

ADDRESS
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY
SAMUEL W. McCALL
TO
THE TWO BRANCHES
OF THE
LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

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ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the General Court.

We meet to-day under the shadow of a great war, which casts its sobering influence over us all. It touches more visibly the many thousands of households out of which our patriotic young men have gone to the camps and the battle line, but there is no one of our people who does not in his heart feel the supreme call which country makes and who does not recognize her cause to be his own. The war imposes responsibilities far from light, not only upon the officers of the national government but upon those who are charged with the work of conducting the government of States. I feel sure that you will agree with me, gentlemen, that it is our first duty to see to it that the Commonwealth shall do her full share, as she has always done whenever the nation has called upon her.

We must rigidly safeguard our credit, and carefully husband all our resources, in order that what we have may be available for the support of the country. I feel sure that we shall co-operate with each other and shall scrutinize most carefully all

appropriation bills, — cutting out expenses that are unnecessary, and conserving every resource of the Commonwealth. No one can foresee the extent of the demands the war will make upon us. They have already been great. They may become much greater. But when everything is at stake it would be worse than idle to count the cost. Let us remember that the \$100,000,000 or more of war taxes that the national government levies each year upon Massachusetts come out of the same pockets from which come the taxes that support our State government. By making our own taxes lighter we shall render it easier for our people to meet the calls of the nation. We have one duty before us and that is to maintain the position which the Commonwealth has always maintained in times of national danger, and do all in our power that our country may emerge victoriously from the trial through which she is passing.

Up to the first of January more than eighty thousand of the young men of Massachusetts had been mustered into different branches of the military and naval service of the nation. Our National Guard was sent out well disciplined, and through an appropriation by the General Court at the last session, made available for use by the executive, it was very well equipped. The elaborate machinery for the enforcement of the conscription act

was created; the enrollment of more than three hundred and fifty thousand men subject to the act thoroughly made, — the arduous work of selection and exemption performed, — and the quotas called for by the act were furnished when they were due. Important things have required attention in addition to the furnishing of the soldiers and sailors. Difficult problems have arisen relating to the civil population. The conditions which apply to the country, and especially to New England, are very different to-day to what they have been in any great war in which the country has been engaged. At the time of the Civil War the yield of the farms of New England was almost great enough to feed the people of New England. Her industries were kept in motion almost wholly by her water powers, and the wood from her forests provided fuel for the homes and for the operation of the railroads. Only a small amount of coal was brought each year to New England. But to-day we rely for much the larger portion of the food we consume upon far distant parts of the country. We require more than thirty millions of tons of coal each year which must be brought to us over long railroad hauls, or after a long voyage upon the sea. The jurisdiction of the Commonwealth is not broad enough to give us mastery over the supply of fuel and food, and we are greatly at the mercy of conditions which

we cannot control. But our anxiety is increased even if our responsibility is lessened and all the more is it necessary constantly to call into play forethought and judicious effort in order to provide for the needs of our people. On the tenth of last February our Committee of Public Safety was appointed, — the first committee of that kind in any State in the Union. This committee has developed a most effective organization. Under the leadership of its chairman, Mr. James J. Storrow, and its executive manager, Mr. Henry B. Endicott, it has helped greatly in the war work of the Commonwealth, and has rendered invaluable assistance in adjusting industrial disputes and securing fuel and food. The men upon this committee, however, are only representative of the great mass of citizens of the Commonwealth. Patriotism is everywhere. The desire to help the country is everywhere. The farmers have made sacrifices to augment the production of food. Large numbers of boys have volunteered to work upon the farms in order to supply the shortage of labor, and have given their services without pay. Lawyers, physicians, journalists, men of business, working men, — including the leaders of labor organizations, — judges upon the bench, earnest and patriotic women by the tens of thousands have eagerly sought avenues of service, and have helped make the Commonwealth a

compact and organized unit in supporting the country.

It is obviously our duty to subordinate everything else to the necessities of the war. New legislative programs, however meritorious, which call for the expenditure of public money or which mortgage our credit should be postponed. But the administration of the Commonwealth should lose none of its vigor. Our institutions, filled with helpless people, must be maintained, and the standard of their living should not be lowered. The cost of running our government will to some extent be made greater on account of the increased cost of supplies of every sort that we purchase. But the gross expense should not much, if any, exceed the expenditures of a year ago if we shall postpone the things which may wait until another day. Whether we shall need new taxes will depend upon the magnitude of the appropriations and upon whether the existing sources of revenue shall in any degree be dried up by the war.

I shall from time to time hereafter, as occasion may require, send to the Legislature recommendations with regard to taxation and to other subjects of legislation.

The Legislature at its last session authorized the Governor to organize a State Guard to protect the peace of the Commonwealth if our regular

military forces should be called out of the State. The wisdom of this action is now manifest, as the number of the National Guard remaining in the State service has dwindled to five officers and no privates. The services of the State Guard may not be necessary, but it constitutes a valuable insurance, for it would be manifestly unwise to have the State without armed forces when we are engaged in a great war. The members of the Guard have followed their work very industriously, and they have been made into a well disciplined and equipped army that does credit to the Commonwealth. I recommend that they have the full status of our militia until such time as our National Guard shall be returned to the service of the State.

