Railroads and Telegraphs:

Mr. LYKES, Chairman.

Messrs. DELANO, ALLEN,
MALLORY, THOMPSON.

Public Lands:

Mr. NIBLACK, Chairman.

Messrs. LYKES, LEE,
McCLELLAN, McKINNON.

Appropriations:

Mr. LYKES, Chairman.

Messrs. JONES, DUNCAN,
WILLARD, HENDRY.

Finance and Taxation:

Mr. McKINNON, Chairman.

Messrs. CRAWFORD, McKAY,
NIBLACK, ALLEN.

Public Printing:

Mr. POWERS, Chairman.

Messrs. POLHILL, MALLORY,
SHARPE, CHANDLER.

Enrolled Bills:

Mr. WALKER, Chairman.

Messrs. HENDRY, WALLACE,
CRILL, McKINNON.

Agriculture:

Mr. DELL, Chairman.

Messrs. POWERS, CONE,
WALKER, POLHILL.

Fisheries:

Mr. JONES, Chairman.

Messrs. LEE, SHARPE,
HATCHER, McCLELLAN.

State Boundaries:

Mr. HATCHER, Chairman.

Messrs. POLHILL, CONE,
CHANDLER, SPEER.

Engrossed Bills:

Mr. BRYSON, Chairman.

Messrs. JUDGE, McKINNON, WILLARD, COLE.

State Affairs:

Mr. SPEER, Chairman.

Messrs. DUNCAN, COLE, HENDRY, CRAWFORD.

Corporations:

Mr. THOMPSON, Chairman.

Messrs. McKINNE, McCLENNY, ROBINSON, WALLACE.

City and County Organizations:

Mr. JONES, Chairman.

Messrs. SPEER, McKINNE, WILLARD, POWERS.

Militia:

Mr. DELL, Chairman.

Messrs. CHANDLER, CRILL, McKAY, CONE.

Legislative Expenses:

Mr. CRAWFORD, Chairman.

Messrs. LYKES, HATCHER, BRYSON, WALLACE.

Indian Affairs:

Mr. SHARP, Chairman.

Messrs. DUNCAN, ROBINSON, DELANO, McCLELLAN.

Post Routes.

Mr. HATCHER, Chairman.

Messrs. CONE, McCLELLAN, LEE, CRILL.

Commerce and Navigation:

Mr. McKAY, Chairman.

Messrs. MALLONY, THOMPSON, POWERS, ALLEN.

Immigration:

Mr. CRILL, Chairman.

Messrs. WALKER, ROBINSON, McKINNE, JUDGE.

Mr. Judge moved that 100 copies of the Standing Committees be printed for the use of the Senate,

Which was adopted.

A committee from the Assembly informed the Senate that the Assembly was organized and ready for business.

Jonathan C. Greeley gave notice that he would contest the seat of Joseph E. Lee, of the Eighteenth Senatorial District, and asked for further time to complete the taking of testimony in the case;

Which was referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The committee on the part of the Senate, to act with a similar committee on the part of the Assembly, to inform His Excellency that both Houses were organized and ready to receive any communication he might wish to make, reported that they had performed their duty, and were discharged.

Mr. Lykes moved that 500 copies of the Senate and Assembly Journals be printed daily for the use of the members,

Which was carried.

On motion of Mr. Mallory, the Senate adjourned until to-morrow morning, 10 o'clock.

FRIDAY, January 7, 1881.

The Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

The President in the chair.

The roll was called, and the following Senators answered to their names:

Messrs. Bryson, Chandler, Cole, Cone, Crawford, Crill, Delano, Dell, Hatcher, Hendry, Jones, Judge, Lee, McKay, McKinne, McKinnon, Niblack, Polhill, Robinson, Sharpe, Thompson, Wallace, Willard—23.

A quorum present.

Prayer by the Chaplain.

The following message was received from the Governor:

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
TALLAHASSEE, FLA., January 7, 1881.

Gentlemen of the Senate and Assembly:

In welcoming you to the Capital for the discharge of your constitutional duties, I have the honor to lay before you a communication left on file in the Executive office by my honored predecessor, George F. Drew, in which he presents the financial condition and necessities of the Commonwealth, and touches upon other matters of public interest. Although it has not been the custom for the out-going Governor to address a communication to the Legislature, yet, upon full consultation between Governor Drew and other gentlemen and myself, it was decided for the best interest of the State, as well as in justice to him, that he should lay before the Legislature his transactions as Executive for the last two years. The communication is as follows:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
TALLAHASSEE, January 3, 1881.

Gentlemen of the Senate and Assembly:

It has not been the custom for the outgoing Governor to present a message, yet after consultation with the members of the Cabinet, the Governor-elect, and others, it has been decided best that I should leave on file in this office for your consideration a discussion of such matters of interest to the State as in my opinion requires it.

