

WEDNESDAY, January 3, 1883.

The Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

The President in the Chair.

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

Messrs. Allen, Baker, Bryson, Chandler, Cone, Crill, Delano, Dell, Duncan, Greeley, Hankins, Hatcher, Hendricks, Landrum, McClellan, McKinne, Polhill, Pope, Powers, Proctor, Roberts, Sharpe, Sheppard, Spear and Swearingen—25.

A quorum present.

Mr. Allen moved that the reading of the Journal be dispensed with;

Which was agreed to.

Mr. Allen moved that the representatives of the press be invited to seats within the bar, and the Sergeant-at-arms be directed to have a table and chairs prepared for them;

Which was agreed to.

Mr. Polhill moved that a committee of three be appointed on the part of the Senate to act with a similar committee on the part of the House, to inform the Governor that the General Assembly is organized and ready to receive any communication he may see proper to make;

Which was agreed to.

Messrs. Polhill, McKinne and Baker were appointed as such committee.

Messrs. Mabry, Bryan, of Orange, and Osgood, committee from Assembly, appeared and reported that the House had organized and was ready for business.

On motion of Mr. Bryson, Mr. Leslie, Senator from the Thirtieth District, came forward and was sworn in by L. B. Wombwell, Notary Public.

The committee to notify the Governor reported that they had performed their duties, and were discharged.

The following message from his Excellency, the Governor, was received and read:

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
TALLAHASSEE, FLA., January 2, 1883. }

Gentlemen of the Senate and Assembly:

In welcoming you to the Capitol in the discharge of your Constitutional duties, I can but congratulate you upon the auspicious circumstances under which you have met. Never before in the history of our State have Floridians had so much to be congratulated upon, or such a brilliant outlook for the future. No State in the South is receiving more attention. Population and capital are continually entering her borders, her lands are being eagerly sought for, and her genial and semi-tropical climate invites the pleasure-seeker as well as the immigrant. Her finances are upon the most solid foundation; her securities in good demand and far above their par value, and her Comptroller's Warrants passing current in the banking institutions and moneyed marts of the country. She has no floating debt, and her taxable resources in the last two years have increased over ten million dollars—so much so as to warrant a large reduction in State taxation, and at the same time maintain a cash basis. Her Internal Improvement Fund, which has been shackled and rendered unavailable for so many years, has been practically released, and thus the fetters thrown off that have so long retarded her development. As a consequence, the gratifying fact can be announced that more miles of railroad have been constructed in her limits during the past two years than in her entire former history. The significance of such a fact cannot go unmarked. Millions of acres of her extreme southern territory are being reclaimed, which will in the future add immensely to her productive capacity,

and furnish a field for tropical productiveness without a rival in our entire sisterhood of States. But to these and other topics, so fruitful of thought, I invite your attention more in detail.

FINANCES.

It will be seen from the reports of the Comptroller and Treasurer that the total amount of warrants issued for 1881 were \$281,201.03—and for 1882 \$170,302.08. For the first time in the history of the State we have ample funds in the Treasury to pay all drafts for current expenses—no floating debt, and no deficiencies asked for. This simple announcement is a sufficient commentary upon our financial status.

The bonded debt is as follows:

Seven per cent bonds 1871.....	\$350,000 00	
Six per cent. bonds 1873.....	925,000 00	
Eight per cent. Convention bonds.....	1,500 00	—\$1,276,500 00
Of these bonds there are in School Fund....	\$285,600 00	
Seminary Fund.....	87,400 00	
Agricultural College Fund.....	134,200 00	
Sinking Fund Bond 1871.....	59,500 00	
Sinking Fund Bond 1873.....	100,000 00	—\$666,700 00
Leaving in hands of individuals.....	\$609,800 00	
Showing a decrease of amount in hands of In- dividuals during the past two years.....	\$62,500 00	
Decrease of public debt during past two years :		
Bought Sinking Fund Bonds 1871.....	\$8,800 00	
For Sinking Fund Bonds 1873, \$17,550 00 U.		
S. 4 per cent. bonds equivalent to 6 per cent.		
Florida Bonds at \$1.10.....	\$19,100 00	— \$27,900 00

The laws of Florida, Chapter 1,833, under which was issued the seven per cent. bonds, and Chapter 1,737, under which was issued the six per cent. bonds, provide that the Treasurer cannot pay over their par value, in the purchase of any of said bonds for the sinking fund. The bonds of the State have advanced so much in value since that time, that the Treasurer cannot purchase the same at their par value. Indeed our seven per cent. bonds are now quoted at 130, with none in the market. The last Legislature amended in this particular Chapter 1833, relating to the seven per cent. bonds, but by

an oversight, omitted to amend Chapter 1,937 relating to the six per cent. securities, which precludes the Treasurer from purchasing them for the sinking fund. I therefore recommend that section 8 of Chapter 1,939 be so amended as to allow the Treasurer to purchase said bonds at their market value.

TAXATION.

There is no subject of greater moment to the people than that of taxation. In order to secure a proper appreciation of the question it is necessary to refer back a few years.

At the change of administrations in January, 1877, the State tax was twelve and a half mills. The Legislature was desirous of reducing the same, but a difference of opinion existed as to the proper reduction to be made, and that body adjourned leaving the law as they found it. In October of that year, Governor Drew, ascertaining that a reduction could be made, directed the collectors, through the Comptroller, to collect ten mills in place of the twelve and a half authorized by law. In August, 1878, he directed a further reduction of one mill, and the collectors were directed to collect nine mills for that year. Thus the matter stood, with a nine-mill tax, when the Legislature assembled in January, 1879.

The question of a reduction of taxes again occupied the attention of that body. Governor Drew, then Governor of the State, pressed upon the committee the necessity of having eight mills, and requested them not to go below that figure if they desired the State kept upon a cash basis and the interest upon the public debt punctually met. They thought, however, that by suspending the Sinking Fund tax for two years, seven mills would be sufficient to carry the State through on a cash basis. Hence a seven-mill tax was passed and the Sinking Fund tax suspended for two years. This was the rate assessed and collected for the years 1879 and 1880.

