

# LEGISLATURES PAST AND PRESENT

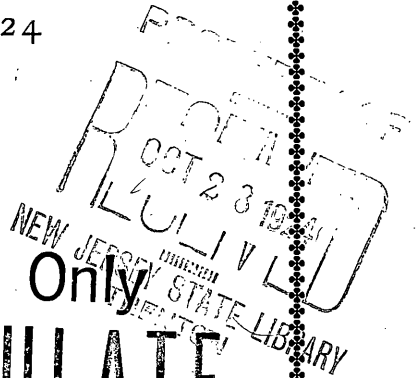
By

GEORGE O. VANDERBILT

MEMBER *of* HOUSE OF  
ASSEMBLY *from* MERCER  
COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

1874 & 1924

For Library Use Only  
**DO NOT CIRCULATE**

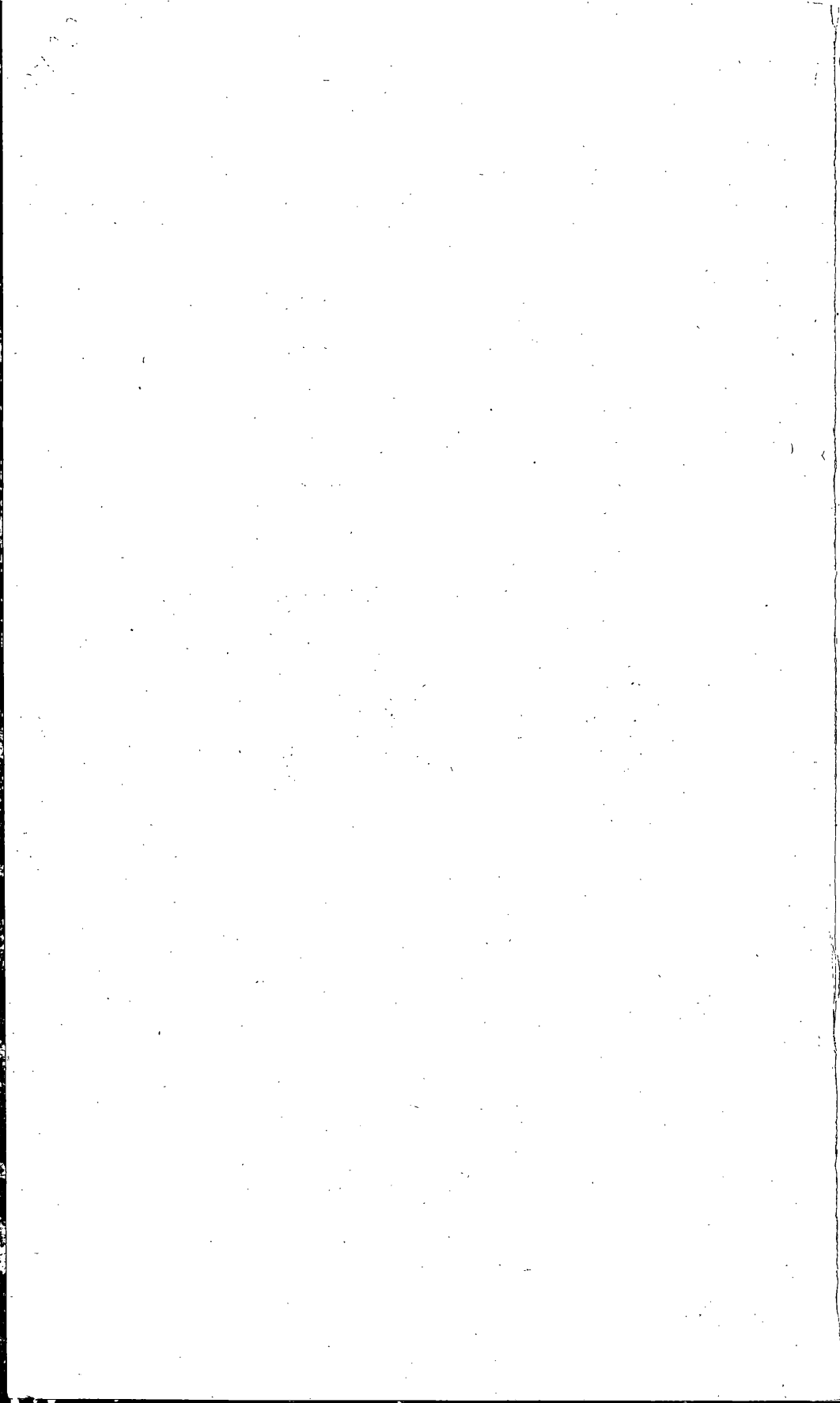


TRENTON, N. J.

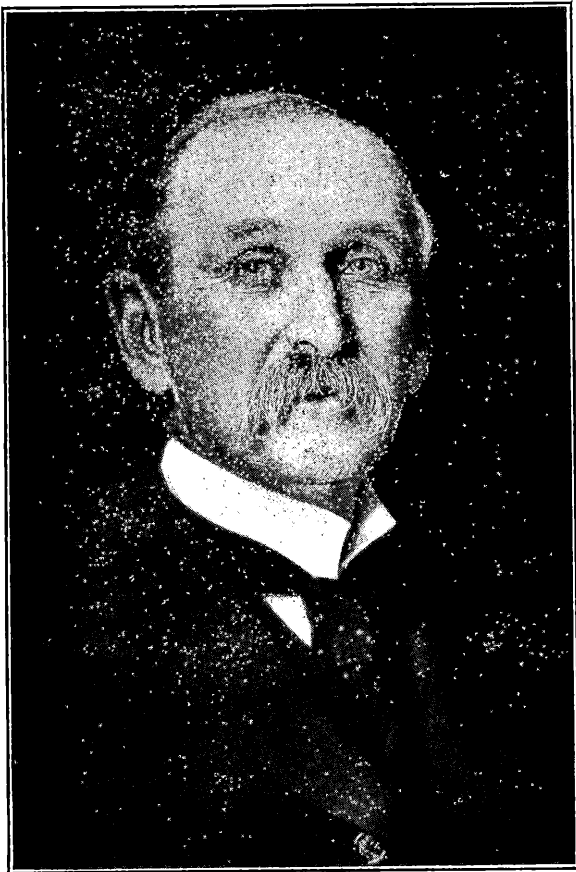
PHILLIPS & GODSHALK Co., PRINTERS.

