

tablish joint rules for the government of the General Assembly ;

Which was adopted.

The President appointed as said committee, Messrs. Holland, Russell and Hopkins.

Mr. Hogue moved that a committee be appointed to inform the House of Representatives that the Senate was organized and ready for business.

Adopted.

The President appointed as said committee, Messrs. Hogue, Vann and Arnow.

Mr. Cooper moved that a committee be appointed to unite with a committee from the House to inform the Governor that the General Assembly was organized and ready to receive any communication ;

Which was adopted.

The President appointed as said committee, Messrs. Cooper, King and Scott.

On motion, the Senate adjourned until 11 o'clock to-morrow morning.

WEDNESDAY, November 23, 1864.

The Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

The President in the Chair.

The roll being called,

A quorum present.

The Journal of yesterday was read, corrected and approved.

Mr. F. L. Villepigue, Chief Secretary elect, came forward, and was sworn in by Hon. E. J. Vann, Notary Public.

A committee from the House appeared at the bar of the Senate, and informed the Senate that the House was organized and prepared for business.

The committee appointed on the part of the Senate to inform the House that the Senate was organized and prepared for business, appeared at the bar of the Senate and reported they had performed their duty, and asked to be discharged.

Mr. Holland moved that a committee of three be appointed on behalf of the Senate, and that the House of Representatives be requested to appoint a like committee to act with the committee of the Senate as a joint and select committee, who are authorized to confer with the Governor and Brig. Gen. Miller, commanding the

Confederate forces in Florida, and report by bill for the organization of the militia for the defence of the State.

Mr. Hopkins moved as a substitute, The Military Committee of the Senate and House be instructed to confer with the Governor on such measures as may be deemed necessary for the public safety;

Which was lost.

The motion was adopted.

The committee appointed by the Senate to act with a like committee on the part of the House to inform the Governor that the General Assembly was organized and were ready to receive any communication, retired and returned and reported they had performed their duty and were discharged.

The President appointed as said committee, Messrs. Holland, Vann and King.

The committee retired, and returned and reported they had performed their duty, and were discharged.

The following message was received from the Governor:

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Tallahassee, November 21, 1864. }

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate
and House of Representatives:*

Another year of war has been added to the history of our country since you were last assembled, and yet no material change has taken place in the circumstances of the contest in which we are engaged. I had hoped to congratulate you at this time on the return of peace and the recognition of the independence of the Confederate States; but our enemy, instigated by pride, fanaticism, revenge and hate, still press on in the vain hope of accomplishing our subjugation and ruin. In this contest, Florida has done her whole duty. Her sons have been sent to all parts of the Confederacy, and to her Roll of Honor has been added many precious names since the year began. Her resources have been poured forth with an open hand, and to the extent of her capacity she

has by every means aided to sustain our glorious cause. Nor has our State escaped her full share of the miseries of war. Our cities and towns have been occupied and sacked, our fields laid waste, our servants stolen and corrupted, our subsistence destroyed, our citizens killed, and the flaming roofs of their homes have lighted helpless women and children on the way to exile and destitution. The footsteps of a remorseless foe have devastated some of the fairest portions of our State. But the people of Florida have exhibited a spirit worthy of the cause and the country for which they suffer. They have borne their afflictions with fortitude ; they have met the enemy with courage, and their indomitable resolution to maintain the rights and liberties of their country has never been shaken. The enemy has not invaded our State with impunity, but have on almost every occasion met with a bloody chastisement. In the east at Olustee, at Gainesville, and in numerous smaller engagements, they have been utterly defeated and severely punished, and at Marianna they have learnt how citizen soldiers can fight in defence of their homes.

It is but natural that the miseries of a contest so long and severe should produce in the hearts of all a desire for peace, and this, indeed, is the unanimous wish of the Southern people. But as earnestly as we desire peace, a dishonorable peace is not for a moment contemplated. The ignominy of such an event would be intolerable, rendering life itself a burthen and a curse. The people of the Confederate States have asserted that independence to which they are entitled by every principle of right, human and divine, and to yield that right while resistance is possible, would be pusillanimous and base. A peace that does not secure our independence would be an affliction at least as great as war itself. Anything less than independence is subjugation, and would entail upon us our children social and political evils of the greatest magnitude. The design of our enemies is far beyond the ordinary purposes of war; they aim to overthrow our whole social fabric and their character forbids

the idea that they would show mercy to a subjugated people.

The reconstruction of the American Union, as it existed under the Constitution of the United States, is now impossible, under any circumstances that can be imagined. That was a Union of consent. It was based upon a compromise of the conflicting interests of widely separated States, and as long as the purposes and obligations of the Constitution were observed by the States of the North, the South, though her interests were continually suffering by the union, steadfastly abided by its engagements. When that compact which formed the Union was broken by our enemies, the tie no longer existed, it had been severed by them, and the South was left free to direct her own political destiny. But our enemies, not satisfied with violating the Constitution, determined to compel us to submit to their lawless government, and in the bonds of a hated union to endure their loathsome embrace. To accomplish this nefarious design they have brought against us vast armies, assisted by mechanical arts and arms of the greatest perfection, backed by immense resources. The people of the Confederacy have successfully resisted every effort of the enemy to subdue them. In this conflict the baseness, cruelty and perfidy of our foe have exceeded all precedent; they have developed a character so odious that death would be preferable to reunion with them. The men who have slain our fathers, sons and brothers, insulted our women and ravaged our country, cannot be again united with us by any tie under Heaven. It is treason against our country and against humanity to entertain such a thought. This is the sentiment of all true Southern men. In all legislation, therefore, the consequences of this fixed determination of the South should be kept in mind, and nothing should be omitted that can strengthen us in making good this great resolve.

