

New Orleans Republican. OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF NEW ORLEANS

OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

First Day's Session.

Senate Chamber, New Orleans, January 5, 1874.

Pursuant to the requirements of the seventeenth article of the constitution of the State of Louisiana, the Senate met at the Mechanics' Institute, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

At the hour of 12 M. Hon. C. C. Antoine, Lieutenant Governor of the State, by virtue of the constitution, called the Senate to order, he being ex-officio President of the same.

On call of the roll the following Senators answered to their names: Messrs. Alexander, Barber, Belden, Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Crawford, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, E. F. Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—25.

The President announced a quorum present. Prayer was then offered by the Rev. Mr. Thompson, Chaplain of the Senate.

Mr. Brewster offered, in form of resolution, that there be appointed on the part of the Senate a committee of two to meet a similar committee on the part of the House of Representatives, who are to notify the Governor of the organization of the General Assembly.

Mr. Barber offered, in form of resolution, that there be appointed by the President a committee of three to notify the House of Representatives of the organization of the Senate.

Mr. Harris requested that the rules required all resolutions to lie over one day; and proposed that the desired effect could be accomplished by a simple motion.

The President ruled the form of simple motion to be correct and proper at that stage of proceedings.

Subsequently Messrs. Brewster and Barber changed the forms of their propositions and the same were adopted.

The President appointed the following in pursuance with the motion of Mr. Barber: Messrs. Barber, Brewster and Stamps; and the following in pursuance with the motion of Mr. Brewster, to wit: Messrs. Brewster and Burch.

The committee to inform the House of Representatives of the organization of the Senate reported, by the chairman, Mr. Barber, that it had attended to the duties assigned to it.

On motion of Mr. Barber, the Senate went into executive session.

Executive session having been raised, the Senate was called to order by the President.

On call of the roll, the following Senators answered to their names: Messrs. Alexander, Barber, Belden, Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Crawford, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, E. F. Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—25.

Very respectfully, JOHN W. ROXBOROUGH, Assistant Clerk.

Mr. Barber moved to proceed to the election of Secretary of the Senate.

On suggestion of Mr. Harris Mr. Barber amended his motion to include the election of all officers required by act No. 11, of the Legislature of 1872, which was adopted.

The Senate then proceeded and elected P. E. Bechtel, Secretary by the following unanimous vote:

Messrs. Alexander, Barber, Blackburn, Belden, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Crawford, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, E. F. Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—25.

Mr. Ingraham nominated William H. Green for assistant secretary of the Senate. The Senate then proceeded to the election of the assistant secretary:

Yeas—Barber, Belden, Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—23.

Mr. Green having received twenty-three votes, was declared elected assistant secretary of the Senate.

On motion of Mr. Butler, the Senate proceeded to the election of minute clerk.

Mr. Butler nominated C. C. Packard for minute clerk, who was elected by the following vote:

Messrs. Barber, Belden, Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Crawford, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—25.

Mr. Burch nominated Thomas Reber for assistant minute clerk.

Messrs. Barber, Belden, Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Crawford, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—25.

Mr. Barber nominated L. D. Herbert. Mr. Stamps nominated A. J. Kemp. Mr. Harper nominated M. Davis. Mr. Sypher nominated Timothy Davis.

Mr. Wharton nominated Thomas S. Kelly. Mr. Bovee nominated A. W. Thompson and J. B. Noble.

Nominations being closed, the Senate proceeded to elect by viva voce vote. The following is the result of the first ballot:

For Timothy Davis—Sypher—1. For Thomas S. Kelly—Wharton—1. For A. W. Thompson—Bovee—1. For J. B. Noble—Blunt, Cagle—2. For Monroe Davis—Harper—1.

For Alfred Henley—Blackburn, Brewster, Burch, Crawford, Kelso, Pollard—6. For L. D. Herbert—Alexander, Barber, Butler, Harris, Ingraham, Mascot, Key, Wharton—3.

For A. J. Kemp—Belden, Chadbourne, E. F. Herwig, Stamps—1. No election.

Mr. Burch moved that all the names be dropped except the three highest. Adopted.