1924

J328.3  
V228



Legislatures: Past & Present



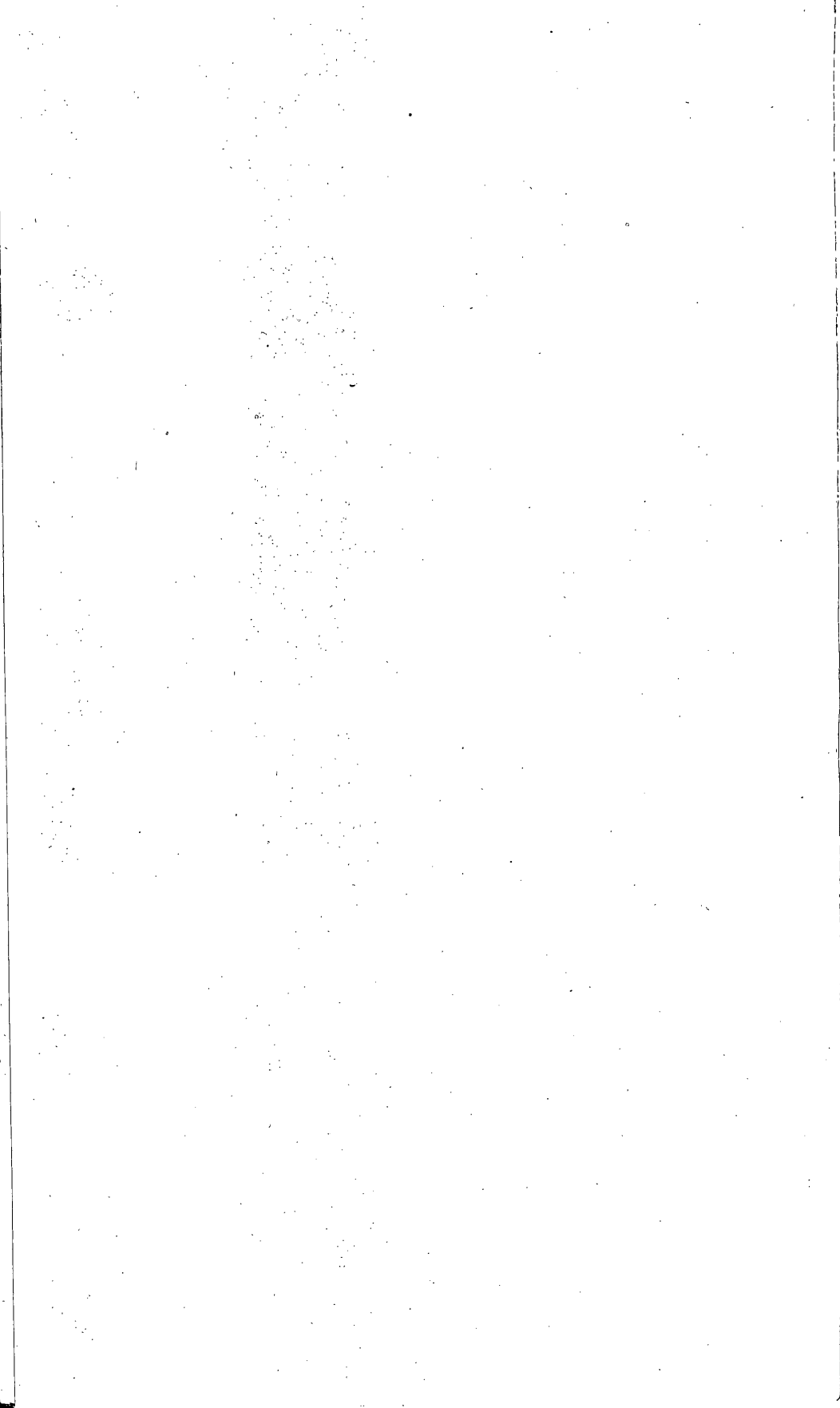
GEORGE O. VANDERBILT

MEMBER OF HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY FROM MERCER  
COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

1874 & 1924

J328.3

V228



## A STATEMENT.

Shortly after the close of the New Jersey Legislature of 1924 it was suggested by some friends that I should write my experience after fifty years in the House of Assembly, as contrasted with fifty years ago, because the election of a member again after fifty years was not only unusual, but probably has never been duplicated in the history of any State in the Union, at least not in New Jersey.

Because of this suggestion I wrote eleven articles for the "Trenton Evening Times." And because it was further suggested, after publication, that they be printed in pamphlet form, I have complied with such requests and had a limited number printed.

These articles were written weekly, and often hurriedly, when pressed for time, and with no expectation of any further publication, hence might have been improved in style.

They are given in this pamphlet exactly as they appeared in the "Times." The head-lines of each article were not written by me, but were written by the Press Editor of the "Times" as display headings of his own make-up.

G. O. V.



# Legislatures: *Past and Present*

---

## ARTICLE I.

### BILLS RUSHED INTO UNDIGESTED, UNDESIRABLE LAWS NOW BECAUSE OF CARELESS AND NEGLIGENT METHODS.

Returning to the House of Assembly after a lapse of fifty years I found many changes in the mode of conducting legislation, some of which are open to criticism.

Many of these changes beget hasty, crude and undigested legislation and do not afford the careful study and wise consideration that every proposed law should receive before its enactment.

It may surprise the people to know that a bill before its final passage is now never read in the House of Assembly, but such is the case.

This is the present procedure: When a member seeks to introduce a bill he is required to put it in a wooden box placed on the clerk's desk. Some time afterwards, when the speaker has leisure, the clerk takes the bill from the box and presents it to the speaker, and he refers it to the supposedly appropriate committee. If he thinks it of a political nature he will refer it to the Judicial Committee of which the majority leader is chairman, and he can hold it or report it as he feels best or wisest for his party.

Then the clerk, by the rules, turns over the measure to the supervisor of bills to be printed—and when it comes back from the printer the supervisor distributes the copies to all members, and the original bill to the committee to whom it was referred by the speaker. That committee may hold hearings if it deems best, may amend the bill and report it—or hold it; the latter is to “pigeon-hole” it. If it is reported, then it is read by its title only—and the speaker says it will be reprinted. This might be necessary if an extended amendment is made by the committee, but not otherwise, and it adds much to the cost to reprint a second time, especially as the printer is ordered to send a copy of the printed bill to the home address of members. This is also unnecessary and only makes additional cost, although it helps the printer.

When the reprinted bill comes back from the printer it is ready to go upon the calendar by number. The speaker calls out the number. The reading clerk calls the number and the speaker says number so and so is on its final passage, and the clerk calls the roll and the bill is being voted for or against without ever having been read before the House. The members commence to hustle among the files of five hundred bills to find the one he is

voting upon, and before he can even hastily read it his name is called. This is the present mode of procedure in passing laws in the House of Assembly of New Jersey.

The old way of fifty years ago was: When a member wanted to introduce a bill he would rise in his seat and address the speaker and would say, "Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce the following bill." The speaker would say, "The bill will be received and the clerk will read the title," and then the speaker would refer it to its appropriate committee and the introducer knew at once what committee it was referred to and did not have to wait sometimes several days before he found out.

The committee was supposed to report a bill favorably or unfavorably within a reasonable time, with or without amendments, and then it went to the printer and was printed only once. When it in due time came back from the printer it then went upon the calendar for a second reading and was read section by section by the clerk, and as the clerk read it the members could follow him and thus know what the bill contained and be prepared to amend it and to vote for it or against it on its third reading, or final passage.

I submit that the fifty years ago plan of making laws was preferable to the present mode. It was more dignified and every member knew what the bill contained before he voted. It prevented abuses of interpolating sections or words, changing meanings—it prevented hasty, crude and improper legislation as was pointed out by Governor Silzer in his vetoing of seventy bills, many of which, he said, were improperly drawn, crude in form and undigested. This was all admitted by the majority of the Assembly and House, as the bills were not passed over his veto and became dead.

I have given space to this change in passing laws as different from fifty years ago because the reader will more readily understand the other articles which will follow this one weekly as I portray what was done, and how it was done, and the part I played therein, thus giving an account of my stewardship.

## ARTICLE II.

MONEY WASTED ON USELESS JOBS—USELESS PLACES  
CREATED TO GIVE POLITICIANS RAILROAD PASSES  
—LACK OF DIGNITY AND CARE IN THE MAKING OF  
LAWS—COSTS OF LEGISLATORS AND OFFICIALS.

In these several articles I am simply trying to portray things of today, as I see them, as distinguished from the mode of legislation fifty years ago in the New Jersey Assembly. I am trying to do it without prejudice or bias.

In my first article I set forth the present mode of passing bills without having them read in the public sessions of the Assembly.

Fifty years ago no person was permitted to smoke in the Assembly Chamber, and the rule was enforced. That same rule is one of the Assembly regulations yet, but it is never observed, and the chamber reeks with smoke during the sessions, much to the annoyance of members and the impairment of the dignity of a legislative body charged with the high office of making laws for a great State.

Another change is that now each party selects a leader. The majority leader is supposed to guide all legislation. The speaker recognizes him as the director of the Assembly, especially concerning all party matters.

The minority party leader's province is to oppose the majority leader in all party measures. Each speaks for his party, and the members of each party are supposed to support and follow their leader like a bell sheep.

Fifty years ago there was no such thing as a party leader. Every member stood for himself and spoke and voted as his best judgment dictated.

