

## REPORT OF COMMISSIONER OF IMMIGRATION.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF IMMIGRATION,  
TALLAHASSEE, FLA., December 31, 1882. }

*To P. W. White, President of Bureau of Immigration:*

As required by the statute under which the Bureau of Immigration was organized, the following report of the action and proceedings of the Commissioner since his appointment to office is submitted:

During the administration of Governor Drew the Commissioner of Immigration had but one office which was located at Jacksonville. At the commencement of Governor Bloxham's official term the Bureau adjudged it best there should be an office at Tallahassee also.

With Columbus Drew as Special Agent of the office at Jacksonville, and R. C. Long, Esq., as Secretary in the office at Tallahassee, it has been found possible to give prompt attention and response to the great and extended inquiry pouring in from all the world. The following table exhibits a summary of the reports of the two offices as to letters received and answered and number of pamphlets and newspapers distributed from April 1st, 1881, to January 1st, 1883:

Summary of Business of Bureau of Immigration from April 1st, 1881, to  
January 1st, 1883:

Name of Office.	Letters answered		Pamphlets distributed.		Newspapers distributed.		Total.			Now on hand.
	1881	1882	1881	1882	1881	1882	Letters.	Pamphlets.	Newspapers.	
Tallahassee...	900	2731	4000	7113	500	2000	3,631	11,113	2,500	3,900 with maps.
Jacksonville...	1468	2583	5818	6628	350	3483	4,052	13,446	3,843	6,800 without maps
<b>Total for Bureau</b>	<b>2368</b>	<b>5318</b>	<b>9818</b>	<b>13741</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>5483</b>	<b>7,682</b>	<b>23,559</b>	<b>6,343</b>	<b>10,700.</b>

In the summer of 1881 the editors of the *Tradesman*, a paper published in Chattanooga, Tennessee, addressed a

communication to the Hon. W. D. Bloxham, Governor, asking that he would have prepared for them an article on Florida and its resources for inviting immigration, and stating their purpose, if furnished with such article, to publish in their paper and distribute, gratuitously, at and during the Atlanta Exposition thirty thousand copies. The like proposition, they said, was made to all the Southern States, and that the paper on Florida and a similar one on Georgia would be published in the same number of their paper.

The communication was sent to the office of the Commissioner for reply, and with instructions that such an article as they requested should be prepared. Such an article as they requested was prepared and forwarded, covering something more than a page of their paper.

The Commissioner on his several visits to the Exposition found the paper in circulation containing the articles on Florida and Georgia published and distributed according to agreement.

In July of 1881 an Immigration Convention, which had been called to consider the best means for furthering the ends of immigration, met in Jacksonville. One of the objects in the call of the convention was to place before them for advisement how we might best collect from each of the several counties such statistical information upon the subjects of climate, soil, productions, healthfulness, schools, churches, commercial facilities and other matters of interest as would be proper for publication in a pamphlet to be issued from the office of the Commissioner upon Florida and its resources for inviting immigration.

Another object was to have designated competent parties in each county to whom might be referred correspondents with the office of the Commissioner making inquiries for specific information about a particular county, when such designated party living in the county could give the information sought more correctly than the Commissioner.

And still another object was to make such provision as might be found practicable for having the State of Florida properly represented at the Atlanta Exposition.

In that convention a little less than half the counties were represented through their delegates. Resolutions were passed by the Convention calling upon the citizens of each county of the State to form a county association and appoint committees for gathering such information upon the various

subjects as would set forth the county properly before the public as to all the advantages it might have to offer.

It was further resolved that the information thus collected should be embodied in proper form in a paper to be sent to the Commissioner for publication. And further, that the county association should appoint some competent citizen of the county to give such local information as might be inquired for in the correspondence of the Commissioner and referred to them for reply. These resolutions were published in the papers, and some of the counties complied with the call thus made upon them for information, but of that number some were tardy in preparing and sending forward their papers. In other counties application had to be made by the Commissioner to intelligent citizens to prepare such papers. And in counties where no such paper could be procured, such counties had to be set forth in the pamphlet with such statistical and other limited information as the Commissioner could command.