The Commonwealth has assisted the towns in the vicinity of the national camp at Ayer in performing their police duties by guarding against the evil forces that are likely to be found near military camps. We have nothing to do with the government of the camp, but we may do very much with the moral sanitation of its neighborhood, and we may do very much in protecting the soldier when he is out of the camp against enemies that are as deadly as any he can meet upon the field of battle. I recommend that the amount of the appropriation made a year ago be increased so that the good work which has

been done may be continued and may be made more effective.

During the year ending June 30, 1913, which was the first year of the Workmen's Compensation Act, there was paid out to injured workers in the form of compensation and medical assistance \$1,667,000. In the year ending last June there was paid out over \$5,000,000 for compensation and medical treatment. This increase is great and appalling. During the last two years accidents have nearly doubled in number and severity. Reports indicate that since last June the increase has mounted to an even greater degree, — due in a measure to the supplanting of old and experienced workers by those who were inexperienced. It has been estimated that more people are now killed and injured in industry in the United States in a four-year period than were killed in battle or died of disease or wounds during the entire Civil War. This wastage of human life creates a heavy and an unpardonable drain in time of peace but it is even more deplorable in time of war. We should increase the safeguards against accidents. There is a great social loss in addition to the individual loss which is suffered. Compensation is a very necessary and beneficent thing, but the prevention of the destruction of the lives and limbs of

workers is far better than compensation, which cannot restore them again. It is estimated that the economic waste from accidents alone in the Commonwealth exceeds fifteen millions of dollars every year. I recommend that the Legislature carefully investigate this subject, with a view to providing remedial legislation.

There is another subject which is kindred to the one I have just referred to, and is of no less importance. In my address to the General Court a year ago I referred to the subject of health insurance for the protection and promotion of the physical well-being of the workers of the Commonwealth. The Board of Charity and Bureau of Statistics have recently undertaken the study of the causes of dependency of widows with families receiving assistance under the Mothers' Aid Law. This beneficent measure, designed to prevent the breaking of family ties, now aids over three thousand families, at an expense of approximately one million dollars each year. The investigation shows that the dependency in three cases out of four is caused by the death from sickness of the father in his prime. Where the dependency was caused by incapacity instead of death, sickness was again the preponderating cause. The men whose families were thus deprived of support had previously been employed as skilled workmen with good wages, and yet

they were unable to make provision against death or serious illness. Life insurance had been sought by many of them, but the amount of the insurance had been totally inadequate — amounting in most instances to but a few hundred dollars — and was largely consumed by expenses of the last sickness and of burial. I believe these facts, and others to be found in the report to which I have referred, should receive the consideration of the General Court. They indicate that the illness of our workers is a chief cause of the dependency which costs us great sums of money each year, and that a further cause is to be found in the premature death of productive workmen. A great amount of this staggering loss and the resulting expense might be averted by prompt and adequate medical care, such as a well-organized system of health insurance would supply, and such as it does supply in those countries which have established such a system. As I have said, general legislation should at the present session be undertaken with unusual caution. But the care of the workers has a very special reference to our efficiency in war. Their labor becomes all the more necessary, for the struggle is not merely between men, but between the productive forces of the nations.

New and untrained workers, especially women, who are entering employments heretofore carried on

exclusively by men, must be protected if we are to avoid the costly mistakes made by some of the nations during the earlier years of the war. The places left in our social order by the men who have entered the military service must be taken by others, who in the first instance require training and are particularly subject to accident. We should not permit our industrial life to slacken. The farms and mills and factories which are essential to our strength should be kept producing at full capacity. Good authorities declare that for every man on the battle front seven are required at home to keep him an effective fighting unit. No subject can better engage your attention at a time like this than that which relates to the conservation of the human resources of the Commonwealth and the preservation and the efficiency of her men and women. A comprehensive system which would so far as possible do away with the waste resulting from accident and sickness would be a wise, humane and beneficent measure. It would strengthen the hands of the country in war, and would result in the saving of very many millions of dollars each year to the Commonwealth. At the last session the committee of the Legislature which considered my recommendations for health and old age insurance were of the opinion that the advent of the war, after I had made my recommendations, made

it advisable, as a measure of present economy, to adjourn their consideration. That view would necessitate their further adjournment until the end of the war. I believe firmly in the wisdom and justice both of health and of old age insurance, and of the inevitableness of their coming. Very much is to be said in favor of both even in war time, and especially in favor of the immediate conservation of the health of our workers.