The speaker then represented the majority party, controlled in a large measure all matters and guided the House of Assembly. Of course, the real power was, and is always, in the majority of a legislative body—the majority is supreme.

In my opinion party leaders are not necessary or conducive to good legislation. The plan arraigns one part of a legislative body against another part; it begets strife and contention. These leaders often seek party advantages simply in the interest of party, rather than in the interest of all the people. I was often amused last winter by their actions and party contentions, being reminded somewhat of two game roosters in a cock fight, sparing for advantage and hoping to damage each other.

Fifty years ago, as I remember it, the officers consisted of a speaker, with one secretary, clerk, journal clerk, reading clerk, engrossing clerk (all bills being engrossed then in writing by the pen), sergeant-at-arms, with one assistant, two or three door-keepers and a couple of pages. And we then handled more than one thousand bills at a session (all legislation being special as well as general), and had no trouble to do it. This was twice as many bills as we handled this year. We had no clerks to committees; no bill clerks, no supervisors of bills, no typewriters, no stenographers, no house postmasters, no assistants to assistants. There was no aim to give every member of the majority two or three appointments as now seems to be the settled plan, without regard as to whether their services are needed or not. Fifty years ago all officers of the Assembly were nominated and elected at the time of the organization of the Assembly, in open meeting, whether it was the clerk or door-keeper. Now they seem to be designated and appointed by caucus of the majority party, the number depending upon how many are needed to satisfy those composing the majority party. Just how many were employed

this year I do not know, but the number of officers and employes must have been at least seventy-six, for there came back at the opening of the Legislature this year seventy-six old employes of the session of 1923—for there was an item of \$760 in an appropriation bill to pay the old employes of 1923 whose offices had expired with the end of that session. This was based upon ten dollars for each old employe. Governor Silzer vetoed this item, but the majority party passed it over his veto, thereby paying seventy-six persons who were not needed on the opening day of the new Legislature and who never rendered any service—a mere gratuity. Of course, the amount was small compared with Mr. Burdette G. Lewis' millions, but it indicates how regardless the present legislators are in expending the people's money. It is an index of the present-day legislator. It might be interesting for the readers of the "Times" to know that the salaries of the New Jersey legislators for the session of 1924 were \$40,833.82 and that their officers were paid \$51,000; this is official.

One day a member offered a resolution to appoint a Mr. A. B. to a clerkship of a certain committee without a salary, and I inquired of another member the object. He said it was done to give him a railroad pass—so he could travel for nothing—and thereby, by an act of the New Jersey Legislature, do a wrong and commit a fraud upon the railroads. I ascertained that this was frequently done.

These are some of the things that I observed and that I thought might be interesting for the people of New Jersey to know.

### ARTICLE III.

#### SPEAKER AND HOUSE COMMITTEES BLOCK BILLS TO SAVE TAXPAYERS MORE THAN A MILLION DOLLARS.

In my two previous articles I have explained the present mode of making laws in the New Jersey Assembly, as contrasted with fifty years ago. I now proceed to explain my own actions and votes, especially in reference to taxation, and in doing so I voice no censure against my fellow-members, for each member is responsible for his own acts to his constituents, and is subject to their approval or condemnation for his votes, and I wish to say that every member of the Assembly was more than kind to me, and treated me with the utmost deference, during the whole session, and often consulted me upon various matters of legislation.

It early became known that I was somewhat of a watch-dog of the State treasury, scanning every State appropriation closely by pointing out and voting against what I termed excesses, and I was always watched to see if I was consistent, and often some member would ask, "How does Vanderbilt vote?" and then

would privately say, "I believe you were right." Yet, for causes best known to himself, would vote otherwise. As an example, a person in Somerset county had lost a herd of cattle, valued at \$1,900, because some State agents had negligently left exposed poison in their effort to exterminate "gypsy moth," and Senator Case had had passed through the Senate a bill to pay for his loss. When the bill came up for passage by the House there was some haggling about it. I stated that I believed it a meritorious claim and ought to be paid; that the State agents had been careless and at fault, and if it were a claim against a private individual it could, without a doubt, be collected. Then some member remarked, "If Vanderbilt is for the bill it must be all right," and it passed unanimously.

Now, I had said when I was a candidate that if I was elected I would save the State of New Jersey a million dollars or know the reason why, and would publish those who blocked the way.

I drew and introduced five bills, which, if they had been enacted into laws, would have saved much more than a million dollars. All but one were blocked in committees—never reported—and that one was blocked by the speaker, viz., never put upon the calendar board, which the speaker seemed to control. These five bills were rather of a radical type—that is, they were sweeping in their nature, and would cause radical changes in the conducting of the departments to which they referred; but if taxation is ever to be reduced radical action must be necessary. Rather, my bills seemed radical when we consider the easy and excessive present public expenditures, for so accustomed have our public officials become to voting away public moneys that any law that serves as an interference with their actions in this respect meets at once their disapproval and objections, hence it behooves anyone seeking a reduction of public expenditures to act cautiously, using judgment and tact. So I was careful in the wording of these several bills by thus making them the least objectionable possible. One was for an investigation of every department of the State Government—to see if our present State annual expenditures—which have increased in ten years from about \$6,000,000 to \$17,000,000—could not be reduced. Another was to place all road construction under the Highway Department, believing this department was better equipped to construct our highways—and with much less expense—than our boards of county freeholders. Another was to prevent any county or municipality from issuing bonds unless any proposed issue was first submitted to the people for their approval or rejection, and another was to decrease the number of the boards of freeholders from seven to five in Mercer county. This last bill

I estimated would reduce the expenditures in Mercer county about \$10,000. Another was for the calling of a State constitutional convention, to be elected by the people, to change and revise our present Constitution, which, with the exception of some amendments, has undergone no changes in eighty years and needs some careful revision to meet present-day requirements in helping our State Government to function more perfectly and with less expense. All these bills died in committees, who refused to report them, except the one that expired in the hands of the speaker.

In my next article I will take up these several bills seriatim and explain their provisions, and how they would have saved the State of New Jersey much more than a million dollars had they been enacted into laws.

#### ARTICLE IV.

#### FREEHOLDERS OF MERCER AND OTHER COUNTIES BLOCKED BILL TO REDUCE SIZE OF BOARDS AND SAVE TAXPAYERS MONEY—TRENTON AND BUCKS COUNTY SHOW POSSIBILITY OF SMALLER GOVERN- ING BOARDS.

Early in the session I introduced a bill to reduce the number of freeholders from seven to five. My object was to save the expenses of the county of Mercer about \$10,000 yearly—\$6,000 in salaries and \$4,000 in the cost and upkeep of two automobiles.

The bill was referred to the Committee on Revision of the Laws, of which Mr. De Lorenzo, of Bergen County, was chairman, and there it remained, never having been reported. When I sought to have it reported the chairman said his county freeholders were opposed to it. I pointed out to him that it would save his county about \$10,000 annually; that five members could easily perform all the duties of the board, and that by the terms of the bill before it could become a law some 3,000 persons would have to sign a petition requesting it be first submitted to a vote of the county for approval or rejection; that there could be no harm in letting the voters decide whether they wanted the board to remain seven or five members, and, anyhow, the people ought to be given the chance to vote upon it. His only answer, however, was, "The Board of Freeholders of Bergen County is opposed to the law."

The bill applied to all counties of the second class, which included Bergen, Passaic, Union, Middlesex, Monmouth, Camden

and Mercer. It had to be general, but I so worded it that it was optional with each county, as it required the majority of the voters of each county to adopt it before it became a law; but the Legislature refused to allow not only its members to vote upon the bill, but also the voters of the counties that privilege.

The several boards of freeholders of the twenty-one counties of the State are banded into an association. I believe they are incorporated, hence a perpetual body. The ostensible object of this association is to give information and aid the Legislature in passing or defeating bills. The members issue a weekly pamphlet and mail it to each legislator, marking certain bills pending as favored; also those that are opposed. The freeholders voluntarily took upon themselves this burden.