When the Legislature met in January, 1881, and I entered upon the discharge of the duties of Governor, we found, notwithstanding the most rigid economy, that the State was behind over one hundred thousand dollars. The deficiencies for 1880 and previous years which had to be met amounted to \$35,685.19—(see acts of 1881, Chapter 3225,)—floating debt,

\$5,335.25; jurors' and witnesses' certificates outstanding, \$25,951.68; interest on bonded debt due January 1, 1881, \$52,250.00; salaries for the last quarter of 1880, \$13,068.00, making a total of \$132,290.12 that was due, with only \$29,683.18 in the treasury to meet the same. In other words, after trying a seven-mill tax for two years, *with the Sinking Fund suspended*, and \$22,727.38 of the Sinking Fund of former years used for general expenses, the State was unable by \$102,606.94 to meet its obligations past due. It may be said that we had the taxes of 1880 to apply to the expenses of 1881, but every one familiar with the practical financial operations of the Government for years, knows that the expenses of each current year are really met with the occupational taxes of that year and the property taxes of the preceding year; and, moreover, it will be remembered that the Legislature was in session in 1881 and its expenses had to be, and were met, out of the taxes of the previous year. Are we surprised, then, that Governor Drew on January 3, 1881, the day before he left the Executive office, addressed the following language to the Legislature:

"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 high 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 \$30,382,309, 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 Jan-

uary, 1880, and for the interest, \$490.76 on the amount borrowed, which will require an appropriation. * * *
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."

Such was the condition of our finances when the present administration entered upon its duties, and the Legislature in session, with the increased expenses necessary to the meeting of that body. The State was compelled, under Legislative sanction, to go into the market to borrow a large amount, in order to preserve her credit.

The question was then, should the Legislature allow the State to go back to a scrip basis, and its credit depend upon scrip speculators, and its expenses be necessarily increased thereby—or should they place an additional mill for one year and keep the State on a cash basis? The Legislature wisely concluded that it was much better for a tax-payer to pay an additional ten cents upon his hundred dollars of property for one year, and thus maintain the State upon a cash basis, than to allow its credit to depreciate, with all the attendant evils of an over issue of scrip. To "pay as you go" is a homely adage, but one equally applicable and beneficial to States as to individuals. I will not discuss the evils of the credit system, as illustrated by a scrip issue beyond the income of the State. The \$80,000 which we are called upon yearly to pay in the shape of interest upon our State debt is the legitimate and necessary offspring of such a policy, and should be a warning that the most thoughtless should heed.

REDUCTION OF TAXES.

The act of March, 1881, to secure an equal and uniform rate of taxation, and to pay the current expenses of the State for the years 1881 and 1882, and for the General School Fund, and for the interest on the bonded debt for said years, levied a tax of eight mills with the following proviso: "That if the Governor should discover from the aggregate assessment of the property of the State, and from other sources of revenue, the reduction of the eight mills State tax of 1882 will be justified, he is hereby authorized to direct the Collectors of Revenue to

collect only seven mills State tax for 1882." Owing to the increased development of the State the assessment showed a considerable increase for the year 1881, and I felt warranted in exercising the authority given me by the Legislature, and directed the tax to be reduced to seven mills for 1882.

The sale to disencumber our Internal Improvement Fund has necessarily placed a large amount of lands upon the tax books, and the great impetus thus given to railroad building has largely increased that source of revenue. The natural increase of wealth and population growing out of these great enterprises, as well as from other sources, has increased the revenue of the State so largely, that I am more than gratified in being able to recommend a large reduction in taxation. To reduce the taxes to the lowest estimate commensurate with keeping the State on a cash basis, is not only a duty but a pleasure. To go below that, is financial suicide. But to secure a proper reduction it is necessary not only to have our resources augmented, but to curtail expenses to the minimum figures. "The best scheme of finance is to spend as little as possible, and the best tax is always the lightest." Believing that the Legislature is actuated by such a desire, and that the present license tax will not be materially altered, I recommend a reduction of taxes to meet the necessary appropriations for the current expenses of the State for 1883, and to pay the interest on her bonded indebtedness to four mills. I recommend the same tax for 1884, with a proviso similar to that adopted by the last Legislature, of allowing the Governor to reduce it to three mills, if the "aggregate assessment of the property of the State will permit."

The Constitution requires, in addition to this, a tax of one mill for school purposes, making an aggregate of five mills for all purposes. The reduction of taxes from twelve and a half mills in 1877 to five mills, shows not only a gratifying increase in our resources, but a commendable economy in the operations of the Government.

TAXING IMPROVEMENTS ON PUBLIC LANDS.

The last Legislature passed an act to provide for the assessment and collection of taxes upon improvements on the

public lands, and for the protection of occupying claimants of said lands. The object and intention of the law was to protect actual settlers, and furnish them some guarantee of securing the land upon which they had made improvements. The operation of the law, however, has not been satisfactory, and in some instances has led to results foreign to those for which it was intended. Parties have been compelled to pay taxes upon their improvements on United States lands, and on lands previously granted by the Legislature to Railroads, without any prospect of being protected by the State. Other cases of hardship have occurred, and unless the law can be materially amended, I recommend its repeal.

TAXES ON RAILROAD PROPERTY.

The last Legislature, by Joint Resolution, directed the Governor and Comptroller to employ counsel to institute legal proceedings against those Railroad Companies constructed under the provisions of the Internal Improvement act of 1855, and who refused to pay taxes on their property.

In conformity to the requirements of said Resolution, General E. A. Perry, of Pensacola, was employed, who associated with him J. W. Malone, Esq., of Quincy. The case was carried forward as rapidly as the law permitted, and in June last was argued before the Supreme Court of this State. The decision of that court sustained the claim of the State to its right to tax the roads constructed under the act of 1855. An appeal has been taken to the United States Supreme Court, and it is hoped that a decision will be reached this year. The assessed value of the Railroad property embraced in the principles of this suit amounts to about 3,700,000. Until a decision is had, however, by the United States Supreme Court, it will not be safe to take this valuation into consideration as a safe basis of revenue.

LANDS SOLD FOR TAXES.

In view of the fact that only a few of the certificates of lands sold for taxes prior to January 1st, 1877, have been approved by the County Commissioners, and returned to the Land office as required by the act of 1881, Chapter 3234, and

the County Commissioners of some of the counties having destroyed all of said certificates sent to them under said act, thus demonstrating that a large proportion of the certificates were erroneous, and the valuations and taxes thereon excessive, I would suggest the passage of a law requiring that all such certificates, whether in the hands of the County Commissioners, or Commissioner of Lands and Immigration, be submitted to a commission composed of the Comptroller, Attorney-General and Commissioner of Lands, and that said Commissioners have plenary powers to cancel the same, or settle with the owners of the lands upon such equitable terms as may be reasonable and just, to the end that the property may be restored to the owners, and again become a source of revenue to the State.