The delay in getting these papers from the counties delayed the publication of the pamphlet until the autumn of the year just passed. The rapidity with which the pamphlet has been put in circulation in answer to inquiries for it, indicates the fact that it meets a public want, and is effective in contributing to the interests of immigration.

The pamphlet furnishes answers to many inquiries addressed to the office; but many more have to be answered by specific replies to correspondents. And these official and specific replies to correspondents by the agent of the Bureau makes this arm of the public service of far more worth than its cost.

The incentives to immigration from this correspondence, from the pamphlets sent out, and from the efforts to promote it on the part of parties having large landed interests in the State, is swelling the tide now flooding towards Florida. In capital, culture, enterprise and moral tone, these immigrants are above the average of those flowing to the great West, and are also, perhaps, above the average of the several communities from which they come. Nor is the influx from any one point of the compass or part of the United States. From the New England States, from the North and the Northwest they come, in quest of a softer and more genial climate; from the Gulf States and West, even as far as California, they come to grow the tropical and semi-tropical fruits.

The very limited appropriation by the State to be expended by the Bureau of Immigration rendered impracticable any agencies in New York or Europe to further the ends of immigration as provided by some of the other States. But, while this has lessened the number of immigrants, it has preserved to us a class for the most part already in sympathy with our government and with our republican institutions.

One of the objects had in view by the Commissioner in preparing the pamphlet issued from his office was to set prominently before the public the need of an Agricultural Bureau for the State of Florida. Much of the soil of the State suited in its locality to the growth of vegetables and tropical and semi-tropical plants, and particularly the peninsular portion, will need a great deal of fertilizing to render it in the highest degree available. Some care, therefore, was taken to show that the State has a large supply of fertilizing material within her borders; but a State Chemist and Geologist is necessary to discover the precise locality of some of them, their relative values, and the proportions of them to be applied, in order to obtain the highest return for the labor expended.

The seasons in which vegetables can be grown, and the prices they command in those seasons, will naturally attract the tillers of the soil to their culture as a leading item; and this will strongly invite to fertilizing, for all along in the past the vegetable garden has received more fertilizing, proportionately, than the farm.

The practical farmer and gardener needs intelligent guidance and should have his pathway enlightened by that careful scientific experience which is enabling the other States to advance with an easier and more rapid step to agricultural success. Georgia has several agricultural colleges in different portions of the State in connection with, and as branches to, her State University.

As by act of Congress of July 2d, 1862, lands were granted to the several States for the establishment of a college of Agriculture and the mechanic arts in each. As the grant was accepted on the part of Florida, the lands sold and the proceeds vested in bonds now at interest to the amount of one hundred and twenty-five thousand six hundred dollars, and college buildings already erected, it is respectfully suggested that the interest upon the bonds and the tuition

fees would supply a philosophical and chemical apparatus upon an economical scale, and pay the salaries of the limited number of professors at first needed. If the Agricultural College buildings are not properly located, or any other consideration renders their use impracticable or undesirable, an agricultural department added to the East and West Florida Seminaries would make them available as agricultural colleges. And the Agricultural College Fund turned in that direction would still be in keeping with the purposes of the donation. A State geologist and chemist put in such connection with these institutions as to give him free access to the apparatus would furnish him with means for such analysis of soils and fertilizers as might be found necessary.

In Georgia the small tax or tariff for the analysis of each cargo of fertilizers put upon the market not only pays all the expense of providing a State Chemist, but is moreover a source of revenue to the State, in 1880, to the sum of over forty thousand dollars. Vendors of these fertilizers are glad to pay for their analysis, for the certificate furnished is a letter of credit to the public which aids in their sale.

We conclude this report with the statement that Florida was represented at the Atlanta Exposition in a manner creditable to the State and promotive of immigration.

A. A. ROBINSON, Commissioner.