The real object of this association is to prevent the passing of any laws that the freeholders think are inimical to the several boards of the different counties, and they stand together, each county, to help the other. They are a body of great influence, as the average freeholder is a politician.

When a bill is introduced that his board does not want, he goes to the members of the Legislature from his county, seeks their influence to oppose the bill and forthwith an item is inserted in their weekly pamphlet that it's a bad bill, and the association is opposed to it, etc.

Now, my bill to reduce the number of members from seven to five was "flagged" by this State Association of Freeholders and "marked" to be defeated in their weekly pamphlet.

None of the counties of the second class require seven members to perform the duties of office of freeholder. This is especially true in Mercer County.

The State Highway Commission has taken over and built a number of the roads in this county in the last year or two, thus relieving the freeholders of the building and maintenance of the same, thereby largely reducing their duties. Besides, it is a well-known fact that some of the freeholders are engaged in other personal business to which they largely give their daily attention. This shows that the duties of the office of freeholder are not so onerous as to require all their time.

As a matter of fact the city government of the city of Trenton is much more complex and difficult to handle than the county government of the county of Mercer, and yet five commissioners seem to easily handle the affairs of that city and do it so well that they are continued in office at each election.

Just across the Delaware river is the county of Bucks. That county is nearly three times as large as Mercer county. Three commissioners (who are the same as our freeholders) perform

all the work there, taking care of all the affairs of that big county. These three members composing the board get \$1,500 per annum each, yet Mercer county pays \$3,000 salary to each member and has a board of seven to handle its affairs.

Taxpayers of Mercer county, your Board of Freeholders was opposed to this bill, though it especially exempted any member now in office. He could serve out his full term. Thus you see who "blocked" the way and prevented even this small saving of county expense.

Last December this association of freeholders invited all members of the Legislature to a dinner given in their honor, they said, "as a get-together meeting so they could become better acquainted with one another." I did not attend, for I divined some ulterior motive. I could not see why this association should expend five dollars per plate for a dinner to me simply to get acquainted. It seemed my discernment of the real object of the dinner party was about correct, as they "flagged" all my bills in their weekly pamphlet, thus placing their association against reduction of expenses and hence against the reduction of taxation.

#### ARTICLE V.

#### FREEHOLDERS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEFEAT OF BILL TO PUT ALL ROAD AND BRIDGE BUILDING IN STATE DEPARTMENT, WITH RESULT THAT COUNTY TAXPAYERS CONTINUE TO PAY FOR EXTRAVAGANT DUAL SYSTEMS.

One of the bills I introduced to save county taxes was to put all county road construction under the Department of Highways. We now have a dual system of roads and bridge construction. Some roads are built by the Boards of Freeholders and some by the Highway Commission.

That double system is caused by the fact that originally the freeholders built all the improved roads, but when the State Highway Commission was created and commenced building roads these highways were called State roads. The commission has already taken over many county roads, and it is taking over more and more each year, building and maintaining them. It will eventually control the whole road system of the State. Even now the State department exercises a kind of suzerainty over all public roads, as no road can be built with State aid unless it is first O. K.'d by the commission.

The County Boards of Freeholders have the right to select and

build roads and are doing so, and certain amounts of money from the license fees from the motor vehicle fund are allotted to them by the State Highway Commission for that purpose.

The bill I introduced placed the building of all roads in the Highway Department. My object was to reduce county expenses and hence reduce county taxes.

In each of the twenty-one counties in the State there is an engineering department. It is one of the big departments of county government and costs annually a large amount of money. There are chief engineers, assistant engineers, map makers and assistants, all of whom in road and bridge construction are necessary. My bill would practically do away with this expense in twenty-one counties, centralizing it in the State department, and would thus save many thousands of dollars. It would also do away with road supervisors, foremen, trucks, automobiles, tools and hundreds of men now employed by the counties in road construction and hence cause large reduction in county expenses, with a corresponding reduction in county taxes.

The State Highway Commission has all facilities for, and is fully equipped for road and bridge construction. It has a large corps of high-class engineers who give their whole time to the study of the best method of road construction; it builds some roads by convict labor and by contract under specifications carefully and vigorously enforced.

Here is a department specially charged with road and bridge construction, with selected men whose sole object is to build the best roads and bridges possible at the lowest possible cost. Why divide our State and road construction, part by the State and part by Boards of Freeholders of twenty-one counties? Why this distribution rather than one central authority with an equipment to do better and cheaper work?

The yearly license fees of the Motor Vehicle Department are sufficient to build and maintain all of our State roads and bridges. They now amount to about \$10,000,000 annually and are increasing at the rate of over a million dollars a year.

In 1925 the auto fees are expected to yield \$12,000,000. This is the fund to build all our improved highways—and thereby stop the half-mill direct taxation which now amounts to about \$2,500,000 yearly. Under my plan, you will observe, not only one million, but two million five hundred thousand dollars would be saved. So, when I said, as a candidate, that if elected I would save the taxpayers of the State \$1,000,000 it was no idle pipe dream—but was more than possible.

One day Freeholder Borden, of Mercer County, a live-wire, intelligent young man, probably as good and capable a freeholder,

as freeholders go, as any county has, was at the State House and I spoke to him about my bill. I found he was violently opposed to it. I said to him, "Why do you freeholders want to build roads and bridges? Why do you wish to assume that burden?" pointing out the large saving in county expenses and taxes by doing away with that county department. He said he thought they could better represent the people, that they were closer to the people and knew their needs and wants better than the State Highway Commission, etc., etc.

I pointed out to him that in the States of Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Ohio the highway departments built all improved roads and bridges, and those States were noted for their fine highways, especially Massachusetts and New York, and if this system was successful in these States it could be made so in New Jersey. He thought otherwise, however.

This bill slept for a long while in the Committee of Highways, of which Mr. Kenworthy, of Essex, was chairman. Towards the end of the session I got a committee hearing, but I could not interest the members in the object of the bill, though I pointed out its advantages in saving expenses and the reduction of county taxes. They even refused to report the bill, so I could argue for its passage before all the members of the Legislature. It accordingly died in the committee.

The State Board of Freeholders Association, which I referred to in a previous article, in its weekly bulletin, opposed the bill. It put out the red flag of opposition and recommended its defeat. You thus see why the Highway Committee opposed it. The power of this State Association of Freeholders influencing legislation defeated my bill and "blocked the way" of my trying to reduce county expenses and county taxes.

## ARTICLE VI.

TAXES EVERYWHERE MOUNTING BECAUSE OF INEFFICIENCY AND EXTRAVAGANCE, AND INTERESTED OFFICIALS KEEP PEOPLE FROM EXERCISING RIGHT TO CONTROL SPENDING OF THEIR OWN MONEY.

As a matter of fact, for the last fifteen years municipal and county taxes have yearly greatly increased in New Jersey.

There is not a county, city, borough or township but that has increased its budget, and thus automatically increased taxes, until in some cases the tax rate in some districts has reached 7 per cent. and 8 per cent., but mostly the increase has been 3 per cent.

and 6 per cent.—at the latter figure equalling the legal rate upon moneys loaned. Much of this increase has been caused by large bond issues for public improvements; some of them necessary, but many not a necessity.

Some years ago the Legislature passed an act allowing Boards of Freeholders to issue bonds up to 4 per cent. of the total amount of county ratables, and further allowed cities, boroughs and townships to issue bonds up to 7 per cent. of the ratables of their respective city, borough and township taxing districts for local purposes.

It is also a matter of fact that ratables of every county, city, borough and township increase every year, as, for example, in the city of Trenton the ratables for taxation purposes for 1924 have increased over 1923 about \$30,000,000, thereby giving the Commissioners of that city (which had reached its 7 per cent. limit) the authority to issue bonds to the amount of \$2,100,000 if they in their wisdom see fit to do so.

The reader will therefore observe that the issue of county and municipal bonds can thus become a yearly continuous performance, if the governing body of any county or municipality sees fit to exercise this power or authority vested in them by this law; and past experience shows that they embrace it very frequently.