As the law now stands, the certificates for lands assessed since January 1st, 1877, and sold prior to March 11, 1879, are in the hands of the Commissioner of Lands and Immigration, subject to redemption by the owners, but not to sale, while the certificates for lands sold for taxes since March 11, 1879, are in the hands of the Comptroller subject to redemption or sale as the law directs. This is manifestly unjust, as all lands sold for taxes should be placed upon the same footing. The holding of these certificates by two different departments of the government also creates confusion and is unsatisfactory. I therefore recommend that all the certificates for lands sold for taxes assessed since January 1, 1877, be placed in the Comptroller's office for redemption or sale, under proper restrictions as to time of sale, and that the Comptroller be authorized to correct certificates where proof is made of taxes having been paid, and to make such other settlement in respect to the same, with the tax-payer, as may appear to be equitable and proper.

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT FUND.

The United States Congress granted to Florida by an act of September 4, 1841, which took effect upon the admission of the State into the Union, March 3, 1845, *five hundred thousand* acres of land. The lands were granted for "internal improvements," and are consequently known as "Internal Improvement Lands *proper*."

There was a much larger grant made on September 20, 1850, consisting of all the "swamp and overflowed" lands in the State, belonging to the United States. The chief object of this grant was for the purposes of "reclamation and drainage."

Under the first grant, of Internal Improvement Lands proper, there are on hand, as reported by the Commissioner of Lands and Immigration, 175,970 acres.

Under the second grant of "swamp and overflowed" lands, the State has received patents for 14,831,739 acres, of which 255,273 acres were patented in 1881, and 75,516 52-100 acres in 1882.

There had been disposed of, up to January 1, 1881, 1,684,729 42-100 acres, and since then \$503,122 82-100 acres, exclusive of the four million acres sold to Mr. Disston.

The Internal Improvement Act of 1855, vested all of the Internal Improvement lands proper, then unsold, as well as all the swamp and overflowed lands on hand, with all the proceeds that had accumulated, in the Governor, Comptroller, Treasurer, Attorney-General and Commissioner of Lands, as a Board of Trustees, to carry out the provisions of said act.

The act designated a road from Jacksonville to Pensacola, with extensions to St. Marks and Crooked rivers, and St. Andrews bay—a road from Fernandina to Tampa, with an extension to Cedar Key—a road from Pensacola north to the State line, and a canal from the waters of the St. Johns river on Lake Harney to Indian river, as proper works to be assisted by the fund. It further authorized coupon bonds to be issued upon the several roads, at the rate of ten thousand dollars per mile of completed road, and additional bonds for various bridges, &c. The trustees were authorized to guarantee the seven per cent. interest on these bonds, out of the land fund, and did endorse bonds to the amount of \$3,597,000, as follows:

Pensacola and Georgia Railroad Company.....	\$1,220,000
Tallahassee Railroad Company	206,000
Florida Railroad Company	1,616,000
Florida, Atlantic and Gulf Central Railroad Company.....	555,000
Total.....	\$3,597,000

After the war, the companies operating the roads, having failed to pay the sinking fund were seized and sold by the trustees—the Florida Railroad in 1867, the Florida, Atlantic & Gulf Central in 1868, and the Pensacola and Georgia and Tallahassee railroads in 1869. The effect of these sales was to relieve the railroads of the bonds or coupons, except the half of one per cent. semi-annually, to meet the principal of the bonds. Thus, the land fund, held by the Trustees, in addition to paying large sums before the war for interest, now became alone responsible for all the interest upon the bonds, not retired and cancelled by the sales.

Thus briefly have I stated the origin of the indebtedness against the Fund, which has been a topic fruitful of discussion. Space will not permit me to enter into a history, much less a discussion, of the various litigations connected with these sales, or those between the Trustees and the holders of the coupon indebtedness. Had the entire price bid for the P. & G. and Tallahassee roads been promptly paid, much loss would have been saved to the Fund. There was a balance, however, of \$412,400 for the P. & G. and a balance of \$50,775 for the Tallahassee road, that was not paid. The balance due on the P. & G. road with interest, was paid only last July, and then after much litigation. That upon the Tallahassee road has not yet been paid, and the Trustees have been compelled to offer it for resale for the principal with a large accumulation of interest. Should the proceeds of the sale be inadequate to pay both principal and interest, the fund will be liable for any balance of the *interest* left unpaid.

DISSTON SALE.

When I entered upon the discharge of my official duties, the prospects of relieving our Internal Improvement Fund, and thus promoting the development of the State by securing proper Railroad facilities, were of the most gloomy character. Two Administrations had evinced their appreciation of the situation by an earnest effort to sell off a large body of the lands at a reduced rate, as the only means of saving anything to the fund. Governor Stearns' Administration had appointed the eminent statesman and diplomat, Reverdy Johnson, who

had represented in the capacity of Minister Plenipotentiary our Government at the Court of St. James, as the agent of the State to visit Europe, for the purpose of selling a large body of these lands at twenty-five cents per acre, in order to relieve the fund.

Soon after my immediate predecessor, Governor Drew, came into office, he recognized the absolute necessity of such a sale as the only means of relieving the fund and developing the State. Mr. S. A. Swann, of our State, was appointed the agent of the Internal Improvement Board. In this capacity he visited Europe, in addition to making several trips North, in the hope of selling a sufficient quantity of these lands at a reduced price, in order to save the fund from utter wreck. (See Reports of Secretary of Trustees Journals, 1875 to 1881, inclusive.) The Board had long advertised to sell, even in blocks as small as five thousand acres, at fifty cents per acre, and there had been no time, for years past, that a sale of a sufficient quantity to relieve the fund would not have been cheerfully made at twenty-five cents per acre. All of these efforts had been published to the world, through the Legislative Journals, without a dissenting note as to the price, so far as I am aware, from any source. Legislature after legislature had met, and in response to the inquiry what was to be done to relieve the lands from this inheritance of seemingly necessary spoliation, no cheering answer could be given. The right of the State to its equity of redemption was freely and carelessly voted away, as insolvency seemed the inevitable doom of the entire fund.

The political organization that placed my name before the people of the State, as its candidate for Governor, in full view of these efforts, not only endorsed Governor Drew's action in the matter, but gave expression to the desire of the people in the platform by declaring, "that we favor the disencumberment of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State at the earliest practical moment."