A legislative committee on finance and budget procedure has given the subject of a State budget very exhaustive consideration during the recess. I have referred upon former occasions to the need of providing for an efficient budget system. The Constitutional Convention has under consideration an amendment to the Constitution providing for a budget, but until that is passed by the people legislative action upon this subject cannot bind Governors or subsequent Legislatures. But it would be binding upon the departments and would probably be followed as a rule of action. As chief executive, with a high responsibility for administration, the Governor should be enabled to examine all estimates of appropriations, and to submit to the Legislature a budget containing a statement of appropriations deemed by him to be necessary for the proper maintenance of the government. This budget should include the amounts required for ordinary

maintenance, to meet deficiencies, to pay interest and maturities upon debt, and also to provide the additions and improvements to existing institutions which may seem necessary or desirable. The recommendations for spending money might well be accompanied by recommendations for raising it, whether by loans or new taxes. A haphazard system of public finance is likely to be an expensive system. The comprehensive grouping of the financial needs of the government will result in the saving of time to the Legislature, a better apportioning of appropriations among the different departments, and a lessening of expenditure. I heartily recommend action designed to secure a proper budget system.

I urge upon you the great importance of improving the efficiency of the transportation systems of the Commonwealth. The national government is now operating the steam railroads of the country, and for the present they are practically taken from the field of our consideration. Our street railway systems are in a deplorable condition, both with regard to their financial strength, and, as to the most of them, with regard to the character of the service they render the public. The State should require that these corporations should be honestly and economically managed, should provide good accommodations for their patrons, should do away

with the excessive crowding of cars which adds a wearisome length to the working day and does much injury to health, and that they should be permitted to receive for this service a rate of fare which would pay the fair cost of rendering it. Our people do not desire transportation wholly or in part free, but they desire and should receive good service and at its fair cost. The chief elements of cost of such service are reasonable wages, maintenance of the property, and a fair return upon actual investment, and not upon inflated values. I recommend legislation designed to enable our street railways to be efficient servants of the public. If the Public Service Commission does not possess sufficient authority in the premises, I recommend that additional authority be granted them.

The Constitutional Convention was unable to finish its work, and has taken a recess until after the adjournment of the present session of the Legislature. It was a notable body of men, and the results of its work already achieved amply vindicate the action of all who had part in creating it. I recommend that a reasonable appropriation be made to enable it to complete its labors. It submitted an amendment for absentee voting which was accepted by the people at the election in November. I recommend the passage of a law providing for the voting of soldiers and sailors who

may be absent from the Commonwealth in the service of the country. Experience has shown that irregularities are likely to occur in the receiving, transmitting and counting of votes taken away from the polling places, and great care should be exercised in drafting the requisite statute. The amendment confers upon the Legislature the power to provide for absentee voting in general. If the Legislature shall deem it important at the present time to exercise this power I would suggest that it make provision for such absentees as are prevented from going to the polls only by sheer necessity. It is not a great hardship for the citizen to go to the polling booth when he is able to do so, even at some sacrifice of his convenience or his business, and a little hardship will cause him to prize the right more than if we should coddle him.

The war must not distract our attention from the necessity of education. There has been a marked falling off in the number of scholars in our normal schools which will have a tendency to lessen the number of our trained teachers. The high wages of labor encourage young people to leave school and seek employment. The money thus obtained is often needed in the homes. In order that this condition may interfere as little as possible with the education of the boys and girls, it would seem to be wise that the attendance upon our continuation schools in such cases should be made compulsory

throughout the Commonwealth, as it is now in the city of Boston.

The physical examination of men under the Conscription Act has shown us the need of physical training in schools for our young people. Some very excellent reports have been made by commissions appointed to study this question. I recommend that you take action to improve the character of the physical training for our young people.

I also recommend the study of the question of educating men who may find it necessary, on account of injury received in the service, to renew the same or adopt some form of employment other than that which they had followed before entering the service, should the national government not make proper provision for such kind of education.

In time of war there is danger of the deterioration of those institutions of government which are the glory of peaceful times and which are superseded by a rule military in character. War has little tolerance for freedom. We must see to it that it shall leave no permanent trace of its autocratic methods, and take nothing from the body of our liberties. But we are in the war, and we must wage it with no divided energy of the nation. We must concentrate all our resources in order to win it, and we must surely not be led to abate in the least our preparations by any talk of peace. Do I mean that we should not think of peace and not be ever

ready to secure a righteous peace in any righteous way? By no means. It would be far better to consider an offer of peace, even fraudulently made, than to refuse to give attention to an honest proposal. Each one of us is a member of our great democracy, and it is our duty to keep clearly in mind the objects for which we are fighting. Every week of this war entails a loss of life and property more serious than the cost of entire wars accounted great by history. The ultimate end that is beyond the mere purpose to conquer we must keep ever before us, so that we may not share in the colossal crime of the architects of the war by prolonging its evil course an instant after that end can be secured. When our adversary states particular terms, when he puts himself in the way with us, our thoughts should take some definite shape in response, and not phrase themselves in vague even if noble generalizations, which, however much they may do honor to our moral nature, are for the purposes of the occasion wholly meaningless and negative, and carry nothing from one nation to another. If an enemy fairly tells us what he will give, and it is too little, let us tell him what we will accept. Otherwise we may make ourselves responsible for the further drifting of the universe, and for the continued deepening of the night that is settling upon civilization.