There is but one way by which peace can be attained, and that is a recognition of the independence and rights of the Confederate States by the Government of the

United States. This will only be done when the people of the North are fully satisfied that the subjugation of the South and the re-establishment of the Union are impossible, and they can only be satisfied of this fact by being beaten in the field. Some Southern statesmen, whose patriotism I do not question, have thought that other means, not incompatible with the interests and dignity of the Confederate States, might be adopted by which peace might be obtained. A Convention of the States North and South has been proposed as a feasible plan, a means of arriving at a peaceable settlement of this controversy and stopping the further effusion of blood. I think it will be found that any hopes based upon such a policy as this will prove to be utterly fallacious. There could be no object for such a Convention, unless it was to compromise the questions involved in this contest. The Confederate States have no compromise to offer or accept. They have but one desire—independence—and this does not admit of degrees. If the Government and people of the North are willing to recognize this, there is no necessity for a Convention. If they are not, the Convention could do no good. The treaty making power of the Confederate Government and the Government of the United States, as delegated by sovereign States claiming to be independent, is amply sufficient to arrange the terms of peace, when peace shall be desired and determined upon by the Northern people. All irregular and questionable ways to peace should be regarded with disfavor and suspicion. They create false hopes and false issues amongst our people, and are calculated to lower the tone of public sentiment in regard to the great purpose of this strife. Nothing is further from me than to condemn the honest exertions of any to put an end to this horrible war by an honorable peace, but I cannot conceive how it is possible to settle so simple a question as the recognition of the Independence of the Confederate States by the complications and discussions of a Convention of questionable authority and discordant elements. These reasons are in addition to the great objection that, in order to enter

such a Convention as this, the States must again resume the rights and powers which they have delegated to the Confederate Government, thereby destroying the bond of Southern unity in a common cause, to maintain which so much blood and treasure have been expended. It is not to be supposed that the people of the United States would consent to such a Convention unless they expected to obtain some advantage thereby, and our experience of that people has established the fact that, at least in regard to ourselves they consider themselves bound by no pledges and no principles of honesty or honor. Besides, the men who have deliberately trampled upon the ancient and sacred Constitution of their country and violated the compacts made by our fathers would hardly be bound by the pledges or agreements made with those who had humbled their pride and taken away their greatness, any longer than it would be their interest to do so. I regard, therefore, this project of a Convention of States as a snare and a delusion. Let us make up our minds to the stern conditions of the contest. We must place the enemy in a position in which they will desire peace with us; we must meet and defeat their armies and the brigands whom they send to desolate our country; we must fully convince them that it will be worse for them to continue this war than to put an end to it, and dispel the delusion that they can subjugate and make provinces and dependencies of these Confederate States. When this is done, there will be no difficulty about the method of arriving at peace. Until it is done, there can be no peace. For this reason every energy of the Government and people of the Confederacy should be bent upon the successful prosecution of the war, and every private interest should be made subordinate to the public welfare.

STATE DEFENCES.

The attention of the General Assembly has been frequently, earnestly, and heretofore unsuccessfully, invited by

me to the necessity for the enactment of laws requisite to secure a proper military organization of all persons capable of bearing arms who are not in the military service of the Confederate States. The condition of the State and country are such as to induce me again to press upon your consideration a matter so vital to the welfare and safety of our State and her citizens. Since the last session of the General Assembly the enemy has made repeated efforts to occupy various sections of the State. They still occupy many portions on our coast, and are doubtless contemplating other raids and advances into the interior. The necessity for a proper organization of all the available strength of the State is more imperative now than when I urged it heretofore. I regard this as a subject of paramount consideration, calling for your earnest and prompt action. In the progress of the war the time has arrived when every man in the State able to bear arms must be placed in position for the defence of his country, his family and property. The State has sent into the armies of the Confederacy all her able-bodied men not engaged in necessary pursuits at home. The majority of these have gone to distant fields, where they have won imperishable renown for themselves and the State they have represented so gallantly, leaving but a small proportion for the defence of Florida, who, although as brave and gallant as their brothers in arms now serving in other parts of the Confederacy, are not sufficient for the proper defence of the State. The exigencies of the war have rendered it necessary for the Confederate government to rely, to a great degree, on the remaining population of the State for support and co-operation. Properly organized, armed and equipped, the militia of the States has proved a most important auxiliary in the public defence, and in our own State this class of our troops, with imperfect organization and indifferent arms, has, on the occasion of meeting the enemy, fought like veterans. Suitable laws are, however, the only means by which a large and important class of our citizens can be put in position to render military

service in cases of emergency. The necessities of the country will not permit that every able-bodied man should be sent permanently into the field. There are duties to be performed and services to be rendered at home, by persons occupied in various useful pursuits, which are as necessary to the public defence as the army itself, and without which it could not subsist a single day. Persons of certain occupations are necessarily exempted from service in the field. By proper enactments, these men thus exempted can be made available for temporary service, in case of necessity, without materially interfering with their pursuits. Agriculture, and the useful arts, and the operations of the civil government, need not be interrupted seriously by such service.

