THE CLARION.

VOL. XLIX. JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1886. NO. 1.

THE GOVERNOR'S BIENNIAL MESSAGE.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

Since the last meeting of the Legislature the people of Mississippi have enjoyed a peaceful and uninterrupted prosperity. We owe to a benignant Providence the prevalance of favorable seasons for our chief industries, exemption from epidemic disease, and from all serious calamities affecting our material interests. The signs of general progress, moral and material, throughout the State, are hopeful and assuring; and I may justly congratulate you on the prosperous condition of our affairs.

Since the last session of this body there has occurred a change in the federal administration, by its transfer from one political party to another. This change has been heartily welcomed by the people of this State, because they see in it the certain evidence of the triumph of truly national feeling, the subsidence of sectional jealousies and bitterness, and the advent of a broad, patriotic spirit.

The event is notable for the reason that the party displaced had its origin in sectional issues, had held the federal administration for a quarter of a century, with the desire to retain it, strengthened by long possession, and by party antipithies, intensified by unusual stimulants, and yet the change was made by the peaceful instrument of the ballot without tumult or disturbance, and acquiesced in without a murmur of discontent, if we except the noisy utterences of the merely partizan spirit. In this event there is much to increase our confidence in the stability of our institutions.

It is surely true that the foundations of true patriotism and public spirit are broader and deeper than the basis of any political party in the United States.

We have cause to deplore the untimely death of Thomas A. Hendricks, late Vice-President of the United States. He was the choice of the people of the United States for the high office he held, and well deserved their choice, for his abilities and usefulness and his genuine patriotism.

The reports of the Auditor and Treasurer will be furnished you at an early day, and will acquaint you with the

FINANCIAL

condition of the State. I have no doubt that but these reports will show a considerable increase in the State debt within the past four years. This will not be surprising when the fact is recalled that the Legislature of 1882 increased the common school fund by $100,000 per annum and decreased the rate of taxation from three to two and a half mills, which is equal to $50,000 per annum. It will be noticed that these two items made a difference of $600,000 in the financial transactions of the State in the four years. Had the common school fund not been increased and the rate of taxation not reduced, it is safe to say that the net payable debt could have been discharged before this. It is well to increase school facilities and to reduce taxation, but, unfortunately, both cannot be done at the same time without increasing the debt. I venture to repeat and emphasize the caution contained in my last message, that the most rigid economy must be inaugurated in every department of the government. Even then I apprehend that the present resources will prove inadequate to meet necessary expenses. I urge that you will in future avoid the grave error of directing expenditures in excess of the revenue you shall provide, and that you shall either first determine what sum of money may be reasonably expected to come into the treasury, and then appropriate it to the objects you see proper, or that, after directing a l expenditures you shall be careful to assure the realization of enough money to meet them.

Our revenue law demands your earnest attention, with a view to devise, if possible, some means by which the irregularities existing in the

ASSESSMENT

for taxation may be remedied. There is not only great want of uniformity in the assessed value of property in counties, but in the different counties of the State as compared with each other. This want of relative uniformity throughout the State is of great moment to the tax payers. It would not matter whether valuation is high or low, if uniform throughout the State. If low, the rate would be higher, and vice versa.

The necessity for this correction, if in your power to make it, will be found in the following facts: The average assessed value of taxable lands per acre in the twenty counties mentioned below are as follows: Coahoma county, $2.55; Pike county, $2.60; Sharkey county, $1.71; Rankin county, $1.90; Washington county, $4.33; Copiah county, $4.35; Tate county, $7.20; Yazoo county, $5.17; Issaquena county, $5.80; Chickasaw county, $4.10; Tallahatchie county, $2.71; Newton county, $2.14; Oktibbeha county, $3.44; Sunflower county, $1.90; Noxubee county, $5.17; Hinds county, $5.47; Prentiss county, $3.10; Attala county, $2.46; Tunica county, $2.65, and Montgomery county, $3.78. It will be observed that Tate county gives a much higher valuation per acre than the others mentioned.