Under this law the county, city, borough or township governing bodies do not have to consult any citizen or taxpayer about the issuing of any bonds which they in their wisdom see fit to issue for any public purpose whatever. All they have to do is to pass an ordinance to comply with the law, and by their fiat they are issued.

As for another example, it was reported last January that the Board of Freeholders of Mercer County were about to issue \$350,000 of serial bonds to take up floating indebtedness of the county that had accumulated and which the board was carrying by loan in the banks.

Now, figuring the interest rate of these bonds at 5½ per cent., the taxpayers of Mercer County would have to raise \$18,250 yearly to pay the interest on these bonds, besides, as these bonds were to be serial bonds, paying probably about \$5,000 on the principal of these bonds yearly.

It was also rumored at the same time that the board might issue \$300,000 more bonds to build additional county roads and bridges, for which its engineers had already made, or were making, plans. These bonds, when issued, would further increase an interest cost of about \$15,500 yearly, and, if the bonds were serial, \$5,000 more for payment on the principal.

By these examples the citizen and taxpayer will observe how

this power and authority to issue bonds, as the law now in force permits, which has had much to do with public expenditures in every county and municipality of the State, and hence has increased taxation.

In many cases this power and authority has been so extravagantly exercised by the governing bodies of counties and municipalities that Governor Silzer, in his last message to the Legislature, said: "Our people are becoming restless under the tax burden. They are demanding relief. The demand of the taxpayers for the expenses of national, State and local government are mounting to such a point that, unless curbed, a discontented people will be the result."

And further, the Hon. Firman N. Reeves, President of the New Jersey Senate, at the time of his election on January 8th last, said: "The increase of taxation in recent years is appalling; some of our taxes are well nigh confiscatory."

The county taxes for the twenty-one counties in the year 1918 in the State of New Jersey were \$14,927,358, and in the year 1923 they were \$25,333,328, an increase in five years of 70 per cent.

The local or municipal taxes for the year 1918 in the State of New Jersey were \$46,346,722, and in the year 1923 they were \$104,283,648, an increase in five years of 175 per cent., and the papers announce that the total amount to be raised to meet the municipal budget for 1924 will be \$165,326,914.45.

The total valuation of property in the State of New Jersey in 1918, as made by the assessors, was \$2,978,892,349, and the average tax rate at that time was \$2.37. In 1923 the total valuation was \$4,070,841,117, and the average tax rate was \$3.56. It is now announced that for the year 1924 the total valuation of property, as made by the assessors in New Jersey, is \$4,504,047,295, an increase in ratables in one year of \$375,723,928, and that the average tax rate will be \$3.67, an increase of 11 points for 1924 over 1923.

With these facts and conditions before me, I conceived by the introduction of a bill, to change the authority given county freeholders and municipalites to thus issue bonds upon their own initiative, by not allowing them to do so unless any proposed issue of bonds was first submitted to the vote of the electorate of any county or municipality, for their approval or rejection.

The bill further provided that all notes of any county or municipality issued in anticipation of taxes should not exceed the amount of their budgets, and that the said notes should be paid from the receipt of taxes annually.

This bill met with violent opposition from all sources that

would be affected by the same. The State Association of Boards of Freeholders at once displayed the red flag and issued an edict against the same in its weekly bulletin. The Municipal League of the State seemed to be opposed to it. Persons interested in city government had influential people to see me personally.

The bill seemed to raise a storm of protest all over the State. The several County Boards of Freeholders did not want the authority of issuing bonds at their pleasure interfered with. Municipal government officials who heretofore could issue bonds whenever they wanted to undertake some public improvement, whether actually needed or not, seemingly did not want their heretofore absolute authority interfered with.

It had been so easy to provide money by issuing bonds that it was deemed a sacred privilege that must not be interfered with, and therefore had become a vested right. Men were called over the telephone to see Vanderbilt. Other members of the Legislature were seen, and the black flag was raised against my bill, and the orders went forward to kill it.

I admit the law meant a radical change, and I meant it to be so. I desired to put an end to this easy mode of piling up county and municipal indebtedness by profligate expenditures, and in some instances, scandal. Besides, if public expenditures were to be decreased, and thereby tax reductions made possible, this public mode of incurring indebtedness by easy issuance of bonds had to be stopped.

And why, I ask, should the people not have the right to say how and when their money should be expended? It is their money.

The State of New Jersey cannot issue bonds unless the proposal is first submitted to the vote of the people for their approval or rejection. No school-house can be built without submitting the project to a vote of the people of the school district. Therefore, why should not the governing body of any county or municipality be required to do the same

The bill was referred to the Committee of Municipal Finance, of which Mr. Hershfield was chairman. In due time I saw Mr. Hershfield about reporting my bill, and he very kindly reported the same, but it never appeared upon the calendar for final passage, although I watched for it daily; for when a bill is ready for final passage, as this bill was, having reached that stage in parliamentary process, it seemed for some cause it was unable to be reached. Now the speaker, in a general way, controls the calendar upon which bills are placed for final passage; so, it not appearing, and as the session was drawing to a close, I went to the speaker and asked why my bill, No. 349, was not put on the calendar, and

was informed that there was great opposition to it. Thus this important bill was never reached for final passage, and I was not permitted to advocate its passage or have it voted upon by the General Assembly.

Here was a vitally important bill, in my opinion, to every taxpayer of the State, and if it had been passed it would have saved the taxpayers many million dollars. Yet the Legislature of 1924 refused to allow the taxpayers of New Jersey the right or privilege of saying when or how their money should be expended.

The only remedy, Mr. Taxpayer, for you, is to change your lawmakers. The ballot box provides that privilege. Exercise that right if you wish your taxes ever reduced.

In conclusion, Mr. Voter, as I had stated in my election canvass that I would publish those who "blocked" the way of my trying to save the State of New Jersey a million dollars, and in these series of letters I am stating who "barred" the way.

#### ARTICLE VII.

STATE IN NEED OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO BRING ABOUT TAXATION REFORMS AND OTHER BENEFITS, BUT MR. POWELL, OF BURLINGTON, SAID "NO," AND BILL SLEEPS IN LEGISLATIVE MORGUE.

It is just eighty years ago since the present Constitution of New Jersey was adopted. It was framed by a convention of delegates elected by the people who assembled in convention in Trenton May 14, 1844, and continued in session until June 29th following, when the work was completed and adjournment taken.

Alexander Wurts, a noted lawyer of Hunterdon County, presided at the convention. I remember seeing him when I was a boy, at Flemington, and was very much impressed with his dignified bearing and commanding appearance. He belonged to the old school of statesmen, who patriotically served their country.

The Constitution thus formed was ratified at a special election on August 13, 1844. Chronologically, that is the history of the Constitution of New Jersey.

It has been amended by a commission twice since—the commission being selected by the Governor by virtue of an act of the Legislature—once in 1875 and once in 1897. These amendments were afterwards ratified at special elections, but there has been no revision or amendment of the Constitution by delegates elected by the people in eighty years.

The two amendments referred to were makeshift modes of amending the Constitution proposed by politicians as the only way it could be obtained from an unwilling Legislature fearful of losing its legislative favor of certain small counties that then and now control legislation.

There have been a number of attempts to call a convention of delegates elected by the people to amend the Constitution, but this has always been refused.

Ex-Senator Rudolph L. Rabe lately told the writer that when he was speaker of the Assembly he came within one vote of passing a bill calling a State convention to amend the Constitution.

The reason why all attempts have failed to amend the Constitution by delegates elected by the people is because the State Senate representation is based upon and by counties and not by population. All the small counties have opposed a convention for fear if one is called it may change a senatorial representative from a county basis to a population basis, as, for example, each county has now one Senator and the counties of Cape May and Ocean, of small population, have the same power in making laws as Hudson and Essex, with their large population. Therefore, the small counties are jealous of their power and vote against calling a State convention to amend or revise the Constitution.