The existing militia laws are totally impracticable, conflicting and impossible to be carried into effect. These laws were adopted for an entirely different state of circumstances from those which now exist, and are altogether inapplicable in the present condition of affairs. In order to render the organization of the forces of the State efficient, stringent provisions should be enacted to enforce obedience to the law by both officers and men, and such penalties annexed to a violation or neglect of the law as will effectually compel prompt compliance with all its provisions. Any military law, without sufficient penalties for disobedience, will fail in accomplishing the end proposed. The willing and patriotic should not be expected to yield their cheerful service, even though it be temporary, while the indifferent and timid can evade it.

The defence of the State and its protection from occupation, devastation and pillage by the enemy having rendered it necessary that our whole available force should be put in condition and preparation to meet the threatened raids of the enemy, I issued a Proclamation on the 30th July last, calling upon all the citizens of Florida capable of bearing arms, regardless of age or occupation, to organize into companies, and directing the enrollment and manner of organi-

was general and enthusiastic throughout the entire State. With one impulse, the people met and organized into companies, some of which have rendered valuable service, cooperating with the Confederate forces, and in response to orders to march to points threatened by the enemy. The organization of infantry in Middle Florida being sufficient to form a regiment, they were so organized with the necessary field officers. At the same time orders were issued for the formation of a regiment of cavalry in East Florida, and a battalion of cavalry in East, Middle and West Florida respectively. Objections occurred that induced me to believe that, under the existing circumstances, the cavalry companies, acting independently, could render more efficient service and prevent embarrassment. After the elections were ordered, I was informed that the State troops would not be subsisted by the Confederate government, unless for the time being mustered into the Confederate service, and no legal provision had been made by the State to subsist such troops. As companies they could report to and be placed under the orders of a captain of the Confederate army, as many of them did in East Florida. As a regiment, they could not properly have reported to an officer of this rank, or any Confederate officer at that time in East Florida. The cavalry companies in West and Middle Florida expressed a preference to remain independent, I therefore caused the latter orders to be suspended. Circumstances have, however, changed, and I recommend that a provision be made authorizing their formation into battalions and regiments.

In effecting the organization of these troops it was necessary to depart somewhat from the letter of the existing militia laws, which as before stated are impracticable to a certain extent. The spirit and intention of the law, however, has, I think, been carefully observed, and the spirit of the people and the exigencies of the times did not admit of legal scruples when the safety of the State and its citizens was in hazard. If the course I have pursued meets your

sanction, I shall conclude that you appreciate the earnest solicitude I feel for the safety and protection of Florida. The accompanying Report of the Adjutant and Inspector General will inform you of the number and locality of these organizations. As far as I can learn, the companies have efficient officers, and, with a proper military law, can be made still more effective. I would recommend that, if consistent with the views of the members of the General Assembly, the present organization be recognized and continued, and that a suitable law be enacted to make them efficient, and to require all persons capable of bearing arms, and not in the military service of the Confederate States, to unite with some company of their respective counties for service in cases of emergency.

STATE OFFICERS.

Since the session of the last General Assembly the enemy have captured, taken off and hold as prisoners the Hon. Allen H. Bush, Judge of the Western Judicial Circuit, the Hon. Jesse Norwood, Senator, the Hon. Joseph B. Roulhac, one of the Representatives, and Wm. H. Kimbell, Esq., Sheriff of Jackson County, the Hon. William Jones, Senator from Washington County, and several county officers in other parts of the State. Under existing statutes, no provisions of law exist to remedy the evils to the public interests caused by the absence of these officers. For the suitable remedies to be provided under the circumstances and for information as to the amendments considered necessary to be made to existing laws, you are respectfully referred to the able report of the Attorney General.

FINANCES.

When Florida seceded from the United States, her Treasury was empty. The system very properly adopted had been merely to raise by taxation an amount of revenue barely sufficient to defray the current expenses of the Civil Gov-

ernment in a time of profound peace. The exigencies of an unexpected and unparalleled war required that the credit of the State should be used to meet the public expenditures. It was found impracticable to raise means by the ordinary method of loans sufficient for the increased expenditures rendered necessary. The General Assembly, therefore, adopted the system of issuing Treasury Notes to defray the increased expenses of the State, and the Convention by an irrevocable ordinance pledged the public lands of the State for the redemption of these notes exclusively. The faith of the State and the public domain of the State are, therefore, pledged for the redemption of these notes, dollar for dollar in specie. The amount of treasury notes now in circulation is, according to the report of the treasurer, \$1,103,622.07. This constitutes the principal and only debt of the State, except a bond debt of \$370,617. The expenses of the Government have been largely increased by a depreciation in her Treasury Notes, sympathizing with the Confederate currency, the depreciation of which has been caused as much by acts of questionable financial policy on the part of the Confederate Government as by the redundancy of that currency itself. The State of Florida has received Confederate Treasury Notes in all payment of taxes and for all other public dues, except the purchase of the lands pledged for the redemption of our own Treasury Notes. The consequence has been that while we have paid out a large amount of our notes, very few if any of them come back to the Treasury, except in the purchase of lands, almost all taxes and all other public dues being paid in Confederate currency. This is owing to the fact that the currency of the State is held at a small premium and for the purchase of lands. The present system amounts simply to the loan or endorsement each year to the Confederate Government of the amount of the revenue of the State, substituting our own Treasury notes for those of the Confederate States to that extent. The effect is continually to increase the amount of State currency, without any means, except the partial sales

