

They bid us to take up our work with studious fortitude, in the spirit of reappraising our state and our needs in this the new light of the best day the world has yet seen. They bid us to see the new viewpoint, and when our duty is thus determined to perform it in a fine spirit of valor,—such as was shown by our boys who have won our triumphs in arms.

We come rejoiced that our victory in war was complete; that our sacrifices have been small; and that we may still feel rich in the possession of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

RETURNING SONS.

I cannot fail to voice an official welcome home to all our living sons who offered themselves to their country. All that we can do for them shall be done. Neither can I fail to speak for you the most feeling word of thanksgiving, and also of consolation in memory of the lives of those heroes laid on the altar of freedom.

It is the duty of the nation, as an expense of the war, not only to care for those who have been made dependent by the war, but to furnish employment at once in public works and improvements, or support without work, those who are forced by the sudden transition of business from a war basis to a peace basis into want and distress through idleness. As one of the sovereign states of the nation, we ask this of the nation, and we are willing to do all we can as a state.

OUR GOAL.

Good government in a democracy is to provide what the people honestly want, and then levy taxes of some kind for payment. These two phases of the question must always be kept together. We should be reasonably sure the people do want each given thing, and then we should discover the best method of securing the necessary money. When that has been done, the executive function of the state should see that the people obtain those results without waste.

POWERS OF A LEGISLATURE.

You now have the power to reconstruct every item of our state government machinery within the limits of the constitution. When this legislature adjourns, if any of our laws and our methods of administering them are not right, regardless of when a law was enacted, the responsibility is on us. It is as bad to pass over and retain a law that is wrong as it is to legislate a new wrong.

HOW TO BEGIN OUR WORK.

The question of how to go to work under our powers to reach our goal comes first. My belief is that we should resolve ourselves into a kind of governmental school for study, by lectures, addresses and discussions, so that each and every one of us, however new to the business, may know the full situation and be able to pass judgment intelligently. Let no one say this is impossible. There are no questions here which we all cannot readily understand, if we study them.

ECONOMIZE IN OUR METHODS.

Our rules and forms should be simplified for new members which means a majority of you. Then no one should introduce a bill until after he has advised sufficiently to know it is not impossible or meaningless and not in bad form to print. We should not go to the expense of printing any bill until it has been carefully scrutinized and inspected so as to prevent the necessity of reprinting. We may thus reduce the number of bills perhaps one half and the printing bill one half and also save our time. Then we have paved the way for a program of careful study on the large, important matters which often go through almost unnoticed in the confusion.

FUNCTIONS OF A STATE.

The functions of a state are divided into legislative, executive and judicial. The constitution has carefully defined the legislative machinery and duties, and we cannot change them. You can change the judicial system but I strongly advise against doing so. The executive department, speaking broadly, deals with enforcing the laws and spending the money appropriated. This needs the most study by you. Primarily it consists in the governor and council.

SHALL THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL BE CHIEF EXECUTIVE?

The constitution of our state makes the office of governor the "chief executive." But the truth is, that the governor and council have been so stripped of their powers by a gradual process of "farming out" their powers to others, that, now, they are not only not the "chief" executives of the state, but in nearly all of the very important matters of finance where judgment and discretion are involved they are no executives at all. It is to a general study of this, to me rather surprising situation, that I wish particularly to recommend the attention of this reconstruction legislature. Believing that the people actually do not know how completely the hands of their elected executives have been tied, while, at the same time, they are held responsible, I now:

cite to you some of the facts with absolutely no reflection on anyone.

THE SUBJECT IS VITAL.

The importance of this subject is fundamental and vital. We are spending between two and three millions of money annually. It is a great business and should be managed from a central, directing and supervising authority at the head. I can think of no better illustration of my idea than to say that the relation of the governor and council to the fiscal affairs of the state should be similar to the relation of the president and directors of a large corporation to that corporation. I believe that the different agencies of the state having the expenditure of any considerable amount of money should be reasonably directed and supervised by the governor and council in much the same manner as the different departments of a corporation are directed and supervised. But this is not so with our state as the laws are now, and here lies what I regard as one of our great reconstruction problems, because this is a time when we are inspecting our whole structure even to the foundation stones.

TWO LAWS WHICH GO THE FARTHEST.

There are two departments which have the uncontrolled and unsupervised expenditures of nearly all our money in which discretionary powers are involved. They are the commission known as "The Trustees of State Institutions," and the highway commission.

WHERE THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IS ACTUALLY A SUBORDINATE.

The law which goes the farthest in setting up an almost absolute power of gigantic proportions within the state house, which is not only independent of the governor and council but superior to them in power, is the law which places a board in practically supreme control of all the affairs of the State's Prison, the State Hospital, the School for Feeble-Minded Children, the Industrial School and the Sanatorium.