These were positive indications, from the leading minds of both political organizations, that a sale of a large block of the lands at a reduced price was the only possible means of saving

anything to the fund. And were they not correct? Here were some fourteen millions of "swamp and overflowed lands" resting under a burthen of over one million of dollars. It bore an interest of over seventy thousand dollars per year, which interest fell due semi-annually and was rendered interest bearing as fast as it fell due. The litigations, and necessary expenses of administering the fund, consumed the larger proportion of the annual sales, and left but little to apply to the rapidly accumulating debt. Delay would have been a not distant, but inevitable ruin. Even this short respite was not to be granted. It was well known that the creditors had invoked the powers of the United States Court, and becoming restive from long delay, had determined to force a sale for their protection. This would have been immediate destruction of the fund, and a withering blight upon our hopes of development by our anticipated Railroads. A sale was the only alternative—a necessity that could not be avoided without irreparable ruin to the entire fund. Under such circumstances, the Board of Trustees were fortunate in securing a purchaser, and on June 1, 1881, a sale was consummated to Hamilton Disston, of Philadelphia, of four million acres for one million of dollars. Successive Legislatures had granted away every acre of the "swamp and overflowed lands" to various corporations. Had there been no debt, the lands were already granted away, or had the Board have sold one acre even for a million dollars and cancelled this debt, the fund would have been no better off, for all the lands of the character sold were already granted to these corporations. They were of no practical value to the corporations, however, until relieved of the debt that constituted a first lien. When the debt was relieved by a sale of a portion of the lands, the remaining portion became operative for the purposes for which it was granted. The rights of the creditors were acknowledged by every grant of land made by the various Legislatures since 1876, and affirmed by a general act (Laws of Florida, Chapter 3326) passed by the last Legislature. The entire fund was in the hands of the United States Court and under its control for the protection of said credi-

tors. The Trustees acted under the direction of said tribunal, and the sale was confirmed by the Court.

No other transaction, certainly since the war, has been of greater service to the State. The debt that rested upon the fund has been relieved—an impetus to Railroad building never before realized in the State was secured—a large amount of capital, both from Europe and America, has been invested in our limits, necessarily bringing with it an influx of population—an advertisement such as we never had, and which has called public attention not only in this country but in Europe, to our resources and climatic advantages, and a large amount of property placed upon the tax books, thus aiding in a reduction of taxation, are some of the advantages accruing from the sale.

SETTLERS ON PUBLIC LANDS.

In making the sale for the relief of the Internal Improvement Fund, the Trustees were not unmindful of the settlers upon those lands. Provision was made, allowing them from June 1st, 1881, until January 1st, 1883, to pay for their lands at State prices, and many have availed themselves of it, and entered their homesteads.

I take pleasure in stating also, that Mr. Disston has shown a most commendable desire in the protection of that portion of our population, and although the time for the payment has now passed, those who are *bona fide* settlers, and have not been able to avail themselves of the opportunity, will, I am informed, not be molested, but allowed further time to complete their payments.

RECLAMATION OF LANDS.

The reclamation of lands in the southern portion of the peninsula, by affording an outlet for the waters of that vast inland sea, known as Lake Okeechobee, has been a mooted question for years, but no decisive step was taken in that direction until January, 1881, a few weeks after the present administration came in. At that date, Colonel I. Coryell appeared before the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, as the representative of Philadelphia capitalists, and negotiated a contract with said Board for the drainage

and reclamation of the lands lying south of township 24, in consideration of receiving one-half of the lands so reclaimed. The last Legislature chartered the "Atlantic and Gulf Coast Canal and Okeechoobee Land Company," who have succeeded to all the rights under said contract.

This company immediately had a series of surveys made to test the practicability of the proposed undertaking, and from their surveys, as well as those made by the United States, under the direction of General Gilmore, it was shown that Lake Okeechobee has an elevation of twenty-two feet above the Gulf of Mexico, and that Lake Tahopekaliga, the head waters of the Kissimmee river, has an elevation of sixty-five feet above the waters of the Gulf. These facts being ascertained, the company assumed the entire practicability of reclaiming this vast area, amounting to many million acres, by drawing off the waters, and preventing the periodical overflows. The work was commenced by building powerful steam dredges on the Caloosahatchee river and Tahopekaliga lake, the plan of operations being to open a canal from the Caloosahatchee river to Lake Okeechobee, and the cutting of a canal from Lake Tahopekaliga through to Kissimmee Lake, then straightening the Kissimmee river, and the cutting of one or more canals from Okeechobee to the Atlantic Coast, as well as the construction of subsidiary canals. The dredge upon the Caloosahatchee entered Lake Okeechoobee on the 21st of December last. This marks an important event in the history of the State.

The work has been quietly but steadily pushed forward—one of the conditions of the contract being that the work should be continuous and with a force equal, at least, to the labor of one hundred men. Up to December 1st, 1882, the company report that they had expended \$93,777.40, and had constructed over twelve miles of canal, twenty-two to thirty-five feet wide and five to six feet deep.

The early completion of the first series of canals is already assured, which, in addition to the reclamation of the lands, will afford a great inland system of steamboat navigation from Kissimmee City through the Caloosatchee to the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of 180 miles. The magnitude of this enter-

prise and its destined influence upon the future of the State can scarcely be realized. The reclamation of many millions of acres, containing some of the most valuable sugar lands in the United States, with suitable climatic conditions for the successful growth of all tropical fruits, is the harbinger of an era of population, wealth and prosperity unthought of in our past history.

EAST COAST CANAL.

The feasibility of forming an inland water communication from the mouth of the St. Johns river to Biscayne Bay, in the extreme southern portion of our State, a distance of some 270 miles, by utilizing the waters of Pablo creek and North, Matanzas, Halifax, and Indian rivers, has long been conceded. It took practical shape when Colonel I. Coryell and Hon. John Westcott organized under the general incorporation act, the "Florida Coast Line Canal and Transportation Company," with a capital of \$500,000. Active operations were commenced in November last, by the construction of a suitable steam dredge, which was carried from St. Augustine to the South end of Matanzas river, where it commenced operations, and has already cut a canal 30 feet wide and averaging over 6 feet deep, from near the line of township 9 S., R. 10 E, to the mouth of Matta Compra creek, a distance of some four miles. A cut through the marsh borders of Matta Compra creek for a distance of three and a half miles due south, and a distance from that point of one mile in an easterly direction, makes the connection with Smith's Creek, which flows south into Halifax river, and forms the connection which gives steamboat navigation at the lower end of the lagoon to the "Haulover," where a cut of less than a mile gives the desired entrance into Indian river.