There are many reasons why our present State Constitution needs revision or amending by the people, not by selfish interests or intriguing politicians. I drew and introduced a bill calling for a State constitutional convention by delegates elected by the people.

My bill provided that each county should elect two delegates, one by the Republican party and one by the Democratic party. By this method each county would have the same representation and could thus protect its claimed vested right of power and prevent the changing from county representation to a population basis. Then, too, each party would be equally represented and would therefore be a non-political body—and each county would have the same voice and power in voting upon any amendment or revision. This seemed about as fair a way as could be devised. It safeguarded the present rights of the counties.

There seems to have grown up in these eighty years a great many departments of government with great power under legislative enactments. They seem to be responsible to no one and are self-perpetuating, like, for example, the Institutions and Agencies and the Boards of Education, etc.

The members of the Assembly were elected by districts based upon population under the Constitution from 1844 to 1893. At

the November term of the Supreme Court, N. J., 1893, there was handed down a decision in the case of the State vs. Wrightson, then county clerk of Essex, to the effect that members of the Assembly thereafter must be elected by counties and not by country districts.

This case was never appealed to the Court of Errors, as it should have been, to permit the interpretation of this important question to be settled by the highest court of the State. Consequently, since 1894, members of the General Assembly have been elected by counties instead of county districts, as evidently was meant by the framers of the Constitution of 1844, which was patterned after the mode of electing members of the House of the National Congress at Washington, D. C.

A constitutional convention could remedy this defect in our present mode of the election of the General Assembly by county representation instead of county districts, as nearly everyone thinks is the best and correct way, and which the framers of the Constitution of 1844 evidently intended.

There are many other respects in which our present Constitution needs revising, as, for example, abolishing the office of justice of the peace and substituting therefore up-to-date magistrates possessing knowledge of law.

There should also be devised a better mode of taxation to prevent large exemptions that have crept into our laws by legislative enactments, causing unequal taxation and unequal burdens. A revision should be made by the people and not by corporations, so that all burdens of government should be borne equally.

Then, too, our judicial system needs changes to meet present-day needs. Various makeshifts have been made until judges have become like Heinz's 57 varieties—of all grades and kinds. By the present judicial system of New Jersey vexatious appeals may be made, often causing long delays to reach conclusions, thus blocking the way to justice.

For these and many other reasons, I contend that our Constitution needs revision. That is why I introduced my bill. It was referred to the Committee on Judiciary, of which Mr. Powell, of Burlington County, is chairman. He was the leader of the majority of the Legislature (though not a lawyer), and this committee is the morgue or receptacle of all bills the party in power does not wish passed. I saw the honorable gentleman who held the keys of this death-house of bills, about reporting my measure. He said (as near as I can remember): "You would not expect me to report that kind of a bill, would you? That has been tried to be put over often before. I cannot report your bill. I am opposed to the same." I am trying to give his exact language

to show how legislation can be throttled under the present latter-day legislation in New Jersey.

What a burlesque upon free government and the glorious American liberty we boast of and which we call one hundred per cent. Americanism!

It sounds like the Russian kind of government—Czar-like, or as such is practiced by the Soviets of that great country.

So my bill, over which I had spent much time in its preparation, consulting persons learned in constitutional government and the history thereof, was consigned by Mr. Powell to eternal death so far as the Legislature of 1924 was concerned.

Again you see who "blocked" the way of my trying to legislate in the interest of the people.

#### ARTICLE VIII.

#### HOW MR. POWELL KILLED OTHER BILLS DESIGNED TO SAVE MONEY FOR THE TAXPAYERS OF NEW JERSEY—REFORM MEASURES REFERRED TO COMMITTEE NEVER SAW LIGHT OF DAY.

One of the matters I believed of great importance to receive legislative consideration was a survey or investigation of every department of the State of New Jersey.

As already stated in previous articles, the State's expenditures had climbed in twelve years from about six million dollars to about eighteen millions.

New departments with their retinue of officers and clerks were created at every session of the Legislature until the State's employes, like the far-famed locusts of Egypt, fairly swarmed in number. The State House became congested, offices were rented until West State street was turned into an office row; new office buildings constructed to herd the ever increasing numbers, and still further office buildings are contemplated to meet future demands of this vast and growing army of State officials and employes.

So, because of criticism in the public press of the great increase in the State's public expenditures, as well as private censure by taxpayers, alleging much of said expense increase was due to the creation of unnecessary State departments and the employment of so many State officials and employes, many of said State departments having been created by persons seeking a State job, with an all too friendly Legislature assisting. I introduced a joint resolution, the object being stated in the preamble, which

was as follows: "To authorize the appointment of a committee to make a survey and investigation of all the offices and departments at present conducting the affairs of the State of New Jersey, and to report a bill to the Legislature to carry out any consolidation, reduction of expenses and necessary changes that they may find requisite for the more efficient and less expensive way of conducting the State government."

This committee was to be composed of four eminent citizens of the State who did not hold any State office (thus would be unbiased), two of which should be Republicans and two Democrats, so as to make it non-political. (I wish here to state that in all my bills that I drew and introduced I tried to be as fair and nonpartisan as the English language would make possible, having in view only public service to the State.)

It was stated in my investigating resolution that this committee was to investigate the mode—that is, the way—of conducting any office, for there are a number of State officials with large salaries who render very little service to the State. Their offices are termed "political sinecures." Names of such officers are stamped by clerks upon official documents with a rubber stamp. Most of them do not live at the State Capitol. Some of them come to Trenton Tuesdays to have a "Trenton lunch" and then return home to look after their private business affairs. As an example, a public State officer has just retired after ten years of public service (so called), for which he has been paid \$60,000, and it is questionable if he ever rendered sixty days of actual service to the State. In justice to him, however, he only followed a custom that has grown up in the State, and he has many associates who are now filling public State positions after the same manner. Of them it is said, on the tops of their ever-closed desks you can write your name in the dust thereon, and some of them do not live far from Trenton either.

My joint resolution was referred by the speaker to the Judiciary Committee of which Mr. Powell was chairman, and by him consigned to the "death house," for which action that committee was noted. In due time I requested him to report it, but he was disinclined so to do. I then proposed to him to amend it, if he did not like the authority of the appointment of the committee by the Governor, by having the appointments made by the speaker of the House and president of the Senate, thinking this might be an inducement to get the same reported. He still refused, and my resolution was thus electrocuted by this political headsmen.

In conclusion of this article, I might further add at the request of Governor Silzer I drew and introduced a bill to compel all public officials of all State departments to deposit all monies

received by them with the State Treasurer, to be paid out only upon proper vouchers as approved by the comptroller, as some of the departments of the State now receive and disburse the monies pertaining to their work. In this bill I concurred with the Governor for the reasons given by him in his annual message. This bill also went to the Judicial Committee and was electrocuted by Mr. Powell.

I also drew and introduced two other bills. One was to reduce notary fees which a few years ago had been almost doubled and especially benefited banks in protesting notes and checks, believing the old fee of one dollar and fifty cents for each protest was sufficient charge for the labor performed.

The other bill compelled the true amount paid for real estate bought and sold to be stated in the deed. This was to aid assessors in fixing values. But even these two little bills also died in their babyhood in the committees to which they had been referred.

I also drew a budget bill to take the place of the present poor makeshift one, but, fearing the executioner's axe of Mr. Powell, I kept it in my desk for a more convenient season. Thus ended my endeavors to try to make laws that I deemed a public necessity and which, in my opinion, would have saved the State and taxpayers many thousands of dollars, to all of which I had given much and careful study.

In my next article I will give my reasons for voting "No" upon certain State appropriations, which will close my record after fifty years in the New Jersey Legislature of 1924.

#### ARTICLE IX.

HOW ASSEMBLYWOMAN THOMPSON AND SENATOR MATHIS DEFIED ALL OPPOSITION, INCLUDING THE GOVERNOR'S VETO POWER, AND GOT \$75,000 FOR DIGGING DITCH IN SOUTH JERSEY, WITH DEMAND FOR \$75,000 MORE IN SIGHT.

