

that a regular session did not afford time for the consideration of so important a measure. And to show their sense of the constitutional obligation to carry out the work of law reform, the proposal was submitted whether the Legislature should not ask the Governor for an extra session. The proposal was not carried, not because the Legislature thought an extra session unnecessary, for they had already determined otherwise, but because some members thought such a request interfering with the duties of Governor.

Such was the state of the business of law reform at the close of the last session of the Legislature. Since then, the commissioners have revised and reprinted the whole of their former work, and have prepared an additional report of the most comprehensive character, and another will soon be ready. Their work will occupy the attention of a Legislature through an entire session. The work is complete in itself & needs nothing further to be done to give it efficacy. It is a great reform of itself. Whatever additional work may be done hereafter can easily be acted on at regular sessions. And in order that anything further may be done, the Legislature must dispose of this. Any delay must well nigh involve the failure of the whole work; as will be shown presently.

In matters of public concern we are too apt to slumber in our official stations, while the people are suffering. It is seldom that a public functionary rises in his conscience to the full solemnity of his duty. What then is the duty which the Constitution has imposed in regard to the reform of the law & law procedure? He boldly asserts that it is the most important duty assigned by the new Constitution. And it is a duty, which reaches every public functionary under the government, who can either directly, or indirectly, in the exercise of his official authority, promote the purpose of the Constitution; no matter what his own personal opinion may be of the expediency of law reform. All other interests of the State are trivial in comparison with the administration of Justice. In all ages of the world the law has been considered the paramount interest of government. And the framers of the laws & those who improve them have been esteemed benefactors of mankind. And the heads of governments, who have, in different ages, patronized law reform, have been crowned by the historian with honors which any good man would covet. His patronage of law reform has made Justinian the most renowned of Roman Emperors: His patronage of law reform has made Edward 1st of England honored wherever the English law gives freedom to man: His patronage of law reform has covered the war garments of Napoleon with the peaceful robe of the civilian, & the blood of the battle field is forgotten amidst the mild dispensations of justice. And why should it not be so? For of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her