of public lands, of retiring any portion of the same. I think it will be admitted that a system like this is not compatible with the interests of the State, and not at all necessary to sustain the credit of the Confederate Government. It would be much better for the State to appropriate this amount to be paid absolutely or loaned to the Confederate Government, than to continue the evils arising from the two currencies in the management of the finances of the State. The consequence of these causes is, that although the debt of the State is not large and the security ample, the currency of the State, which is to be redeemed and must be redeemed in gold or its equivalent, is very greatly depreciated, making still larger expenditures necessary and constantly increasing the public debt. I would therefore recommend to the General Assembly one of two measures in regard to this subject; either to make the Treasury notes to be hereafter issued by the State redeemable in Confederate currency, or to receive no other but State Treasury notes in payment of State Taxes. It is not my purpose to recommend any measure that would tend to depreciate or discredit the Confederate currency; nor do I think that either of the measures proposed would have this effect. Other States of the Confederacy have based their financial policy on one or the other of these plans, and the Confederate Government itself only receives its own notes in the payment of Confederate taxes. It is expected that the State of Florida will attend to her own interests in this matter. It is the duty of her Government to do so. It is not considered necessary to identify the credit of our State in its whole financial policy with that of the Confederate States in a manner entirely different from that of any other State in the Confederacy. I am satisfied that some other policy should be adopted better calculated to produce harmony in our financial plan and to establish definitely our system of receipts and disbursements, that the State may not pay out one currency and receive her dues in another. I think that no inconvenience can arise to tax-payers from the adoption of such a system. There is amply sufficient State

currency extant to enable every tax-payer to obtain enough for the payment of all State taxes. Although the law of the State positively fixes no specified currency in which our taxes shall be paid, other than specie or our own Treasury notes, yet the resolutions of the General Assembly in relation to Confederate Currency have been of such a character as to amount to an authorization of the receipt of this currency by the State and a condemnation of its refusal. Under these circumstances, I concurred with the Treasurer in his view in regard to the receiving of Confederate Treasury notes in the payment of all public dues.

You are referred to the reports of the Comptroller and Treasurer for information relative to the revenue and expenditures for the past year.

TAXES.

In connection with the above-mentioned subject, allow me to direct your attention to the propriety of increasing the taxes, at least to a certain extent. The taxes remain the same that they were at the commencement of the war, one-sixth of one per cent., yielding a revenue estimated, the last fiscal year, at \$138,103, while the expenditures of the State for the same time was \$508,676. The present tax being intended merely to meet the expenses of the government in time of peace, furnishes but a small part of the expenses that are now necessary on account of the war. It has been thought desirable, in consideration of the large Confederate taxes, to avoid, if possible, the imposition of an increased State tax, and this, to a certain extent, is correct policy. The credit of the State should be used, as it has been, to sustain the expenses of the war in part. In order, however, to sustain that credit and make it continue available for this purpose, it must not be strained beyond a certain reasonable extent. The credit of the State will be much more available when it is understood that she does not rely upon that credit almost entirely for her expenditures. I think

good policy requires that the income of the State be somewhat increased, if not in proportion to the increase of expenditures, at least to a sufficient extent to prevent our debt from becoming large enough to impair credit or further depreciate the currency. The present tax is, I believe, smaller than that of any other State in the Confederacy, and might be doubled without inconvenience to our people. The tax which they would thus at this time be required to pay would not only appreciate the value of the money in which the State pays her dues, but would thus have a double effect to prevent the accumulation of a large debt and the necessity for heavy future taxation, when the debt of the State may be held or accumulated by comparatively a few persons, who having acquired it at a time of depreciation, will reap most of the benefit of a mistaken policy in regard to taxation and finances at this time. That repugnance on the part of legislators in popular governments to increase taxation should not be indulged at the expense of sound policy and the public credit. That people is not intelligent enough to be free who cannot perceive the necessities and are not willing to submit to the burthens that the preservation and proper administration of their government require. Our people, I am satisfied, will cheerfully respond to the increased demand on their means for the necessary support of their government, even although suffering under the pressure of the times.

I would further suggest, that the General Assembly take into consideration the propriety of changing the mode of assessing taxes on slaves from the *ad valorem* to a specific tax. The *ad valorem* system, although theoretically the best and most just manner of taxation, cannot be made applicable to this species of property, being impracticable in assessment. The same objection, it is true, will apply equally to some other species of property; but as slaves constitute a large portion of the taxable property in the State, and is a species of property of a peculiar character, I think the objection to the *ad valorem* system as applicable to them is more forcible than to other objects of taxation. Taxes, as at present as-

essed, are not the same throughout the State, the Commissioners of the several counties fixing different values on slaves and other objects of taxation. This is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, and shows the practical impossibility of assessing an *ad valorem* tax with any justice or uniformity on certain kinds of property. I think it will be found that a specific tax on certain principal subjects of taxation is more just, practical and in conformity with the intention of the Constitution.

PUBLIC LANDS.