The importance of this great improvement has long been acknowledged and cannot well be overrated. The Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund appreciating this, withdrew the lands belonging to the Fund along the route, for the benefit of the enterprise. If the evidences of earnestness and vigor manifested by the company having the work in charge are omens of the future, it will not be long before that entire tropical section of our State will be supplied with transportation,

and a large population gladden and render productive the splendid lands adjoining those various water courses. Even in its isolated condition, the number of thriving settlements along the route attest the value of the various locations. And thus another great enterprise has been inaugurated, as illustrative of the great progress and development made in the last two years.

RAILROADS.

Nothing tends with more certainty to show the increased prosperity and development of a State than the increase in her railroad facilities. As I have before remarked, Florida has every cause of congratulation in having more miles of railroad construction in her limits, in the last two years, than in her entire former history. West Florida, that has for so many years been cut off from direct communication with the remaining portion of the State, has now practically rail connection with our system of roads; and Pensacola, the Queen of all Gulf ports, as well as the interior western counties, will in a few weeks have direct communication with our Atlantic sea ports. The rapidity with which the Pensacola and Atlantic Road has been built, connected with its superior structure and equipments, speaks well for the company, as well as for the efficient Superintendent. The time is not far distant when through trains of freight and passenger travel from the golden gate of the Pacific will find their exit by this line through the ports of Jacksonville and Fernandina. The Florida Southern has also completed, and has in operation, one hundred miles of road, and I am informed has made arrangements for a further and greatly increased extension. The road chartered from Live Oak to Rowland's Bluff has been finished to the latter point, and is vigorously pushing forward in the direction of South Florida. The roads from Waycross to Jacksonville, and from Fernandina to Jacksonville, have been completed. Jacksonville and St. Augustine will, in a short time, have a new road completed, and thus be furnished with direct rail connection. The road from Waldo has been pushed on to Silver Spring and Ocala, connecting there with the Tropical, which has been built and is in operation as far south as Wildwood, in Sumter coun-

ty, with a branch graded and cross-tied from Wildwood to Leesburg. The South Florida road has been built from Orlando to Kissimmee City, thus giving the Kissimmee valley direct communication with the St. Johns. The St. Johns and Halifax, Palatka and Indian River, Green Cove and Melrose, and the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West roads, all have portions graded, and the former, some eight miles of iron laid. While these improvements are unparalleled in the history of the State, yet it is a source of deep regret that neither of the several lines leading to Tampa and further south, have yet reached that desirable section. The Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, appreciating the great advantages of that highly favored section, and with an earnest desire to secure to it railroad facilities, reserved lands for five different lines running to Tampa and some further south, through the counties of Hernando, Polk, Hillsborough and Manatee. From information received, however, I can but believe that the time is near at hand when these facilities, so long need, will be secured.

EDUCATION.

There is no subject of more importance than popular education, which is being fully recognized by all enlightened countries. In our Republican form of Government, where public questions are settled by the popular will, that will must be educated or the Government will sooner or later prove a failure. Free Government and ignorant suffrage are not in harmony. Universal suffrage demands universal education as its protector, for while the ballot is a most potent weapon, when wielded by ignorance, there is none more dangerous to free Government. The Government which we enjoy to-day can be transmitted only to the rising generation, which must be educated to perpetuate it, or ignorance with her handmaids—corruption and vice—will cause it to lapse into despotism.

Education commends itself to us also in an economical sense. Actual experience demonstrates that intelligent labor is worth at least fifty per cent. more than illiterate, while the illiterates furnish fifty times their proportion of paupers and many times more than their proper proportion of criminals. Ignorance is the fruitful mother of public burthens, but contributes little to

the public wealth or weal. Hence every commonwealth should encourage the education of her youth as the best safeguard for the future. Florida is particularly interested in this question, as the census reveals the fact that there were in 1880, 23,319 illiterate voters in the State. The large increase in our school facilities, and in the attendance of pupils, are therefore subjects of congratulation. The number of schools in 1877 was 656, with an attendance of 29,678 pupils. In 1880 there were 1,131 schools with 39,315 pupils, and for the scholastic year beginning October 1, 1882, we have 1,326 schools, with 51,945 pupils.

The principal of our common school fund has also increased in a most satisfactory manner. Indeed, the increase in the last two years has been unprecedented in the history of the fund. From a fund of \$246,900 in January, 1881, we have now \$323,535.42, showing an increase of \$76,635.42 in the principal of the fund in the last two years. This fund is chiefly derived from the sale of lands known as the "sixteenth sections," granted the State by Congress for educational purposes.

The Board of Education, learning that there was still due the State of Florida for school lands under the provisions of the acts of Congress approved May 26, 1826, June 15, 1874, and February 26, 1859, nearly 80,000 acres, employed the Hon. Walter Gwynn to make selections from the United States lands within the State to supply the deficiency. Mr. Gwynn did his work efficiently and made most excellent selections. The lists were forwarded to the United States Interior Department for approval, and selections amounting to 43,745 99-100 acres have already been approved. The remainder, it is hoped, will be in a short time. We have 561,728 acres of land belonging to the school fund yet unsold, and 33,820 acres belonging to the seminary fund.

In this connection, I may add, that while popular education is a duty belonging to the respective States, and a matter of local policy which should be under the management of local Government, yet owing to the peculiar condition of the South, our resources are insufficient to furnish all the assistance re-

quired for the education of our large illiterate population. The right of Congress to contribute to general education in the several States has not been questioned, and the public domain, amounting to over one billion of acres, furnishes ample means to secure so desirable a result. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the general Government, appreciating the great necessity for such a course, will still further add to the educational resources of the country, to be applied through the agency of the various State organizations.

DEAF MUTES.

I cannot forbear in this connection calling your attention to the entire absence of any legislation for the education of that unfortunate class of our population known as deaf mutes. There are in the State, as shown by the last census, 119; of these 58 are white and 61 colored. There are under the age of 25, and now urgently requiring educational facilities, 78. Of this number 32 are white and 46 colored. I can imagine of no class of our citizens who are so entirely dependent upon education, and I sincerely trust that the subject may receive your careful and favorable consideration. Some portion of the common school fund should be set apart, under the direction of the State Board of Education, for this praiseworthy object.

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE FUND.