If you can devise some means of securing uniformity of valuation, and an impartial exhibit of all taxable wealth of the State, it will meet my hearty concurrence, and you will thereby effect great good for the people of the State.

I again call attention to the importance of requiring the Auditor, or other proper officer, to procure and transmit to the sheriff or assessor of each county, for assessment, a list of all lands purchased from the United States, and of all homestead entries on which final proof has been made, together with the name of purchaser and date of purchase. The Secretary of State should also be required to furnish such officers with a similar list of sales of Chickasaw School lands. In the absence of such information, it is impossible for the assessor to assess lands to the true owner, and they continue to appear on the rolls as the property of the State or United States, as the case may be, and thus year after year escape taxation. It will be observed that §§ 567, 569, *et seq.*, of the Code, require the Auditor to furnish such list in case of the purchase of lands through that office, and that Section 1, of the Act of February 1, 1877, requires the Secretary of State to furnish such list in case of the purchase of swamp lands, but, through an omission, the Legislature has failed to provide for such lists in the two cases mentioned, though they are of equal importance. Within the last four years the United States has disposed of 682,090 acres of land, of the value of $760,362.50. Doubtless much of this land still appears on the assessment rolls as the property of the United States, and so escapes taxation, because the assessor and tax collector are not notified of the change of ownership.

I direct your attention to the importance of providing further remedies for the faithful collection of

DELINQUENT POLL TAXES,

the Act of March 15th, 1884, having proved insufficient. No citizen deserves to enjoy the blessings of government who fails to contribute to its support the pittance exacted in the shape of the poll tax. The constitution having prescribed the qualifications of electors, the Legislature could not, if it were desirable, require the payment of the poll tax as a condition for the exercise of the elective franchise, but the wisdom of the Legislature will doubtless suggest other means of accomplishing the object in view. The statute declares it a misdemeanor for any person summoned to work on a road to fail to attend and perform the service required, and directs the justice of the peace, on notice of the default from the overseer, to issue his warrant for the arrest of the delinquent and to proceed as in other cases.

It is entirely competent for the Legislature to make it a misdemeanor to refuse payment of the poll tax, and to authorize the prosecution of the delinquent before the justice of the peace of the vicinage, on notice of the default from the sheriff, (which it should be his duty to make to be relieved from liability,) as in case of delinquent road hands, and I recommend this as the best solution of the difficulty which a thoughtful consideration of the question on my part has suggested. The effect of enforcing such collections would be to swell enormously the legitimate receipts at no expense, save that arising from the compulsion of the unwilling to perform a duty they owe society. The number of delinquents would surprise one who has not investigated the subject. In many of the more populous counties over three thousand delinquents are reported to the county, while the average in forty-four counties, from which I have returns, is nine hundred and forty eight. This is a scandalous abuse of citizenship which the Legislature should promptly correct. The same average throughout the State would give 73,214 delinquent polls. For assessing these delinquent polls the State and counties pay $7320.20 and receive nothing in return.

The State tax is not burdensome. The principal burden of taxation is county and municipal. A large part of county expense consists of what is called "the judiciary," to which belongs, as a principal item, the

FEES OF WITNESSES

in criminal prosecutions.

These are enormously, and I will add unnecessarily increased by the fact that numerous misdemeanors which should be promptly disposed of by the justice of the peace of the vicinity of their occurrence are prosecuted in the circuit court. If you can pass any measure to remedy this mischief and relieve the circuit courts from this class of cases, I earnestly recommend that you shall do so. On many grounds it is desirable that the magistrates provided for every vicinage shall promptly exercise their jurisdiction and try all charges over which they have it. The economy of this course is of itself enough to commend it. Under the constitution, which confers on circuit courts original jurisdiction in all criminal cases, it is not allowable to deprive those courts of jurisdiction to entertain prosecutions for misdemeanors, but the constitution (sec. 31, art. 1,) provides that the Legislature, in cases of misdemeanors, may dispense with the inquest of a grand jury, and authorize prosecutions before justices of the peace or other inferior courts of its creation.