FINANCE.

From the reports of the Treasurer and Comptroller, you will see that—

The floating debt of the State, in Comptroller's Warrants and Treasurer's Certificates for and during the past two years was	$21,611 81
Of this amount there has been paid	16,276 56
Making the amount outstanding January 1, 1881	$ 5,335 25

Amount of Juror and Witness Certificates outstanding January 1, 1881	25,951 68
Making the total floating debt January 1, 1881	$31,286 93

Of course this does not include the salaries of the Executive and Judiciary Departments for the last quarter of 1880 and for which warrants were issued January 1, 1881.

The deficiencies for 1879 were:

For maintenance of lunatics	$2,908 56	
For contingent expenses of State	17 18	$ 2,925 74

The deficiencies for 1880 were:

For maintenance of lunatics	$4,591 44	
For contingent expenses of Supreme Court	1,338 08	
For repairs of Capitol	370 93	
For expense of collecting Revenue for 1880 and previous years	20,000 00	
For printing and advertising election notices, etc.	4,500 00	
For conveying prisoners to Penitentiary in 1877	29 00	$30,829 45
Making the total deficiencies of the two years		$ 33,755 19
The current expenses of the State for 1879 were		215,047 85
The current expenses of the State for 1880 were		167,755 64

These deficiencies were anticipated, and the necessity of increasing the assessment urged upon the last Legislature, but they failed to carry out the suggestions then made, and to this fact as well as to the increased demand on the several appropriations is due the scarcity of funds in the Treasury. In private interviews with prominent members of the last Legislature I urged the fixing of a sliding scale rate of taxation upon the ground that if the assessment was increased largely, as anticipated, the rate could be diminished; or, if it failed to be increased as much as expected a rate higher enough to raise sufficient money to meet the interest and pay all appropriations could be fixed. But this they failed to do, and fixed the rate at seven mills, expecting the assessment to run up to $35,000,000 or $40,000,000; but instead of this it reached only $30,382,209, rendering it absolutely necessary for myself and Cabinet, in order to maintain the credit and keep the State at a cash basis, to borrow on our own responsibility enough money in part to meet the interest on the State bonds for January, 1880, and for the interest, $490.76, on the amount borrowed, which

will require an appropriation. In this connection I think it would be advisable to pass a law similar to the one in operation in our sister State Georgia, and other States where the fixing of the rate of taxation is left to the Governor and Comptroller, who, after the assessment is finished, fix a rate sufficient to raise money enough to pay all interest and the several appropriations. At the present valuation of property and rate of taxation the State cannot be kept at a cash basis and the interest on the public debt paid.

The bonded debt is as follows :

Bonds of 1871	$350,000 00
Bonds of 1873	925,000 00
Bonds of 1857	8,760 00
Convention Bonds	1,500 00

Of this indebtedness there is

In Sinking Funds	$150,700 00
In School Funds	246,900 00
In Seminary Funds	85,000 00
In Agricultural Funds	121,600 00
Leaving in the hands of private parties	$681,060 00
This shows a decrease of the bonded debt during the present administration	$50,800 00

Besides the bonds above mentioned there is held by the Indian Trust Fund of the U. S., State bonds to the amount of $132,000, with interest, but as an offset to this the State has a claim against the U. S. for an amount more than sufficient to cover the face of these bonds with interest. And in order to stop the large amount of interest thus accumulating against the State, and in order to bring into the State Treasury any overplus that there might be after an adjustment of these claims, I have thought best to have some considerable effort made to effect an early settlement, but a more detailed statement in reference to this matter will be made further on.

The value of our bonds in the market to-day is much improved to what it was four years ago. Then the 6 per cent. bonds were worth 80 cents, while to-day they are scarce at par; the 7 per cent. bonds were worth 94 cents, while now there are few, if any, to be had for $1.06. And here I would say that the law in reference thereto should be so amended as to allow the Treasurer to purchase bonds at their market value. As it now stands the law provides that he can invest in State or National bonds at not exceeding their face value, thus virtually excluding him from the market.

UNIFORMITY OF TAXATION.

In my message to the last Legislature, in referring to this subject, I said, "It is naturally the desire of all that the taxes should be reduced to the lowest possible figure; but a certain amount of revenue has to be raised annually to meet the expenses of the government and to pay the interest on our bonded indebtedness. To distribute this burden equally amongst all the tax-payers of the State should be the desire and aim of all lovers of a fair and impartial government. The present revenue laws of this State do not seem to fully meet these requirements. Under the present system of assessment a great deal of property is assessed at a greatly less valuation than the 'usual selling price' the annual crop would sell for in the market, and in some instances at less than half the value of the crop, and scarcely one-tenth of what the owner would demand for the property were he to offer it for sale. This is a great injustice to those tax-payers who return their property to the assessors at a legal and just valuation."