Under the act of Congress of July 2, 1862, there was granted to each State thirty thousand acres of land for each Senator and Representative of said State under the census of 1860. The conditions of the grant were that "the interest shall be inviolably appropriated to the endowment, support and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the Legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe." The act also provided that "no portion of said fund, nor the interest thereon, shall be applied directly or indirectly, under any pretense whatever, to the purchase, erection, preservation, or repair of any building or buildings."

Under this grant Florida received ninety thousand acres, which was sold for \$81,000. The proceeds of the sale were invested in \$100,000 of Florida bonds. The interest has since been invested, and the fund now has an income of about \$9,000 per annum. As no portion of the fund, nor the interest, can be applied to building purposes, no Institution has been established.

In view of the fact that the Trustees of this fund will meet in Tallahassee on the 9th of January, to take into consideration the best means of utilizing the income of this fund for Educational purposes, I deem it proper to withhold my recommendations until their report is received. I will then take pleasure in laying it before the Legislature, with such suggestions as may be deemed advisable.

IMMIGRATION.

The Bureau of Immigration, upon accepting the resignation of Hon. Seth French, as Commissioner, appointed Hon. A. A. Robinson to the position, with head quarters at the Capitol. A branch was established at Jacksonville under the direction of Mr. Samuel Fairbanks. Upon the death of this efficient officer and honored citizen, the Hon. Columbus Drew was appointed by the Commissioner, with the sanction of the members of the Bureau, to fill the vacancy. The Commissioner, in addition to his efficient work in other respects, has prepared and had published 20,000 copies of an immigration pamphlet, treating upon the resources, advantages, climatic condition, &c., of the State. For full information regarding the details of the work connected with the position I respectfully refer you to his report.

Public lands and climate are useless without population. People constitute the State, and as the tide of immigration is being turned to Florida, from her varied resources being published to the world, it would be a misfortune to slacken any of our efforts in that direction. Rather let them be invigorated. The Commissioner of Agriculture calls a convention of the agriculturists of the United States, and Florida is not represented—Congresses of Forestry are held and we have no representation—Cotton Planters' Associations meet, and when Florida is

called, there is no response. Why is this? Because the means at the disposal of the Bureau are so scant that we have no surplus with which to send delegates. We have citizens fully capacitated for the various positions, but individuals cannot be expected to give their time and talents, and at the same time pay their own expenses. Another cotton exposition, upon a gigantic scale, will be held during the present year—shall Florida be represented at these various associations? It is for the Legislature to answer.

ATLANTA EXPOSITION.

During the fall and winter of 1881, the Cotton Exposition of Atlanta was opened for visitors. It was not only an exhibition of all the improved machinery for the cultivation, handling and manufacturing of cotton, but embraced a wide field in everything tending to the development and wealth of the country. It was, in the full sense of the term, a "World's Fair"—the first ever held in the South. Feeling the importance of Florida's being represented, and at the same time fettered by having no appropriation for such a purpose, I appealed to the Immigration Convention that met in Jacksonville in the summer of 1881 to take the matter in charge, and have our State properly represented. A committee was appointed who did most efficient work. Contributions were asked for, and liberally responded to, by some of our generous citizens. Florida had a separate building and her display of agricultural productions and tropical and semi-tropical fruits, attracted the attention of the vast throng of visitors who daily visited the exposition grounds. Her success was fully demonstrated in the fact of her securing the first premiums for sisal hemp, sugar cane, rice, sea-island cotton, oranges and lemons. For the best collection of agricultural productions, in competition with the vast number of States there represented, but one State surpassed her, and she was awarded the second premium.

Having nothing but voluntary contributions to rely upon, the managers were involved in pecuniary embarrassments, and at one time the building itself was in danger of being taken for these obligations. To prevent such a stigma falling upon our State, a

number of leading gentlemen borrowed, upon their own responsibility, a sum, including interest up to March 1st, 1883, of \$725, to liquidate the claim. As the State was vastly benefitted by the exhibit there made, and advertised in a more practical manner than by any other possible process, I respectfully recommend that that amount be appropriated to meet the claim. In the midst of her triumphs, however, with her generous rivals, Florida was called upon to mourn the loss of one of her most active and enterprising citizens. Mr. D. S. Place, who was in charge of the State exhibit, fell at his post in the discharge of his arduous duties,—respected and honored by all.

INDIAN WAR CLAIMS.

What is known as the Indian Trust Fund of the United States holds \$132,000 of our bonds, with a large amount of interest due thereon. It has been properly excluded from the interest bearing debt of the State, for the satisfactory reason that the State holds valid and legitimate claims against the General Government for necessary expenses incurred in suppressing Indian hostilities. The claim of the State is much larger than the amount due the Indian Trust Fund, if the United States Government allows the State the same interest claimed against her. With the exception of an effort made in 1860, no step was taken to settle this important matter until Governor Drew appointed Colonel S. I. Wailes, of Washington City, who associated with him the late Col. W. K. Beard, of Tallahassee, as agents of the State, to settle the claims, with the understanding that their fee was to be a contingent one of fifteen per cent. of the amount collected.

When the matter was presented to the Treasury Department, the objection was made that no State claim could be adjusted without the authority of Congress. A resolution was introduced by our Senators and Representatives to carry out this decision, and after a considerable delay passed both houses, referring the matter to the Secretary of War. A report from that official has been made, allowing the State \$225,648.09. If the State is allowed interest, as the General Government charges against her, she will be entitled to a considerable sum

above her indebtedness. It is hoped that Congress at an early day will take action upon this long deferred, but just and equitable claim.

STATE WEATHER SERVICE.

My attention was called, as far back as June, 1881, by the chief signal officer of the U. S. army, to the importance of each State establishing a weather signal service. I am convinced that great good will result from a united effort on the part of the several States to organize such a service; and that it will prove of great benefit to the people interested in various branches of industry, as well as serve the interests of science in determining the accurate climatic conditions of each section. It will utilize every feature of the weather that affects the prosperity of the inhabitants of the State as to crops, health, life, etc., and utilize all local climatic data by which we will eventually be able to define precisely the localities most favorable or unfavorable to special crops, diseases, &c.

It may be entirely volunteer and under the charge of some appointee, or it may be made a part of the duties of some officer, or the president or professor of some of our literary institutions. In this manner it need not cost the State anything, and by each county having a voluntary observer or making it the duty of some county official to perform the duty, the cause of science will not only be advanced, but a fund of climatic information be secured of great benefit to our State. The instruments, which are few, need not at first cost over \$15 or \$20. The chief signal officer at Washington will, I am informed, cheerfully furnish all information, and transmit through our service any information of importance regarding storms, frosts, floods, etc. Many of the States are acting upon the suggestion, and I commend it to your favorable consideration.