The following is the result of the second ballot:

For Alfred Henley—Blackburn, Brewster, Bovee, Brewster, Burch, Crawford, Harper, Kelso, Pollard, Sypher, Twitchell—11. For L. D. Herbert—Alexander, Barber, Butler, Harris, E. F. Herwig, Ingraham, Mascot, Key, Wharton—11.

For A. J. Kemp—Chadbourne, Stamps, Whitney—3. No election.

On motion of Mr. Harris, the candidate having the lowest number of votes was dropped.

The following is the result of the fourth ballot:

For Alfred Henley—Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Burch, Crawford, Harper, Kelso, Pollard, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Wharton, Whitney—14.

For L. D. Herbert—Alexander, Barber, Belden, Butler, Harris, E. F. Herwig, Ingraham, Mascot, Key, Wharton—11. Mr. A. Henley having received a majority, was declared duly elected doer.

The Senate then proceeded to the election of chief messenger.

Mr. Harris nominated Philippe Ferris, who was elected by the following vote:

For Philippe Ferris—Barber, Belden, Blackburn, Blunt, Bovee, Brewster, Butler, Burch, Crawford, Cagle, Chadbourne, Harris, Herwig, Ingraham, Kelso, Mascot, Pollard, Key, Stamps, Sypher, Twitchell, Weber, Wharton, Whitney—25.

Blank—Alexander—1.

Executive Communications.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR. The Speaker directed the Chief Clerk to read the annual message of the Governor.

STATE OF LOUISIANA. New Orleans, January 5, 1874.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 29th inst., in relation to the proposed amendment to the constitution of the State, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the Finance Committee.

During the year that has passed since you last convened a kind Providence has given the people of this State comparatively good crops. We have been in a great measure exempted from financial disaster, and while contiguous States and cities have suffered from the scourge of pestilence, every community in the State, with one exception, has been singularly exempt. With a few exceptions, which I regret to note, good order has prevailed throughout the State. The great and pressing need now is relief from the burden of heavy taxation which is so depressing to all the material interests of the State. It is your great privilege to be in a position to contribute largely toward this relief, to inaugurate many needed reforms, and to correct many abuses in the legislation of the past. Your enemies say that little or nothing can be expected of you in this regard. Many other persons, not partisans, would gladly find good reason to approve your course, while your friends, both here and elsewhere, the supporters of the great party you represent expect you to do much to merit commendation, and trust you will do nothing to deserve censure. I have the highest confidence in you, and have every reason to believe that your honorable course will be such as to merit the approval of all. I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

FINANCE.

THE SITUATION IN JANUARY LAST.

The financial situation at the beginning of the year was one of extraordinary difficulty. The treasury was empty. The total amount of taxes collected during the previous year was less than the amount required to defray the various obligations of the State.

Against the various exhausted funds a mass of unpaid warrants had accumulated, aggregating nearly \$2,500,000. This debt, the result of the mismanagement of the resources of the State during several years past, was left as an inheritance to be added to the other embarrassments of the present year.

The interest on the heavy bonded debt of the State had fallen in arrears to the extent of nearly \$300,000. All receipts from the various sources, including taxes due the interest, school and other funds were tied up by act No. 81 of 1872, and devoted exclusively to the payment of the old outstanding warrants, and at the same time those warrants were in effect lien on all current receipts to the general fund. A system of espionage, which it was impossible for the treasury to shake off, had been established by the issue of these warrants, whereby they were informed the instant a dollar was turned into the treasury, and presenting their warrants for payment, and a receipt was given for the amount received.

It is sufficient to say that the resistance to the payment thereof, if this seemed likely that nothing would be realized from current receipts to meet the necessary and legitimate expenses of the government, and it is even difficult to distribute the funds received among the holders of the old warrants except in the manner agreed upon by the organization which had virtual control of the treasury. I need not enlarge in this connection upon the hostility at that time manifested toward all the departments of the State government. It is sufficient to say that the payment of all taxes was especially embarrassing to the financial officers of the State.

PRESENT CONDITION.