The Public Lands belonging to the State, amounting to about thirteen millions of acres, have been pledged for the redemption of the State Treasury Notes, for which alone they can be sold. The policy adopted by the Convention and the Legislature in regard to the sale of these lands, though it may have been proper at the time when the existing laws on the subject were passed, should not, I think, owing to the peculiar condition of affairs, be continued. As the currency is depreciated and the price of the lands low, they are liable to be entered largely by persons, not for the purpose of settlement or cultivation, but merely as an investment or for speculation. A great many of the citizens of the State, who are the actual cultivators of the soil, are absent in the military service, and unable to attend to their affairs at home, the purchase of lands or the increase of their farms. Under these circumstances, the best lands in the State are liable to fall into the hands of persons, many of them citizens of other States, who do not purchase them for cultivation and improvement, and the absent soldiers deprived of the opportunity of purchasing homesteads from the State on their return from the war. This is unjust and unwise, and the impolicy of the system is aggravated by the fact that the purchasers of these lands can obtain them at their legal price with currency that they in most instances only received at a great depreciation. As the evil of this system becomes

every day more apparent, I would suggest that you consider whether or not a suspension of the sale of these lands would be advisable until the termination of the war; but little inconvenience can arise to citizens from such a course, and, I think, upon due consideration, the policy of such a measure will appear. If, however, it be not deemed advisable to stop the sale of these lands altogether, I think it beyond question that their price should be increased. Notwithstanding the ample security of our Treasury Notes and the comparative smallness of our debt, these Notes are depreciated so that those who receive them for purchases made by the State only take them five or ten times less than their face value. Under these circumstances, the State must protect her interests and take care of the security of her public debt. Land is a species of property that has not depreciated in value relatively to other property, and there is no reason why the State should sell her lands for less than the reasonable market value of such lands, if they were private property. If the chief purchasers were settlers or soldiers, this principle might not apply, but there is no particular reason at present why those who are the purchasers of these lands should get them for one-tenth of their real value relatively to other lands of the same kind. The debt of the State, for which these lands are pledged, has been incurred principally in the sacred duty of aiding in the support of soldiers' families, and I think there is no reason why the State should not demand for them the highest price compatible with sound policy and justice. It will readily occur to you, that in case hostilities should terminate, or the prospect should appear of a near approach of peace and the final and unquestionable establishment of our rights as a sovereign State over this domain, that the sale of lands would greatly and immediately increase, and at the present rate the most valuable lands would be bought up by persons not designing to occupy or settle them.

SOLDIERS' FAMILIES.

The General Assembly, by "an act for the relief of sol.

diers' families," incurred the charge of assisting the families of soldiers who needed aid, designing thereby to prevent distress amongst those whose husbands, fathers or sons were in the service of their country, and directed the Governor to disburse the fund that was appropriated to this purpose "according to his knowledge of their several necessities, the price of provisions, clothing and supplies." It will be seen that the most difficult part of the execution of this intention of the Legislature to relieve soldiers' families was that discrimination in regard to the necessities of counties and even of individuals that was necessary to make the amount most available for the purpose for which it was appropriated. To ascertain the actual and comparative wants of counties and families, even imperfectly, is a matter of great difficulty. I have, however, endeavored to make a distribution of this fund in such proportions as from the data before me seemed to be the most just and expedient. The county officers have generally discharged their duties under the act more promptly and efficiently during the past year than the year previous. Only two counties have made reports how and in what manner the amount received by them has been expended. The reports from the Judges of Probate have been defective in not furnishing or giving an estimate of the price of provisions, clothing and supplies, which is a very material point in regulating a distribution under the act and in arriving at a proper conclusion as to the necessities of the several counties. It has not been possible to do so during the past year, and, to obviate the difficulty, a portion of the fund has been reserved to meet the wants of counties where the distributions, as made, did not, owing to the high prices and extravagant cost of transportation, give them an equal proportion of benefit with those counties where prices were lower and transportation less.

I think the efficiency of this act for the relief of those entitled to receive its benefits might be materially increased by an amendment providing for a general agent, whose duty it would be to visit all the counties, examine the returns,

confer with the Judges of Probate and County Commissioners and ascertain the wants of the counties, the prices of provisions, &c., to make purchases and to be at all times subject to my control and removable for inefficiency or neglect. This agent should, of course, receive a suitable compensation and traveling expenses. It is unreasonable to expect the county officers to bear the heavy expenses of a journey to the capital to receive the fund due to the counties and the expense is almost invariably paid out of the amount to be distributed to the counties. Some of the counties have received no relief, owing to the inability of the Judges of Probate or other officers to leave home in the disturbed and unsettled condition of affairs in their counties. This difficulty could be obviated by the appointment of a general agent who could place funds at a point near to and accessible to them. These advantages are obvious from the method proposed. Nor can the expense of such an agent be an objection, for, as before mentioned, the expenses incurred by county officers in coming to receive their funds must exceed the cost of a single agent appointed for that purpose. Besides, I am satisfied that the increased knowledge which such a plan would give of the affairs of the several counties in this particular would not only promote a more just distribution of the fund, but would actually save a considerable amount to the State.

In addition to this provision for a general agent, I would recommend that the county officers be required to make reports quarterly of their proceedings and of the distribution of the funds entrusted to them, and that authority be given to withhold all payments under the act to any county, the officers of which have not made the report and returns required by law until such time as they comply with its provisions and requirements. This would stimulate county officers to a more perfect and prompt discharge of their duties in this respect. With these amendments, the law as it now

stands is, perhaps, as effective as, under the circumstances, it can be made.