Acting upon the recommendation then made for a change in the law, the Legislature passed "An act for the assessment and collection of revenue;" which was approved March 7th, 1879, putting in operation the present revenue law. But this has failed to accomplish the very thing for which it was intended, *i. e.* the equalization of assessments and the uniformity of taxes. It was thought that the present law, when put in force, would increase the assessment from $30,000,000 to 35 or $40,000,000, but the assessment has not been increased, and the same injustice to other tax-payers and wrong to the State is practiced by some—the less conscientious man having decidedly the advantage of his more scrupulous neighbor. This is due to the fact that no penalty was attached sufficient to carry out the intention and spirit of the law. And in order that you may yet be able to remedy this want of uniformity in assessments, and this imposition upon the State, I think that the present law should be repealed, and in its stead an act passed requiring the county commissioners of each county to appoint

two appraisers, whose duty it shall be to accompany the assessor on his rounds, and with him to fix the valuation of all lands subject to taxation, and whose valuation shall be final, and shall stand for four years. In this way a spirit of improvement of all real estate will be developed, and property will be assessed at something like its cash value, and though largely increasing the value of taxable property, it will give uniformity of assessment.

And here I would say that section 34, of the revenue law, should be so amended as to place the power of issuing the second warrant for the extension of the time for the collection of taxes in the hands of the Comptroller entirely, instead of the county commissioners. As the law now stands the matter rests entirely with the commissioners, who may arbitrarily suspend the collection (as has been done in one county this year) to the detriment of the State's interest. Besides this, the Comptroller, from his position, coupled with the advice from the Governor and Cabinet, is certainly the best qualified person to say when the collections shall be delayed.

And for many various reasons it would be decidedly for the interest of the State to have the revenue law so amended as to require the close of the collector's books by the 30th day of November, if not earlier, and the fixing of the sales day of property for the non-payment of taxes to the first day of January of each year instead of the first day of April, as it now stands.

PUBLIC LANDS.

From the very full and able report of the Commissioner it will be seen that the sales of public lands have continued to increase, and that the general condition of matters in his department has been improved.

In this connection it will be well for me to state that shortly after coming into office I learned that there was a large amount of swamp and overflowed lands which had been selected by the State, but for which the general government failed or declined to issue patents. Soon afterwards I visited Washington, and finding such to be the facts in the case, and also finding that it would be well for the interest of the State to have some one

residing in Washington to prosecute these claims before the Department, I appointed Colonel S. I. Wailes, of that city, an agent (without compensation) in behalf of the State to examine into the condition of the claims of this State for lands under the Acts of Congress, known as the swamp and overflowed land acts. Upon receiving the report of Colonel Wailes it was laid before the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, and subsequently two contracts were made by the Board with him to procure an adjustment of the claims of the State for lands granted by Congress under the several acts. Under these contracts he has had patented, and has turned over patents to the State, for 3,761,880.87-100 acres.

Full and complete information as to the progress of the work, the terms of contracts, and compensation, can be found in his report.

LANDS SOLD FOR TAXES.

From the report of the Commissioner of Lands and Immigration it will be seen that he has been unable to make the necessary advertisement of lands sold for taxes and subject to redemption, as contemplated by section 3 of the "Act to provide for the redemption of lands sold for taxes," approved March 11th, 1879; and as there is a large amount yet unredeemed, I think that the time should be extended to January 1st, 1882.

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT.

The Board of Trustees of this Fund, recognizing the wisdom and soundness of that policy which would tend to encourage and foster such improvements as would promote the interest of the State and its citizens, have ever been willing and ready to countenance and aid any legitimate, *bona fide* scheme looking to this end. During the past two years several propositions and proposals for the internal improvement of the State have been presented to the Board, which were not accepted, as it was believed the material interests of the State would not be advanced by them. Several railroads, canals and other corporations have been incorporated under the general act and are now pushing forward their work, notably among which are several railroads in the eastern part of the State, which are

now nearly completed. A full and complete list of the corporations recently organized accompanies the report of the Secretary of State.

HOMESTEADS.