INSANE ASYLUM.

During the past two years this institution has been under the immediate charge and supervision of Dr. James H. Randolph as Superintendent, assisted by Dr. W. B. Foreman, the Commissioners of Public Institutions having a general direction, as the law requires. The management of the institution

has been excellent, and the treatment of the patients tending to their restoration as well as their comfort and contentment. A neat chapel has been fitted up and supplied with the necessary furniture, as well as an organ. Ministers have been engaged, who hold at regular intervals Divine service. An addition that was greatly needed has been made, by erecting a substantial brick building containing fourteen rooms. Regular monthly reports and abstracts of all expenditures, accompanied by proper vouchers, are made to the Board. Considering the number of patients, and the cost to the State of delivering them at the asylum, the expenditures have been not only judicious but economical.

On January 1, 1881, there were 95 inmates in the institution. During the last two years there have been admitted 112; discharged, 50; died, 26; escaped, 8; re-admitted, 5; leaving on hand January 1, 1883, 128. Of this number there are 36 white males, 44 white females, 27 colored males, and 21 colored females.

STATE CONVICTS.

From being a large expense to the State under the former system the convicts have become a source of revenue, while their improved condition shows that they have been properly cared for. The East Florida Railway Company has had them in charge for the last two years, and I take pleasure in stating, has complied with the contract in furnishing proper food, clothing, etc. The company received the convicts at the several jails, and paid all expenses after conviction, and in addition has paid into the State Treasury over six thousand dollars for their services for the last two years.

As the lease expired on the 31st of December, 1882, the Adjutant-General, under the direction of the Commissioners of State Institutions, advertised for bids for the hire of said convicts for the years 1883 and 1884. Mr. H. M. Wood, agent for Mr. C. K. Dutton, offering the highest bid, it was accepted. He is to receive the prisoners at the jails, paying all expenses after conviction, furnish them proper food, clothing, etc., and pay to the State \$9,200 for their services for the next two years.

The following tabulated statement of convicts for 1881 and 1882 may be of interest:

1881.		
Number of convicts on hand December 31, 1880, and delivered to the East Florida Railway Company		129
Number of convicts delivered to East Florida Railway Company during 1881.....		101
Of this number there were discharged in 1881.....	49	
Pardoned.....	4	
Escaped.....	13	
Died.....	14	
Sentence commuted.....	1	
Number on hand January 1, 1882.....	149	
	230	230
1882.		
Number of convicts on hand January 1, 1882.....		149
Delivered to East Florida Railway Company during the year 1882.....		69
Of this number there were in 1882 discharged.....	55	
Pardoned.....	3	
Escaped.....	5	
Died.....	10	
Number on hand	135	
	208	208

The number of convicts sentenced in 1882, as compared with 1881, shows a very large decrease, and speaks well for the proper enforcement of the law, and a better moral condition.

ARREST OF CRIMINALS.

There are criminal cases of urgent moment, that require proper rewards to insure the ends of justice, and the arrest and return of criminals, who have escaped to other States, at times necessitates some public expenditure. The last Legislature omitted to make any appropriation for these purposes. I have had to use a portion of the contingent fund in such cases, but it would have proven entirely inadequate had many of the rewards been called for. It is due to the cause of justice that an appropriation for this purpose be made. In this connection, it is proper to state, that criminals from counties having no jails, are frequently ordered by the Circuit Judges, for safe keeping, to be delivered over to the sheriffs of coun-

ties having jails. The sheriffs have no power to refuse the prisoners, but they have no power to collect their proper fees for feeding and keeping them. It should be made obligatory upon the counties furnishing the Criminals to provide the means of paying for their support, before the sheriffs of other counties are compelled to receive them.

SETTLERS IN ST. JOHNS COUNTY.

A former Board of Trustees sold to certain settlers in the county of St. Johns for cash, lands which said Trustees supposed they held valid titles to. The settlers in many instances improved and cultivated said lands at considerable expense. After the sale and improvements, the courts decided that these lands belonged to the St. Johns Railway Company in conformity to a land grant made by the State to said Company.

The last Legislature passed an act (Chapter 3321) directing the Trustees to make a settlement with the Railroad Company in order to protect the settlers in their improvements. At that time the entire fund was deeply involved in debt, and the United States Court had assumed practical control of the fund to protect the creditors. Every dollar received from the sale of land by the Trustees had to be reported to the Court, and all the surplus, after paying certain specified expenses in the management of the fund, had to be turned over monthly to the Receiver of the Court. It was thus rendered impracticable to carry out the intention of the Legislature in its praiseworthy act. As soon, however, as the Disston sale was made, and money sufficient to practically relieve the fund had been received, the Board of Trustees opened negotiations with said Railroad Company to secure the settlers in their claims and carry out the intention of the Legislature.

I am happy to state that it is confidently expected that these negotiations will be closed at an early day. The Trustees have agreed to pay over to the Railroad Company the same amount of money they received for the lands, in consideration of which the company has agreed to relinquish all claims to the lands in question. Thus a matter, pregnant with evil forebodings to a considerable number of our citizens will be equitably and satisfactorily settled.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

The last Legislature passed a resolution looking to the calling of a Constitutional Convention for an entire revision of the organic law of the State. That the Constitution needs revision in many important particulars, is, I believe, conceded by all. Indeed, in all its departments, Legislative, Executive and Judicial, important changes are required in the interest of economy, and to more properly conform it to the requirements of the people and the true principles of Republican Government.

As this is a subject, which, under the Constitution, appertains largely to your department of the Government, the people, whose interests you have the deepest solicitude for, look to you to give it the most serious consideration, and I feel that I have not exceeded my duty in thus referring to it, and expressing the hope that moderation, sound judgment, as well as a due regard for differences of opinion, may characterize your action.

DIGEST OF THE LAWS.