The accompanying report of my Private Secretary will inform you of details on this subject. The number of families reported as entitled to relief under the provisions of the act is 3,633, comprising 13,248 persons. The fund for this purpose was more than sufficient. The aggregate amount paid out to the respective counties up to the 16th instant is \$290,441.90, and there has been paid for salt for distribution \$21,001.50. In most counties the amount paid them has been sufficient to meet their wants for the ensuing year. In some counties, owing to their peculiar situation, further payments will be necessary. Three counties have received no relief, owing to the difficulty of obtaining information concerning them, and the almost impossibility of conveying money to them. It is estimated that for the ensuing year a much smaller appropriation than that made for the past year will, added to the unexpended balance of the appropriation of Dec. 3, 1863, be sufficient for the relief of all who require assistance.

SPECULATION AND EXTORTION.

I am inclined to the belief that the most efficient remedy to prevent speculation and extortion upon the necessaries of life, during the existing war, would be for the several State Legislatures (which they have the constitutional right to do) to establish by law maximum prices, and to require as a tax the excess of prices received, and such excess to be applied to the support of all indigent families, especially the families of those who are in military service. Would not such legislation on the part of the several States supercede the necessity of having commissioners to regulate prices, and to a great extent dispose of the necessity for impressments, be more equitable and satisfactory to the citizens of the States, and curtail largely the expenses of the Confederate government?

EDUCATION OF SOLDIERS' CHILDREN.

I would recommend that the General Assembly take into consideration the propriety of making some provision for the education of the orphan children of deceased soldiers. Argument is entirely unnecessary to show the duty and the policy of the State in this respect. It is a subject that appeals to the heart as well as the head, and is suggested by that wisdom which teaches us that it is good policy to obey the nobler impulses of our nature. A large number of children in our State have been, by the cruel hand of war, deprived of their fathers, brothers and other natural protectors. They have been, in many instances, left destitute or in very needy circumstances. Many of them have not the opportunity or the means of receiving that instruction which is necessary to make them intelligent citizens, and which they are entitled to by every principle of justice and public policy. The brave men that have given their lives for their country are not only entitled to the gratitude of that country, but have purchased the right that their children shall be taught, to read the history of their glorious struggle and achievements. The duty of the State, in this respect, is perfectly obvious; the only subject for consideration is the means and method by which it should be carried out. On this subject, I am not prepared to make any definite recommendation at this time. The wisdom of the General Assembly can probably devise some method by which this great public duty can be effectually discharged. An orphan of this war has claims upon the State that no consideration of convenience or economy can put off or deny.

CLOTHING FOR TROOPS.

The appropriation for clothing for Florida troops in the Confederate service, made last year, has not been all expended, but the contract for cloth now being filled and the expenses incident to making up the clothing will exhaust the

balance of it. The balance will be sufficient to meet the existing contract and the expenses referred to. Clothing is now being made up as rapidly as possible, and as fast as the cloth is received from the factory. The report of the Quartermaster General will inform you how the clothing has been distributed.

In the preparation of these clothes I have received material assistance from the ladies, who in this, as in every other matter that has the good of their country for its object, have exhibited that patriotism, industry and devotion to the public cause that they have shown from the commencement of this war. The experience of the past has, however, satisfied me that it is expedient to leave the clothing of the troops almost entirely to the Confederate Government which has undertaken this business. The Confederate Government having made extensive arrangements for this purpose, can effect it at less expense and with much better materials than the State; and that government being entirely responsible for the clothing of the soldiers, there is no uncertainty as to the source from whence they are to expect supplies and no valid excuse for neglect or failure in this respect. No arrangement can be made by the State for the purchase and manufacture of the clothing designed for our soldiers, which will ensure a certainty of supply. And as it is not contemplated to supply all of them, partiality cannot be avoided. I do not apprehend any actual destitution amongst our Florida soldiers in this respect. A fund might be properly appropriated, however, to meet contingencies and to be used only in case of necessity and for special occasions and circumstances.

CARDS.

You are referred to the report of the Quartermaster General for information in regard to the expenditure of the appropriation for the purchase and distribution of cotton cards. The cards that have been purchased could probably have been obtained at a lower price had I been authorized by the

law to make arrangements for purchasing them abroad. This I did not think myself warranted in doing. I would recommend that discretion be allowed in this respect, if an appropriation shall be made for the purchase and distribution of cards or clothing for soldiers for the ensuing year.

SALT.

Having ascertained the great convenience and advantage of contracting for the purchase of salt to be bought in quantity by the State for the use of soldiers' families, I devoted a portion of the amount appropriated for the relief of soldiers' families to the purchase of salt, which has been distributed in lieu of the money which would have been expended for its purchase by families at a much greater price than that for which it was obtained. This method has operated well, and I would recommend that a specific appropriation be made for the purchase of salt for distribution to those counties where it is most difficult to be obtained and most costly.

HOSPITALS.

The circumstances of the war have rendered the State Hospitals which were established for the particular use of the troops from this State no longer necessary, and they have been discontinued. At Richmond, however, one ward in the Howard Grove Hospital has been specially assigned to Floridians and is under the charge and efficient management of Mrs. M. M. Reid, who there continues her work of mercy and usefulness. This ward is designated the Florida Hospital, and I recommend a special appropriation for its benefit.