In regard to the entries and sale of State land, I desire to make the following suggestions:

The law, as it now stands, requires the payment of the purchase money in cash upon the entry of any public land, and many of our citizens and some of the poorer immigrants are unable to do this, and so they settle upon these lands without entry. And there these squatters remain. They make only such improvements as are essentially necessary to health and life; frequently they live on in this way for years, exhausting whatever fertility there may be in the land, and when worn out they move off, leaving only worn out land and dilapidated improvements, while, in the meantime, the State has received not one cent of tax or remuneration in any way for the use of the land. Then, again, it checks and kills the spirit of improvement among the class of people settling on these lands. If asked why they do not build more comfortable houses, plant fruit trees and make other improvements, the reply invariably is: "This is State land; I am not able to buy, and I don't know how soon I may be entered out." And on this account many a poor man is prevented from becoming a landholder and a tax-payer. To obviate these difficulties in the way of their becoming tax-payers instead of squatters, and to increase the revenue from the public domain, I think every settler or intending settler upon State land should be allowed to pay for his homestead (say 160 acres or less), in three installments. One-third of the purchase money in cash upon entry, one-third two years and the other in three years after date of entry, in the meantime the land to be assessed and taxed as the property of the settler. In this way not only a considerable revenue will be brought into the Treasury from lands which, under the present system, are of little or no benfit to the State, but a door will be thrown open for the encouragement of settling and improvement among the poorer classes of our citizens and immigrants which will, in the course of

years, prove of incalculable benefit to the State of Florida. A home will be placed within easy reach of the poorest, and a feeling of protection and security will be produced among the settlers on public lands that will develop the thrift and economy necessary to secure the means with which to buy the land.

IMMIGRATION.

From her local advantages and internal resources our State has always offered superior inducements to immigration, but it is only within the past two years that any decided step was taken to secure that increase of population and capital for which all are now so anxious. Two years ago, by an act of the Legislature, a Bureau of Immigration was established, with power to appoint a commissioner for the purpose of inviting and encouraging immigration, with a view to the speedy settlement of the vacant lands of the State. This was done, and Hon. Seth French appointed Commissioner. With headquarters at Jacksonville, he commenced operations soon after the adjournment of the last session of the Legislature, and has continued to work for the desired end. A pamphlet with a map accompanying it was published by him early in 1879, which has been extensively circulated, and notwithstanding the defects and imperfections necessarily incident to the getting up of such a work without any reliable information or data, much good has been done by it. Another has recently been published giving fuller and more reliable information, and will no doubt do much more towards furthering the purposes of the act. It is gratifying to know that the records and correspondence of this Department show much interest awakened and still growing in all sections in behalf of Florida.

From the report of the Commissioner, it will be seen that an increase in the appropriation is asked. And now that the movement has been fairly made and some progress attained in this work of rapidly peopling the State, it would be bad policy to stay the work. Rather let us strengthen the efforts until the flood tide of immigration is turned from the West to Florida and the South. Within the last two years much has been done, and the influx of capital and labor has

been much greater than for any previous years, but much can and must be done before we can realize the full fruition of the purposes for which the Bureau of Immigration was established.

LANDS IN THE FORMER PALATKA MILITARY RESERVATION.

In accordance with a resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund I think that the State should relinquish all claim to the swamp lands embraced in the former Palatka Military Reservation, which have been entered by settlers under the homestead laws, and in which said settlers have in good faith complied with the requirements of said laws, or which have been entered at the United States Land Office at private entry, or located with military land warrants.

DIGEST OF THE STATUTES.

The act of 1879 entitled "An Act to Provide for the Compiling and Digesting of the Laws of Florida" provided that the digest then under preparation by Colonel J. F. McClellan should as soon as completed be submitted to a commission, to consist of Hons. P. W. White, John A. Henderson and Geo. P. Raney, for revision and examination. Colonel McClellan completed the digest in the early summer of 1880, but the gentlemen composing the commission announced their inability, on account of other engagements, to undertake the task of such revision and examination. They, however, recommended that it be placed in the hands of Colonel C. C. Yonge if he would undertake the work which the statute contemplated they should perform, and that I agreed to recommend to the Legislature that Colonel Yonge be paid a proper and just compensation for such revision and examination when completed. They consented too to receive the digest and deliver it to Colonel Yonge under this arrangement, which was agreed to by all concerned. I am informed that Colonel Yonge will soon have completed this important work, requiring, as it does, great care and accuracy. From all I can learn, no one in the State is better qualified than Colonel Yonge for the task, and I have no doubt as to the digest, when it shall have passed from his hands, being a reliable and creditable repository of our statute law. Colonel Yonge should be paid a just compensation. He is entitled to great credit for being willing to undertake the work under the circumstances.

INDIAN WAR CLAIMS.

The Indian Trust Fund of the United States holds, and has held for many years, bonds of the State of Florida to the amount of $132,000, with large arrearages of interest due on them, aggregating now, principal and interest, over $300,000. In all estimates of the State's indebtedness, these bonds are mentioned, but coupled with the remark that as the State has large claims against the United States for expenses incurred and paid by the State in suppressing Indian hostilities, these bonds should be considered as an offset, and not be included among the State's debts. But allowing this matter to remain in this condition has resulted in, and will continue to do, great injustice to the State.