There were many bills upon which I voted "No," especially if they called for appropriations of money, which I deemed inopportune to expend in the present financial condition of the State.

Governor Silzer, in his budget message, said that the miscellaneous receipts of the State were \$11,729,870. He recommended appropriations of \$16,157,379.02, and as he could not balance the State's budget by State receipts he was compelled to

borrow from the motor vehicle fund, the educational fund and various other State funds (which it was unwise to do), \$4,440,-307.91. Now, as the appropriations which finally passed the Legislature of 1924 totaled nearly \$18,000,000, still more will be required to be borrowed from these other State funds this year, thus depleting these several funds of the money which rightfully belongs to them.

Having these facts before me, and knowing the burden of taxation which the people were struggling to pay, I conceived it my duty to try to prevent any appropriations that would increase taxes.

The first bill that came along of this nature was a measure introduced by Mrs. Thompson, member from Ocean County, which proposed an appropriation of \$150,000 to dig a ditch or waterway along the northerly side of Beach Haven Island, a narrow strip of wild sand land lying opposite Manahawken, in the southern part of Ocean County.

There is in this State what is known as the Department of Inland Waterways. It has jurisdiction from Manasquan river along the Atlantic coast, through Ocean, Atlantic and Cape May Counties, covering a distance of about one hundred miles. The system connects ponds, creeks, waterways which in the lowlands along the coast are many. This inland waterway system is chiefly used by sailing boats, motor boats, etc., and has cost the State already millions of dollars. It is a pleasure proposition, pure and simple. By Mrs. Tompson's bill it was proposed to straighten a curve by digging a new channel along the north side of Beach Haven Island.

I thought there was no present need of this proposed expenditure, hence I opposed the bill and spoke against it.

Mrs. Thompson asserted the bill carried no appropriation, as it contained a clause that this proposed appropriation was only available when subsequently appropriated. To this I replied that I well understood such legislative tactics—that once a bill was passed funds were always found to be appropriated. On calling the vote there were not enough affirmative votes to pass the bill, hence it was defeated.

Just here let me explain the parliamentary mode of keeping a bill alive, though it has been beaten. Mrs. Thompson, as soon as she saw her bill was defeated, changed her vote of "Yes" to "No," to gain the right to move a reconsideration of the vote by which the bill was lost. In such a case another member moves to lay the measure on the table and thus keep the bill alive until, by trading with other members for votes, or by persuasion, there

are enough votes pledged to pass it. Then the author moves to take the bill from the table and it is passed and becomes a law.

Mrs. Thompson's bill continued to sleep on the table until near the end of the session when the introducer of the bill, having ascertained that she had enough votes to pass it, moved to take it from the table. I again opposed it, but it passed, though members who voted with me and said they approved my action at the time it was first defeated, then voted for it.

There are various ways of making laws, and I have taken considerable space to explain how opposition to a bill or law can be overcome, thinking it might interest the readers of the "Times."

Governor Silzer vetoed this bill. It was passed over his veto. And now, as I expected and said at the time of its passage, a way was found to get the money. When the general appropriation bill later came along it contained an item of \$75,000 to dig this ditch. Governor Silzer vetoed this particular item, but it was also passed over his veto.

In all the legislative action regarding this bill Senator Mathis, of Ocean County, always sat behind Mrs. Thompson and seemed to direct her moves. He personally sought me out, explaining how necessary this new ditch would be to aid navigation for this inland waterway and how the State of New Jersey would reap great benefit by selling riparian rights, etc. He seemed to be the generalissimo in engineering this bill through the Assembly. From what I know about the location of this part of the New Jersey coast, I do not think the State will be able to sell any riparian rights because of the digging of this ditch—not in fifty years.

I might incidentally state that Senator Mathis was chairman of the appropriation bill that contained the item of \$75,000 with which to commence work upon this ditch, and next year \$75,000 more will be appropriated, and perhaps that will not be enough to complete the job, as these are the days of high wages and materials.

This is only one example of how your money was expended, Mr. Taxpayer, by the Legislature of 1924. Does it meet your approval?

## ARTICLE X.

## NEW JERSEY LAWMAKERS EXTRAVAGANT WITH STATE FUNDS IN SPITE OF OPPOSING VOTES AND THE GOVERNOR'S VETO POWER—CONCLUDING ARTICLE TO DEAL WITH DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES.

There were a great many bills carrying appropriations and increasing salaries that I voted against, as the record of the Legislature will show. Permit me in this article to call attention to several such appropriations as examples of expenditure that seem to me were unnecessary and uncalled for in increasing the heavy load of our over-burdened taxpayers.

A joint resolution of this nature for the expending of \$50,000 by contract with one or more advertising agencies to advertise the "industrial, agricultural, residential and recreation advantages of New Jersey."

Now could there be any more foolish or unnecessary expenditure of public money than was embraced in such a proposition? New Jersey is one of the original thirteen colonies, that was first settled, and older than the government of the United States, located between the largest cities in the Union, traversed by railroads and improved public highways in every direction and peopled by a large, intelligent citizenry whose whole seacoast is America's playground, with geological maps of every section and cross-section of the State accessible to every inquirer seeking knowledge of New Jersey's minerals and soil, yet the Legislature of 1924 passed this joint resolution to make contracts with one or more advertising agencies to exploit New Jersey's advantages.

Governor Silzer vetoed this joint resolution, condemning such expenditure as unwise; nevertheless, it was passed over his veto and the expenditure authorized.

Appropriations of this nature and kind lead one to ask, has legislation in New Jersey run mad?

There was a bill passed to defray the proper and legitimate expenses attending a national encampment of Veterans of Foreign Wars at Atlantic City some time this year. This bill was also vetoed by the Governor for want of particularizing what the "expenses" were to consist of, alleging that they were too indefinite, and his veto was sustained. Yet the Appropriation Committee put an item in the appropriation bill of \$25,000 for this same purpose which the Governor again vetoed for the same reasons stated in his previous veto, but it was passed over his veto.

In 1921 the Legislature of that session passed an appropriation of \$10,000 to dig a ditch or channel to straighten the Salem creek, leading from the town of Salem to the Delaware river, said money to be expended only when the United States Government had appropriated sufficient funds to complete this job. As this present creek is navigable for steamboats and other sailing craft, this new channel was to be of sufficient depth and width to accommodate the same kind of vessels and would be about a mile in length. It will thus be observed that it will be quite a large and costly undertaking, and as it is tidewater navigation over which the United States has jurisdiction, it was therefore a United States job rather than a State enterprise. Since 1921 the United States Government has not appropriated a dollar for this undertaking, but this Legislature of 1924, without any estimate of the cost thereof, appropriated as a starter for the digging of this ditch or channel the sum of \$25,000. The Governor vetoed this bill, but it was passed over his veto, notwithstanding his cogent reasons contained in his veto message.

The readers of the "Trenton Times" are familiar with the fact that four or five years ago the people of New Jersey voted to bond themselves for \$14,000,000, a like sum being furnished by the State of New York, under an agreement between the two States, to build the motor vehicular tunnel under the Hudson river at Jersey City, and a like agreement between the States of New Jersey and Pennsylvania to build a bridge across the Delaware river at the city of Camden. The total cost of these enterprises, based upon engineering investigation and reports, was to be the sum of \$28,000,000, each State furnishing its pro rata share thereof. These public undertakings are still unfinished, and the commissions in charge of constructing the same reported to the Legislature and the Governor that it would require seven or eight millions of dollars more on the part of New Jersey to complete the same.

By an agreement between the States of New Jersey and New York, approved and sanctioned by the Congress of the United States whereby there was created what is known as "The Corporation of the Port of New York Authorities" with chartered rights and vast powers to develop the Port of New York in the handling of its immense, congested and rapidly growing traffic more expeditiously and with less expense.