In place of a general appropriation for hospitals, I think it would be better if provision was made, and a fund appropriated for relief societies, to be furnished them at discretion and to be applied to the relief and assistance of our sick, wounded and needy soldiers in all parts of the Confederacy. I am satisfied that the patriotic men who have and will un-

undertake the sacred duty of attending our sick and wounded soldiers can expend to great advantage any sum that the State may deem it proper to devote to this purpose.

DISTILLERIES.

In my last annual message I took occasion to show the propriety of entirely suppressing and prohibiting the distillation of spirituous liquors in this State. Since that time my opinion in regard to the matter has been confirmed. I believe that the entire and absolute prohibition of all distilleries in the State is necessary to prevent a great evil. There has been some difficulty in applying the law, as it now exists, to the entire suppression of distillation of liquor. I have not hesitated to construe the law in such manner as I deemed the interest of the State and of the people required. I regard the licensing of particular contractors to distil spirits as a measure fraught with much evil. This construction of the law, so far from operating to prevent unlawful distillation, only operates to effect a gross monopoly by which those who are favored with contracts by the Confederate Government make large profits by distilling into vile whiskey the bread that should feed the people. I am informed that in no instance in this State has the contract with the Government been fulfilled by any distiller. These persons find it more profitable to dispose of their condemned liquor to private persons than to comply with their engagements with the Government. It is useless to endeavor to search out these persons through the various devices by which they evade the law. Nothing but positive prohibition can prevent these frauds. This policy I have adopted. Any other construction of the law would render it totally inefficient. So satisfied am I of the abuses practiced under the system of licensing contractors, that I would prefer to see all laws against distillation repealed outright rather than that an iniquitous monopoly of the profits of this damaging business should continue. I am aware that the power of the State

to prohibit her citizens from contracting with the Confederate Government and fulfilling their contracts with that Government has been questioned, and that it is represented that there is a necessity for spirits for the medical department of the service. I apprehend, however, that the Confederate Government can adopt a means of supply more compatible with the morals and support of our people than this, and I am sure there could be no other means resorted to obtain this article for medical purposes that could be more dilatory and less satisfactory.

REPORTS OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

The Reports of the Comptroller, Treasurer, Register of Public Lands and Attorney General are herewith submitted. The facts and suggestions contained in them will be found interesting and will materially assist you in legislating upon the subjects to which they refer.

Your attention is respectfully invited to the annexed Resolutions, adopted at a meeting of the Governors of several of the Confederate States, held at Augusta Georgia in October last.

Since the secession of the State and the commencement of the war, the extraordinary circumstances of the country have rendered unusual and unprecedented legislation necessary, such as has been, in many instances, difficult of practical application, and execution. It is, however, a subject of congratulation, that in the progress of a conflict in which every fibre of the body politic has been shaken to its foundation, in a country surrounded by dangers of the greatest magnitude and exigencies of the most pressing character, the supremacy of the law has been maintained throughout all parts of the State not occupied by the enemy. This is the surest evidence of the capacity of a people for the enjoyment of freedom and constitutional liberty; for lawlessness is the inevitable road to despotism. The preservation of our institutions of government is a bright harbinger of success in the

establishment of our liberties. Nor is there anything in the present aspect of the affairs of the Confederate States that should cause us to doubt the triumph of our arms and the glorious termination of this great contest. It is true that the enemy have penetrated our country in some parts; that they have inflicted immense sufferings on our people; that they have slain many of our noblest citizens and have desolated their path with fire and sword. It is also true that they now threaten us with large armies and seem still to cherish the hope of our destruction. But this they can never accomplish. Our armies confront them wherever they appear. They have defeated them on almost every battle field, and we have reason to believe that our foe can never again make as formidable efforts as he has heretofore made. He has not the men, the money or the credit to do it. Our armies, although diminished by the war, are comparatively superior to those of the enemy—superior in discipline, in courage, in endurance and in the inspiring consciousness of a great and holy cause. Heaven has mercifully blessed us with good crops, sufficient to supply the necessities and sustain the life of the country, if properly used. The administration of the Confederate Government has caused a well-placed reliance in the hearts of the people that the best use will be made of the public resources for defence. The President of the Confederate States deserves and receives the confidence of the great mass of his fellow-citizens. His lofty character, noble virtues and great abilities qualify him for a position surrounded by difficulties of an unparalleled kind, and to be the leader in a great revolution; nor can the efforts of his enemies, public or private, shake him from the eminence that he holds so gloriously for himself and so fortunately for his country. United in the support of their Government and the defence of their rights and country, the people of the Confederate States cannot be conquered. The various events and causes by which the secession of these States and this great conflict were brought to pass show

that God designed it thus to be. In Him, therefore, let us put our trust, and commend ourselves to his favor and mercy, that he may give us strength in arms and inspire us with wisdom in council and in legislation, that we may be enabled to accomplish the great destiny to which our people and country are called.

I have the honor to be, respectfully,

Your fellow-citizen,

JOHN MILTON,
Governor of Florida.

Which was read.

Mr. Hogue moved that two hundred copies of the Governor's message and accompanying documents be printed for the use of the Senate.

Adopted.