The State claims that the United States are indebted to her in a much larger sum, in principal, than the face of her bonds, *i. e.*, $132,000, and if she is allowed interest which is clearly her due, an adjustment of the accounts would show a large balance in her favor. Again, the State is at a great disadvantage in the present condition of her accounts with the United States, for when a State is indebted to the United States, any moneys coming to her from the proceeds of sales of public lands, or any other source, are stopped and applied to her debt. And again, our bonds now in the Indian Trust Fund bear seven per cent. interest, and it is questionable at least whether the State will be allowed that rate of interest on her claim. An effort was made in 1860 to adjust these claims with the General Government, and a bill was introduced for that purpose in Congress and referred to a committee, but never reported on.

The matter since that time has, so far as I have been advised, been allowed to rest until the present administration came into power. Recognizing the importance and necessity of stopping the large amount of interest annually accumulating against us, as well as the benefits of an early settlement with the General Government, I appointed Colonel S. I. Wailes, of Washington City, with the request that he associate with him Colonel W. K. Beard, of Tallahassee, as agents of the State, to

represent her before the Department at Washington to procure this settlement, with the distinct understanding that the fee was a contingent one of fifteen per cent. of the amount collected.

They immediately commenced the examination and preparation of the State's claim, but encountered many difficulties in consequence of the displacement of important records and documents during the military occupation of the State government.

Having completed the examination as far as it was practicable, Colonel Beard went to Washington in September, 1879, to present, with Colonel Wailes, the claim at the proper Department, where he expected to find documents and other evidence bearing upon the claim, and to put the claim in such definite form as to be reported to Congress for the necessary appropriation. On arriving in Washington Colonel Beard, with Colonel Wailes, went to the Treasury Department, and there they were met with the objection that no State claim could be adjusted or examined without special authority from Congress. On the meeting of Congress these gentlemen prepared, and Senator Jones and Representative Davidson introduced in the Senate and House respectively, a resolution directing the Secretary of the Treasury to examine and adjust the claim of the State of Florida, and to pay her any balance that might be found due after providing for her bonds held by the Indian Trust Fund. The resolution was referred to appropriate committees and amended in committee, by making the reference of the claim to the Secretary of War instead of the Treasury, and requiring that Department to examine the claim and report to Congress such amount as may be found due.

The resolution, as amended, passed the Senate on the 28th of May last and was on the same day certified to the House but failed to pass that body at that session. It is now pending in the House and will, I trust, be passed at the present session. Until this resolution passes, thus giving the agent of the State access to the files and records of the War and Treasury Departments, definite statement of the claim of the State cannot be made. As far as can be now ascertained the amount of the

State's claim is about $280,000, (principal,) of which there are about $48,000, for which the vouchers and evidence are not complete, but for which additional evidence is expected to be found in the Departments at Washington.

The question of interest on the State's claim is one of material importance, and a statement prepared by the agents is herewith filed which will show the equity of the claim and the abundant precedent for its payment.

WARRANTS ISSUED UNDER ACT OF FEBRUARY 8th, 1861.

By an act approved March 11, 1879, the Governor was "empowered to appoint three suitable persons as commissioners to examine and approve or reject any and all warrants" issued under and by virtue of Chapter 1175 of the Laws of Florida, approved February 8, 1861.

On the first day of December, 1879, I appointed as such commissioners Hon. George P. Raney, Colonel Robert Bullock, of Marion, and W. C. Brown, of Hillsborough. Mr. Raney not being able to accept the appointment, I appointed, January 14, 1880, Colonel W. K. Beard, of Tallahassee, in his place.

I am informed by the commissioners that they are not yet prepared to make a definite report, but will be able to do so early in the present session of the Legislature, which will be transmitted by my successor. It may be proper for me to state here that the work of this commission, and the claims they are appointed to investigate, have no connection with the claim now pending before Congress, of which mention is made above.

COMMON SCHOOLS.

The condition of our common schools has been greatly improved and the cause of education somewhat advanced during the past two years, as is shown by the report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. But there is yet much room for improvement, and much to be done towards arousing our people to a proper appreciation of the vital importance of this question. The future prosperity and safety of Florida, and the South generally, depends upon the education of the masses, and it is clearly the duty of every citizen

and statesman to encourage and foster every object looking towards the mental and moral improvement of the country. That the present system, in its practical operations, is not all that it should be, and that our State, as well as the country at large, is not fully aroused to the importance and necessity of perfecting that system, are truths that need not be dwelt upon, for the remedy lies not in words—but work: and therefore any measure calculated to invigorate and strengthen the system, and to develop the educational interest, should be looked to at once. I am pleased to see that this matter is receiving some special attention just now in the national council, and the newly-elected Senator from Georgia, in a speech on this subject before the United States Senate, has so clearly and forcibly presented the importance of this subject, that I would be glad to know that a copy of it had found its way to every fireside in our State and the South. But, as the Superintendent has so fully discussed the whole subject in his able report, I will do no more than invite your careful consideration to the changes and modifications suggested by him.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