The present situation is not without its discouragements, yet compared with that of one year ago, it affords just grounds for congratulation. Resistance to the payment of taxes and the execution of the laws has been happily abandoned. The collections of revenue exceeding \$4,000,000 have been larger in amount, and I may safely affirm, have been effected with less loss and expense to the State than for many years past. One of the most important measures of the organization which had virtual control of the treasury, I need not enlarge in this connection upon the hostility at that time manifested toward all the departments of the State government. It is sufficient to say that the payment of all taxes was especially embarrassing to the financial officers of the State.

set to the action of the courts. The collection of the interest had not been sufficient to pay that amount also, in case it shall ultimately be decided that the bonds enjoyed a legitimate independence of the State. A rigid inspection of the accounts of the various tax collectors has been maintained, and they have been required to make their settlements in person with the proper officers, instead of through brokers, as in many instances heretofore.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE.

It is well known that in practice warrants could not be paid as issued, and were not paid to the original holders, but were sold on the street at their "market value" and collected in full by middle men as money came into the treasury. The Auditor, taking advantage of this state of affairs for the benefit of the State, inaugurated a system by which the funds received were distributed in a more equitable and satisfactory manner, and at the same time a saving of over \$200,000 was realized to the State, which would otherwise have been paid to speculators, without benefit to the original holders of the warrants. These warrants were canceled, and are now in the treasury, the value of which has been increased by the course reduced by precisely that amount. By this means and by a scrupulous care in the issuance of warrants, and by confining the issue of warrants to the holders of the same, the State has been enabled to begin the new year with \$1,930,000 outstanding warrants of 1873, instead of over \$2,500,000.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE.

In this connection I desire to call your attention to several matters which appear to me of great vital importance.

1. The absolute necessity of hereafter confining your appropriations rigidly within the revenues. This is the first principle of sound and economical government, and adopted instantly, in principle and practice, and adhered to, we may cherish small hopes of permanent improvement in our condition.

2. It is believed to be a wholesome legal principle, that the revenues of each year must take care of the expenditures of that year and no other. I believe this to be sound policy, and an acknowledgment of great benefit to the State, tending to relieve confusion, to restore order, and to check improvidence in the future, if this principle were positively recognized by the State.

3. It should be specified among the duties of the Auditor of Public Accounts that he shall in no case issue a warrant unless the funds are then in the treasury to pay the same on demand. When this is done we shall no longer see State warrants hawked about the streets and hear no more of confusions in the treasury to pay the same on demand. When this is done we shall no longer see State warrants hawked about the streets and hear no more of confusions in the treasury to pay the same on demand.

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THE SUBSTANTIAL RESULTS OF SUCCESSFUL EXECUTION OF THIS POLICY WILL BE BEST ILLUSTRATED BY A REFERENCE TO OFFICIAL FIGURES.

The total debt of the State, funded and unfunded, as appears by the official records in the Auditor's office, as follows:

Bonds outstanding January 1, 1874, \$2,427,300.00. Auditors warrants (old), 1,930,185.15. Total, \$4,357,485.15.

Certificates of indebtedness (old), 1,175,912.42. Total, \$5,533,397.57.

The present rate of taxation for all purposes, as appears by the official records in the Auditor's office, as follows:

The existing debt of \$2,428,886.60, funded at sixty cents on the dollar, would leave us with a new debt of \$1,570,331.60.

If any portion of the bonds now to be repaid by the courts and taxed at the rate of fifty cents on the dollar, the new debt will be considerably less than this latter sum.

Interest tax at present is eleven and a half mills, and the rate of interest on the consolidated bonds is five and a half mills.

It should be remembered, also, that this estimate is based upon our present great rate of interest, and that if the rate of interest on the new debt represented by consolidated bonds is five and a half mills, the interest tax at present is eleven and a half mills, and the rate of interest on the consolidated bonds is five and a half mills.

It is apparent that as soon as the relief is afforded to the treasury to pay the same on demand, when this is done we shall no longer see State warrants hawked about the streets and hear no more of confusions in the treasury to pay the same on demand.

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