Mr. Hogue moved that the Sergeant-at-Arms be instructed to procure stationery and other necessary articles for the use of the Senate, and that he be instructed to procure one-half ream of foolscap paper from Mr. Hugh A. Corley;

Mr. Holland moved to amend by adding, And that he have the necessary arrangements made to have postage paid on the public documents sent by the members of the Senate;

Which was lost.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Hogue gave notice that at some future day he would ask leave to introduce the following bills:

A bill to be entitled An Act to create special tribunals for the trial of capital offences committed by slaves, free negroes and mulattoes.

A bill to be entitled An Act to provide for taking the census of 1865.

The committee appointed to invite some minister of the Gospel to act as Chaplain,

REPORT;

That they have secured the services of the Rev. E. L. T. Blake.
D. P. HOGUE, Ch'n.

Received and concurred in.

Mr. Holland gave notice that at some future day he would ask

leave to introduce a bill, to be entitled An act in relation to estates in this State.

Mr. Hopkins gave notice that at some future day he would introduce a bill, to be entitled An Act for the protection of the citizens of Florida.

Mr. Arnow moved that a committee of three be appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the printing of the Senate;

Which was adopted.

The President appointed as said committee, Messrs. Arnow, Hogue and King.

Mr. Holland gave notice that at some future day he would ask leave to introduce a bill to provide for the expenses of the Circuit Courts when held at Chambers.

The President appointed as a committee on the part of the Senate to act with a like committee on the part of the House, to confer with the Governor and Brig. Gen. Miller in reference to a bill for the organization of the Militia, Messrs. Holland, Scott and Russell of Jefferson.

Mr. Hopkins presented the following resolution :

Resolved, That the House of Representatives be notified that the Senate will be ready on to-morrow to enter into the election of officers required by this General Assembly, on joint ballot, at such hour as the House may determine on ;

Which was adopted.

Mr. Hopkins presented joint resolution relative to adjournment ;

Which was adopted by the following vote :

Yeas—Mr. President, Messrs. Cooper, Duncan, Hopkins, King, Scott and Vann—7.

Nays—Messrs. Arnow, Hogue, Holland and Russell of Jefferson—4.

Ordered to be certified to the House of Representatives.

The President announced the following standing committees for the Senate :

STANDING COMMITTEES.

On the Judiciary.

On Propositions and Grievances.

Messrs. HOGUE,
HOLLAND,
VANN,
ARNOW,
NORWOOD.

Messrs. DUNCAN,
CLARY,
KING,
JONES,
ROPER.

On Military Affairs.

Messrs. COOPER,
DUNCAN,
HOLLAND,
CATER,
KING.

On Taxation and Revenue.

Messrs. VANN,
HOGUE,
RUSSELL of 17th Dist.
ROPER,
ARNOW.

On the State of the Commonwealth.

Messrs. SCOTT,
ABERCROMBIE,
VANN,
HOLLAND,
RUSSELL of Jefferson.

On Elections.

Messrs. KING,
NORWOOD,
SCOTT,
HOPKINS,
DUNCAN.

On Confederate Relations.

Messrs. ARNOW,
SCOTT,
COOPER,
HOLLAND,
HOGUE.

On Schools and Colleges.

Messrs. COOPER,
CLARY,
DUNCAN,
JONES,
ABERCROMBIE.

On Internal Improvements.

Messrs. HOLLAND,
VANN,
ARNOW,
HOPKINS,
JONES.

On Enrolled Bills.

Messrs. ARNOW,
HOPKINS,
RUSSELL of 17th Dist.
KING,
CATER.

On Corporations.

Messrs. HOGUE,
KING,
NORWOOD,
ROPER,
HOPKINS.

On the Executive Department.

Messrs. HOPKINS,
COOPER,
CLARY,
DUNCAN,
JONES.

On Finance and Public Accounts.

Messrs. RUSSELL of Jefferson,
HOLLAND,
SCOTT,
CLARY,
ABERCROMBIE.

On Public Lands.

Messrs. HOLLAND,
KING,
ROPER,
HOPKINS,
RUSSELL of Jefferson.

On Engrossed Bills.

Messrs. VANN,
COOPER,
ROPER,
DUNCAN,
HOGUE.

On Agriculture.

Messrs. ABERCROMBIE,
VANN,
CATER,
RUSSELL of Jefferson,
SCOTT.

On motion, fifty copies were ordered to be printed.

The time for the adjournment of the Senate having arrived, the President declared the Senate adjourned until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

THURSDAY, November 24, 1864.

The Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

The President in the chair.

A quorum present.

Prayer by Rev. E. L. T. Blake.

The journal of yesterday was read and approved.

The President declared motions in order.

According to previous notice, Mr. Hogue introduced the following bills:

A bill to be entitled, An act to create special tribunals for the trial of capital offences committed by slaves, free negroes and mulattoes;

A bill to be entitled, An act to provide for taking the census of 1865;

Which were placed among the orders of the day.

According to previous notice, Mr. Holland presented

A bill to be entitled, An act in relation to estates in this State;

Which was placed among the orders of the day.

According to previous notice, Mr. Hopkins presented

A bill to be entitled, An act for the protection of the citizens of Florida;

Which was placed among the orders of the day.

Mr. Holland moved that so much of the Governor's Message as refers to the condition of the Confederate States, be referred to the Committee on Confederate Relations; that portion on State defences, to the Committee on Military Affairs; that portion on State officers, to the Committee on the state of the Commonwealth; that portion on Finances and Taxes, to the Committee on Taxation and Revenue; that portion on Public Lands, to the Committee on Pub-