Agriculture is our main support in all the various pursuits of life, and it cannot be too carefully fostered and encouraged. In some of the other States, Bureaus of Agriculture have been established for the purpose of developing and guarding this most important interest, and much has been done in this direction for its prosperity and progress. In our present financial condition we are hardly prepared to take such a decided step in relation to our agricultural interest; but we may take initiatory steps which in after years will prove of great benefit and service to such a bureau, should one ever be established, by requiring the tax assessors to gather all statistical information possible on this subject while making their usual rounds. This matter was called to the attention of the last Legislature, but they failed to take any action in regard to it. At that time I suggested that the law defining the duties of the assessor should be so amended "as to require them to collect this statistical information while going their rounds assessing taxes, and compile it in a separate book, and when completed

to forward the same to some one of the officers of the Cabinet to arrange and have printed in the proper manner;" and considering this of such vital importance to the interest of agriculture and the State at large, and appreciating the vast fund of valuable and interesting information to be thus gathered, I can but renew the suggestion and to urge upon you, gentlemen, to take such action as will enable us to give to our citizens and the world at large some definite and reliable information in reference to the productions and resources of our State. In our sister State of Georgia, as well as in some others, there are also laws of compulsory inspection of commercial fertilizers, which in their operations are satisfactory not only to the consumer, but also to the dealer, as they protect both from imposition and fraud. In Georgia during the year 1879, after paying all fees necessary for the support of the Agricultural Bureau, the surplus paid into the Treasury from the fund raised in this manner amounted to about $50,000. The adoption of a similar law for this State and the appointment of a State chemist would no doubt produce similar results.

INSANE ASYLUM.

Under act of the Legislature approved March 8, 1879, during the past two years this institution has been under the immediate charge of Dr. W. B. Foreman as Superintendent, under the general direction of the Board of Commissioners of Public Institutions. And while the appropriation for the past two years has been insufficient, owing to the very large increase in the number of patients, still the management, I think, has been economical and the treatment successful. From a report of Dr. Foreman's to the Board of Commissioners of Public Institutions for the month ending December 31, 1880, I quote: "The number present since my last biennial report was 55, since which time 93 have been admitted, making a total of 148 patients in the Asylum from January 1, 1879, to January 1, 1881. Discharged 38. Died 14. Total discharged 52, which deducted from 148 leaves 96, the number now present. With scarcely an exception I can conscientiously say that the condition of the patients has greatly improved under the treatment at the Asylum, and that the benefits derived therefrom have

been incalculable to the unfortunate ones under our charge." Monthly reports and abstracts of all expenditures of money, provisions, &c., have been regularly made to the Board, and the expenditures of the appropriation has been judicious and economical, and taking into consideration the large increase of patients which necessarily greatly increased the current expenses, the deficiencies now asked, as well as the appropriation, is not thought unreasonable. From the report of the Adjutant General, it will be seen that there is an urgent demand for increased and enlarged accommodations at the Asylum. The number of patients at that institution now is so great as to leave no room for the accommodation of any others, unless some provision is made for increased quarters.

PENITENTIARY.

The efforts to make the Penitentiary, or more properly the State convicts, self-sustaining, have not proven fruitless. Under the act authorizing the same, the contract for their hire for 1879 and 1880, was given to Major H. A. Wyse, of Live Oak, Fla., who gave good and sufficient bond for the fulfillment of the terms of the contract, which required of him to pay all costs accruing after sentence; to receive the convicts at the jail of the county where sentenced, and to furnish all necessary food, clothing, and medical attention requisite to the health and comfort of the prisoners, and to pay $100 per annum into the State Treasury, thus making a clear saving to the State of more than $4000 over 1878, and more than $21,000 over 1876.

The Board of Commissioners of Public Institutions, or some members of it, together with myself, have visited the camp where they were kept, and they were always found well treated and cared for. This contract expired on the first day of the present month.

Early in December, after consultation with the Board, it was thought best to advertise for bids for the hire of the convicts for another year, so that they might be received and opened, and the contract awarded, before the first of January, since usually persons having contracts to make for any considerable amount of labor consummate their arrangements in time to commence operations with the opening year. Accordingly,

due advertisements were made throughout the State, and bids were received, and on the 18th of December were opened. The East Florida Railway Company agreeing to pay $15 a year for each convict now on hand and for all to be received during the year; to pay all costs accruing after conviction; to receive the convicts at the jail of the county where convicted, and to furnish all necessary food, clothing, and medical attention, was awarded the contract. This bid being so advantageous, and the company being willing, it was made for two years instead of one. They have given good and sufficient bond for the performance of their contract, and no doubt the prisoners will fare equally as well, if not better, than locked up within the walls of a penitentiary. Certainly this curtailing all expense, and the bringing into the treasury from $2,500 to $3,000 per annum, makes it much better for the tax-payers of the State.