Before the introduction of a bill to submit to the voters of New Jersey the raising of this seven or eight million dollars by a bond issue there were a number of conferences held between the Governor of New York and the Governor of New Jersey and members of the Legislature, with the commissioners composing

the Port of New York Authorities, in reference to furnishing the additional seven or eight million dollars to complete the same. The Commissioners of the Port of New York Authorities offering to furnish the seven or eight million dollars by a bond issue of their own by which they would stipulate to complete the tunnel, thus relieving the States of New Jersey and New York of furnishing the said seven or eight million dollars, with the proviso that the States of New York and New Jersey should endorse said bonds. Both the Governors of New Jersey and New York were in favor of accepting this proposition, but the Legislature of New Jersey refused. Consequently a bill was introduced and passed in the Legislature of New Jersey proposing the issue of \$8,000,000 of bonded indebtedness, which, under the Constitution of our State, has to be approved by a vote of the people. I voted against this bill because I did not want to saddle New Jersey with any more bonded indebtedness and because I thought we should accept the very fair offer of the Port of New York Authorities in completing this tunnel proposition, and which would not only relieve New Jersey of the principal of the bond issue, but also the annual interest charges at 5 per cent., or \$400,000; and further, I shall vote against said bond issue at the general election.

Another bill was introduced and passed appropriating by the State of New Jersey the sum of \$50,000 to enable the Port of New York Authorities to make preliminary work that it was claimed was necessary for borings, surveys, engineering investigations, to build a bridge across the Kill von Kull between Perth Amboy and Staten Island. There is now a ferry running between these two points which is very much used by automobilists in going from New Jersey to New York City and Brooklyn, and at times it is so congested that waits of an hour or more are necessary to make the passage. The Port of New York Authorities are vested with power and control all avenues of travel for thirty miles inland around said harbor of New York, and hence includes this Perth Amboy and Staten Island ferry. This bridge will be a costly construction, but one, sooner or later, necessary to have built. I voted against this appropriation because I thought if the Port of New York Authorities could furnish \$8,000,000 to complete the motor vehicular tunnel they would also be able to furnish the money for the bridge, sooner or later.

As soon as this bill was introduced by the members or senator from Middlesex County, the members from Union County got busy and thought that they, too, should have a bridge across the Kill von Kull connecting Elizabeth with Staten Island, and they therefore had a like bill drawn and passed appropriating \$50,000 for the building of a bridge at this point under the authority of

the Port of New York Authorities, and for the same reasons I voted against this bill also.

I had intended to close these articles which I have been writing concerning my legislative action in the legislative session of 1924, but, as I desire to give a few reasons why I opposed and voted against the many million dollar appropriations asked for by the Department of Institutions and Agencies for the construction of new and costly buildings and the alteration of many others in the control of that department, which would lengthen out more space than would be given by "The Times" for this article, I defer further comments concerning the same for one more article which will close the series.

The writing of these articles has given me considerable labor, but I deemed it time well spent to give the people of New Jersey an insight of how legislation is conducted by their lawmakers and how their money has been expended, and I trust my action meets their approval.

#### ARTICLE XI.

HOW, EVEN WITH RIGHT TO TALK FIVE MINUTES DENIED, TREMENDOUS EXPENDITURE FOR INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS WAS REDUCED AND MUCH MORE THAN THE MILLION SAVING PROMISED WAS EFFECTED.

Because of engagements in court I was prevented last week from preparing and publishing my concluding article on "Legislatures, Past and Present."

Early in the session there was introduced in the Assembly a bill prepared by the Commission of Institutions and Agencies pertaining to that department.

It proposed to levy a half-mill tax on all the taxable property in the State of New Jersey each year for a period of four years, which it was estimated would produce about \$9,000,000.

This State department has a general supervision over about twenty-five different institutions and agencies, including prisons, reformatories, asylums, hospitals and the like.

To properly house, protect and care for the inmates of these different institutions the State has erected large and costly buildings with all modern improvements and has made additions thereto as needed from time to time.

Each of these institutions has a head master or keeper, with assistants, medical and otherwise, to direct, care for and look

after the inmates committed to their charge, rendering them all needful services.

The bill of last winter proposed to expend the \$9,000,000 income under the direction of this Commission of Institutions and Agencies during a period of four years in constructing new buildings and additions and for remodeling others.

It was a large and bold undertaking and carried a larger appropriation than the Legislature had ever before made at one time for one purpose.

At the head of this department of Institutions and Agencies is one Burdette G. Lewis, and by various acts of the Legislature he holds his office by virtue of this Institutions and Agencies Commission, and is vested with almost autocratic power. He belongs to this new school of Criminology and Penology for the reforming of criminals, and this large appropriation was principally to be made to aid him in carrying out these new and advanced ideas, ideas which he has sought to inculcate and put into practice ever since he has been at the head of the department. He is an energetic and forceful person, a believer in reforming criminals rather than in punishing them, and is continually delivering lectures and writing theses and promulgating propaganda along these lines. By education and ability he probably ranks near the head of the group of prison reformers. He receives and annual salary of \$12,000 and probably costs the State \$3,000 more for a chauffeur and the upkeep of his State automobile. The total appropriations for the Department of Institutions and Agencies for the year 1924 are \$182,230, of which \$84,100 are office expenses. By some, Mr. Lewis is considered New Jersey's most expensive luxury.

When the bill came up for passage I arose to discuss it and had not proceeded far when I was halted by Mr. Powell, leader of the Assembly, who raised the point of order that I had already exceeded my five minutes, there being a rule that no member of the Assembly can speak more than five minutes upon any one bill. This rule, however, is seldom enforced. I had seen Mr. Lewis flitting through the Assembly that morning, and as he was very much interested in this bill I presume Mr. Powell was tipped off to thus invoke this rule. Mr. Crawford, of Hudson, moved that my time to discuss the bill be extended and Mr. Evans, of Passaic, said I could have his five minutes, but all this was denied me, and the roll was called and the result showed that I stood like "the boy on the burning deck," alone with my vote of "No."

Here was the most important bill of the session, carrying the largest single appropriation, a bill far-reaching in results concerning future possibilities, for Mr. Lewis had informed us that after

this \$9,000,000 was expended he would need many millions more, as his plan or scheme of development of this department of building contemplated an expenditure over a period of nine years of the sum of \$16,915,617, and yet I, a legislator, was not permitted to discuss this bill and give my reasons for voting against it. This is the way things were done in the Legislature of 1924. How different from 1874!

The Senate would not stand for this huge appropriation, and when the bill came back to the House of Assembly it carried all told an appropriation of about \$3,157,296, and then the same Assembly, that under whip and spur, not even allowing the original bill to be discussed, without a whimper, meekly, by vote, concurred therein, and I was vindicated.

During the time this bill was pending in the Senate I met Senator Bright, of Cape May. I said to him, "Well, Senator, how are you getting along with Lewis's appropriation building scheme?" and he replied: "He has found out that there are two Vanderbilts in this Legislature."

I had said during my campaign: "If I am elected I will save New Jersey a million dollars or tell who blocks the way."

This Lewis bill which I opposed carried an appropriation of \$9,000,000. As it finally passed it carried an appropriation of about \$3,157,296—a difference of \$5,842,704.

I claim that my standing alone and voting "No" against this bill as originally introduced, and calling public attention thereto in the press; that my voice was heard in the Senate and found an echo in good old Senator Bright who proved to be another "Vanderbilt" as help-mate. Therefore I more than redeemed my promise.

Let me say in my concluding article to the readers of the "Times" that from what I know by my past experience and otherwise about the State's public expenditures, that I could write a hundred letters pointing out how the people's money is foolishly, wastefully and wrongfully expended, but I close the chapter, ring down the curtain, feeling my duties are done. Mr. Taxpayer, if you ever want such reckless public expenditures of your money stopped you must take radical action.

You have read how two thousand years ago the greatest Man who ever lived went into a certain temple and drove out those who polluted it. Now, if you taxpayers are ever to get relief you will have to act likewise in that big house of yours along the banks of the Delaware.