Under the laws of Florida, Chapter 3240, the Governor and Comptroller were authorized to secure, on just and reasonable terms, the publication of the Digest prepared by the Hon. James F. McClellan, after the said McClellan embodied in the same all laws of a general or public nature passed by the eleventh session of the Legislature, and after its revision by the Hon. C. C. Yonge. In accordance with said act the Comptroller received bids from Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Charleston, Atlanta, Savannah and Tallahassee. The bid from Tallahassee being the lowest and best bid, the contract was awarded to C. E. Dyke. Three thousand five hundred copies were printed, and "fifteen hundred copies bound in good law sheep," as the statute required. The Secretary of State has distributed to the various counties, in accordance with law, a sufficient number for the county officers, and paid over to the Treasurer \$798 for volumes sold.

CAPITOL FURNITURE, &C.

The last Assembly passed a Resolution directing the Adjutant-General to purchase suitable desks for the Assembly Hall.

In pursuance of said Resolution seventy-six desks for members and one Secretary's desk have been purchased, with chairs suitable for the same. As the last Legislature made no appropriation to carry out the Resolution of the Assembly, it is proper that the amount be placed in the appropriation bill.

The Capitol is in need of repairs. The roof is in poor condition—floors are required for some of the basement rooms, and the entire building needs painting. I hope that an appropriation sufficient for the purpose will be made.

REPORTS OF DEPARTMENTS.

I have the honor of transmitting herewith full reports from the various departments, treating more fully of all the details connected with the operations of the State Government, for the last two years. I ask for these reports a careful examination, as they treat upon many important questions and give a variety of information that is impossible as well as unnecessary to embrace in this communication.

CONCLUSION.

To relieve our Internal Improvement Fund from a debt that has paralyzed our energies for over half a generation—to greatly invigorate our railroad system and thus furnish transportation to portions of the State long needing the same—to secure a constant and growing tide of immigration and capital from all sections—to largely reduce taxes and relieve the people, while maintaining the credit of the State—to increase our school facilities and furnish the opportunities of education to a much larger portion of the youth of the State—to set in operation the capital and machinery to reclaim from a wilderness of water a large proportion of our extreme Southern territory—are some of the results of the last two years.

Trusting that your actions may, under the guidance of an All-wise Providence, further tend to the development and prosperity of the State, I have the honor to remain,

Very respectfully,

W. D. BLOXHAM, Governor.

Mr. McKinne moved that the Governor's message be spread upon the Journals of the Senate, and that 500 copies with accompanying documents be printed ;

Which was agreed to.

The President announced the following standing committees :

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE.

Judiciary Committee :

Messrs. Mr. MALLORY, Chairman.
McKINNE, BRYSON,
COTTRELL, ALLEN.

Privileges and Elections :

Messrs. Mr. McKINNE, Chairman.
BRYSON, SHARPE,
DELL, BAKER.

Education :

Messrs. Mr. CRILL, Chairman.
POPE, LANDRUM,
COLE, DUNCAN.

Claims :

Messrs. Mr. SPEAR, Chairman.
LESLIE, SWEARINGEN,
POPE, CHANDLER.

Railroads and Telegraph :

Messrs. Mr. DELANO, Chairman.
LESLIE, McKINNE,
BRYSON, CRILL.

Public Lands :

Messrs. Mr. McKINNE, Chairman.
McCLELLAN, CONE,
GREELEY, COTTRELL.

Appropriations :

Messrs. Mr. LESLIE, Chairman.
MALLORY, SPEAR,
DELL, COLE.

Mr. Baker moved that a committee of 5 be appointed on Temperance;

Which was adopted.

Mr. McKinne introduced the following bill.

Senate bill No. 1:

A Bill to be Entitled, An Act to repeal an act to Provide for the Assessment and Collection of Taxes upon Improvements on the Public Lands, and for the protection of Occupancy Claimants of said Lands.

Mr. McKinne introduced the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to present appropriate resolutions expressive of our feelings of sorrow and regret at the death of Senators Walker and Hendry, whose deaths have occurred since last session, and that now as a mark of respect this body do adjourn until 10 o'clock to-morrow, at which time the committee will report;

Which was agreed to.

The following committee was appointed:

Messrs. McKinne, Spear, Crill, Dell and Sharpe.

The Senate adjourned to 10 o'clock A. M. to-morrow.

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THURSDAY, January 4, 1883.

The Senate met pursuant to adjournment.

The President in the Chair.

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

Messrs. Allen, Baker, Bryson, Chandler, Cole, Cottrell, Crill, Delano, Dell, Duncan, Fortner, Greeley, Hankins, Hatcher, Hendricks, Landrum, Leslie, Mann, Mountien, McClellan, McKinne, Polhill, Pope, Powers, Proctor, Roberts, Sharpe, Sheppard, Spear, Swearingen—30.

A quorum present.

Senator Cottrell came forward and was sworn in by L. B. Wombwell, N. P.

I. McAuld came forward and was sworn into office as Sergeant-at-Arms by L. B. Wombwell, N. P.

Mr. Delano offered the following joint resolution:

Resolved, That a committee of two from the Senate and

three from the Assembly be appointed to investigate the affairs of the office of the Commissioner of Lands and Immigration, and that said committee be invested with power to send for persons and papers;

Which was read and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Speer offered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The custom established in our legislative bodies of employing clerks for committees, regardless of the necessity, is one that should be abolished; therefore, be it

Resolved, That no committee of this House shall employ such clerk unless there be real necessity for it, and then the committee shall only employ such clerical aid as may be necessary, and at a stipulated price, and for a certain time;

Which was adopted.

Mr. Chandler offered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The people of the State of Florida represented in Senate and Assembly did, by joint resolution, approved March 7, 1881, resolve as follows:

"SECTION 1. That it is the determination of this Legislature that it is necessary to cause a revision of the Constitution of the State of Florida; that this determination be entered upon the respective journals of the two houses of this Legislature, with the yeas and nays, and that the same is referred to the Legislature next hereafter to be chosen, and shall be published in at least three newspapers of this State for three months before the time for choosing the next Legislature;" and

Whereas, Said publication as above mentioned aroused comparatively no enthusiasm among the people in favor of a revision of our State Constitution; and

Whereas, From the message of the Honorable Wm. D. Bloxham, Governor of Florida, read in our hearing on yesterday, it appears that our State is rapidly enlarging its facilities for educating its youth, and is increasing in wealth, population and power under the present Constitution:

Resolved, That it is the judgment of the Senate that it is not necessary to call a convention for the purpose of revising the Constitution of the State of Florida.

The further consideration of this motion was postponed until 11 o'clock to-morrow.

Mr. Chandler offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That Rule 20 of the Standing Rules of the Senate be amended by inserting before the word "and" in the last line the following words: "A Committee on Temperance;"

Which was adopted.