The number of convicts on hand January 1, 1879, was 163; pardoned, 8; escaped, 7; died, 8.

The number of convicts on hand January 1, 1880, was 151; pardoned, 6; escaped, 6; died, 9.

In compliance with the above-mentioned contract, the Adjutant General has turned over to the company 125 convicts, for the hire of whom he received and paid into the treasury $1,950.

CRIMINALS AND FUGITIVES FROM JUSTICE.

An appropriation was made by the last Legislature for the "Arrest of criminals and fugitives from justice." Several rewards have, at different times, been offered for murders in various parts of the State, but none have been paid out of this fund, as none of the criminals were captured. The proper papers having been filed, and the law relating thereto duly complied with, several requisitions for the extradition of fugitives from justice in other States have been made, and ten were brought back and either tried or committed to await the action of the courts. In every instance, I am pleased to say, the Executives of other States have complied promptly with the request.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

In accordance with the terms of the joint resolution of Legislature, approved March 4th, 1879, the question of a Con-

stitutional Convention was submitted to the people at a general election held on the 2d day of November last, at which time there were cast, according to the official canvass of the State Canvassing Board, 14,713 votes for a convention, and 23,281 votes against a convention. I would suggest that such legislative action be taken as will be necessary to take the initiatory steps towards ridding the Constitution of such features as are objectionable.

ELECTION LAWS.

No set of laws, or combination of statutes on this subject, under existing circumstances, can be produced which would operate so well as to give perfect satisfaction to all.

From many sections come cries of irregularities and fraud, and without stopping to discuss the justice or injustice of these, I will say that every voter should have thrown around him all the protection possible to secure his perfect independence in preparing and casting his ballot, and that no means should be left to effectually check every species of fraud in our elections.

ROADS AND ROAD LAWS.

Notwithstanding the many changes made in the road laws of this State, there still exist good grounds for dissatisfaction and complaint as to the condition of the roads in most of the counties. In some way the laws as they now stand are inoperative in so far as correcting the condition of the roads is concerned, for in many instances they continue bad. However I feel confident that the Legislature will fully realize the importance of this subject, which forms a part of the material advancement of the State, and which is so essentially necessary to the convenience and advantage of all its citizens.

CAPITOL AND GROUNDS.

The appropriation for the repairs and improvement of the Capitol and grounds has been entirely exhausted and there is a small deficiency asked to cover the outstanding bills incurred in necessary improvements and repairs. It is gratifying to me, and I am sure will be pleasing to all, to see the decided improvement that has been effected by the Adjutant-General in the judicious expenditure of a part of the appropri-

ation for the neat and substantial fence enclosing the Capitol grounds.

MANUFACTURING INTERESTS.

I cannot close without calling especial attention to the manufacturing interest and industries of the State. While Florida is keeping pace with the other States in many respects, a casual glance will show that she lags in this one. Something should be done to encourage and build up in our midst such manufacturing establishments and industrial interests as will put our State in the ranks with the foremost of her Southern sisters, and that will secure for our people that influx of capital and skill so desirable for the rapid growth and development of Florida. And I think such constitutional amendment should be made as will exempt any such interest or establishment from taxation for the first five or ten years after its commencement of operations.

CONCLUSION.

In closing my connection with the Executive Department of the State, I desire to express to the people of the State, my sincere thanks for the honor they conferred in electing me to the office I am about to deliver to my honorable successor, and to thank them for the confidence and support I have ever received while discharging the duties of Governor. It affords me pleasure to be able to say that the several departments have been faithfully and economically administered, and it has ever been my constant aim and earnest desire to throw the weight of Executive influence on the side of economy. The reins of government were assumed when the State, with a depreciated credit, groaned under a heavy debt, and in restoring her, even to her present condition, many obstacles and difficulties had to be met and mastered.

I retire from the Executive Chair with the consciousness of having honestly endeavored to prove true to the oath administered upon my inauguration.

In the many arduous duties I have had to perform, the officers of my Cabinet have always yielded their steadfast support and counsel. The harmony of our intercourse has been un-

broken, and for this they will ever be remembered by me with the most pleasant recollections.

Very respectfully,

GEO. F. DREW.

I ask for this communication a careful and respectful consideration, as it treats upon matters of vital moment to the interest of the State.

I also invite your careful examination of the lucid and full reports of the several departments, herewith transmitted.

Under the existing system of biennial legislative sessions, a largely-increased responsibility is devolved upon you, and your meetings concern more deeply than before the prosperity of our beloved State. In this age of progress, two years of inaction, or of error, upon the vital subjects of immigration, internal improvements and education, may well involve a loss that cannot be recalled. If necessary, I shall take occasion at a later day to call other matters to your attention.

With the assurance, gentlemen, of my hearty co-operation with you in all measures appertaining to the welfare of the State, and wishing you an agreeable, harmonious and useful session, I am, very respectfully,

W. D. BLOXHAM, Governor.

Which was read by the Secretary.

On motion of Mr. McKinnon, 500 copies of the Governor's message, together with the accompanying reports, were ordered printed for the use of the Senate.

The following message was received from the Assembly:

ASSEMBLY HALL, Tallahassee, January 6, 1880.

HON. L. W. BETHEL,

President of the Senate:

SIR: I am directed by the Assembly to inform the Senate that the Assembly has adopted a joint resolution for the appointment of a Joint Committee, consisting of three on the part of the Assembly and two on the part of the Senate to draft Joint rules for the government of the two houses, and have appointed Messrs. Dougherty, Tolbert and Pollock such

committee on the part of the Assembly, and respectfully request the concurrence of the Senate therein.

Very respectfully,

WM. FORSYTH BYNUM,
Chief Clerk of the Assembly.

Which, under a suspension of the rules, was concurred in, and the President appointed Messrs. McKinnon and Chandler as said committee on the part of the Senate.

Mr. McKinne offered the following joint resolution:

WHEREAS, The present condition of the Internal Improvement Fund is of the greatest interest to the people of the State, and the purpose for which it was intended, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate and the Assembly, That a committee of three from the Senate and five from the Assembly be appointed to consider and report the feasibility of and the best plan for relieving the Internal Improvement Fund, and securing the construction of a railroad from the Apalachicola river to Pensacola bay, and a railroad from Ocala, in Marion county, to the waters of Tampa bay.

Which was adopted.

T. A. Carruth came forward and was sworn in as Engrossing Clerk of the Senate by L. B. Wombwell, Notary Public.

The following bills were introduced:

By Mr. Thompson:

Senate bill No. 1:

A bill to be entitled an act to supply maimed soldiers with artificial limbs;

Which was read the first time by its title and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Also the following:

Senate bill No. 2:

A bill to be entitled An act to encourage the planting of oysters in the waters of this State, and to protect the rights of owners thereof;

Which was read by its title and referred to the Committee on Fisheries.

By Mr. McKinne:

Senate Bill No. 3:

A bill entitled An act to amend the 18th section of sub. chapter 4 of an act to provide for the punishment of crime and proceedings in criminal cases, approved August 6, 1868—Chapter 1637, of the Laws of the State of Florida, and to repeal an act to amend an act entitled An act to provide for the punishment of crime and proceedings in criminal cases, approved February 1, 1869, being chapter 1699, of the Laws of the State of Florida;

Which was read by its title and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

By Mr. Mallory:

Senate Bill No. 4:

An act to authorize Commissioners to swear witnesses, and legalizing oaths heretofore administered by them;

Which was read by its title and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Also the following:

Senate Bill No. 5:

An act to authorize Dunlap F. Judah, of Pensacola, to take charge of and control his own estate;

Which was read by its title and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

On motion, the Senate went into Executive Session at 11 o'clock.

At 11:30 the doors were opened, and, upon motion of Mr. Mallory, the Senate adjourned until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

SATURDAY, January 8, 1881.

The Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

The President in the Chair.

The roll was called and the following Senators answered to their names:

Mr. President, Messrs. Bryson, Chandler, Cole, Crawford, Crill, Delano, Dell, Duncan, Hatcher, Hendry, Jones, Judge, Lee, Lykes, Mallory, McKay, McKinne, McKinnon, Niblack, Polhill, Powers, Robinson, Sharpe, Speer, Thompson, Wallace and Willard—27.

A quorum present.

Prayer by the Chaplain.

On motion of Mr. Polhill, the reading of the journal was dispensed with.

Mr. Polhill offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the President appoint a committee of two to act with the committee appointed by the Assembly to examine the books of the Comptroller and Treasuer and employ such clerical aid as may be needed.

On motion of Mr. Bryson, the rules were waived.

Mr. Crawford offered to amend the resolution by striking out that part that authorizes the employment of clerical aid.

Mr. Speer offered the following resolution as a substitute:

Resolved by the Senate, the Assembly concurring, That a committee of five, two from the Senate and three from the Assembly, to be appointed respectively by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the Assembly, to examine into and report upon the condition of the offices of State Treasurer and Comptroller;

Which was adopted, and the President appointed Messrs. Speer and Duncan as such committee on the part of the Senate.

Mr. Judge offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Committee on Finance and Taxation be requested to take into consideration the propriety of creating a license tax on commercial travellers, or that class of dealers more familiarly known as "Drummers;"

Which was referred to the Committee on Finance and Taxation.

The following bills were then introduced:

By Mr. McKinne:

Senate Bill No. 6.

A bill to be entitled An act to amend chapter 1986 of the