It may be that it would be well to allow a fee of one-fourth of the amount now allowed to district attorney on conviction, to the justice of the peace for each conviction.

The objection that it would be a constant temptation to justices of the peace to convict for the fee is met by the provision for an appeal to the circuit court, and by the right of every accused to have a jury in the justice court as his trier unbiased by the justices. With this objection overcome it may be expected that many misdemeanors, which now escape the notice of the neighborhood magistrate, and await discovery by the grand jury, will thus become the subject of prompt investigation near the time and place of their occurrence, for fees at the end of a prosecution are known to be a powerful stimulant to vigilance and activity to earn them.

If there is danger that certain misdemeanors of grave character may escape due punishment by justices of the peace, it is competent for the Legislature to except from the grant of jurisdiction to justices of the peace, such misdemeanors as may be desired to be especial subjects of prosecution in circuit court. In this connection, I suggest that no costs or district attorney's fee be allowed in prosecutions in circuit court of all the class of misdemeanors, the prosecution of which, in circuit court, is desired to be discouraged.

The allowance of costs and fees in justice courts and denial of them in circuit courts will go far to effect the object I deem so desirable. Certainly it seems to me, every legitimate means should be employed to prevent the great evil of the consumption of a large part of the errors of circuit courts in the trial of petty cases, prosecuted in the name of the State, at enormous expense, to result in case of conviction in a fine of one dollar and a district attorney's fee of ten or twenty dollars, and fees to the clerk, sheriff and witnesses to a considerable amount, the last named in many and perhaps most instances to constitute a charge on the county treasury. I deem it appropriate in this connection to renew my recommendation made two years ago, that district attorneys be compensated alone by reasonable salaries. They are now paid a salary of $1250.00 per annum each, and are allowed fees on conviction varying in amount with different offences. This is an evil. Fees should never be resorted to as a means of compensation, when from the nature of the case a different mode can be adopted. Fixed salaries should be provided in all cases when practicable. If fees are allowed on conviction they should go into the public treasury. The administration of criminal law is grossly scandalized by the frequent instances of convictions of petty charges, followed by a fine of one dollar and a fee of ten or twenty dollars to the district attorney and other costs. In some of the districts of this State the fees of district attorneys amount to thousands of dollars, far more than is realized by the school fund from the convictions he procures. This a great wrong and should be promptly corrected. A fair and reasonable salary, without fees, will retain the services of the present able and efficient district attorney's or secure others.

A reasonable addition to the present salary will accomplish the desired object. They are allowed to practice law, as before their election, in civil cases, and the office will be well filled on the plan proposed. Circuit Judges and Chancellors, whose labors are far more arduous than those of District Attorney, are paid $2500.00 and not allowed to practice law.

There are 152 circuit courts annually held in this State at a cost of from $200,000 to $300,000. Probably half the time of the 152 courts is consumed in the trial of petty misdemeanors. This is a great, and it seems a growing evil, and should be promptly remedied and the tax-payers of the State relieved from such an unjust and unnecessary burden. There is no feasible measure that can be adopted that will so much reduce county taxes as this suggestion, the prompt adoption of which I earnestly urge. It must be remembered that government is maintained by the people for their benefit. It has not a penny of its own. The people are entitled to the best attainable government, at the smallest possible cost, therefore every superfluous expense should be promptly abolished.

Fees should only be allowed, where, from the nature of the case no other mode is admissible. Just compensation should be given to all engaged in the public service, but it should in every instance be fixed by law, so that no uncertainty may exist as to the emoluments of any office.

On the 24th of November, 1885, Gen. Wirt Adams resigned the office of

REVENUE AGENT,

and Mr. Wirt Adams, Jr., was appointed to fill the vacancy. The report of the Revenue Agent for the years 1884 and 1885 shows his collections to have been $4,667.23 and $29,570.56, respectively. The small amount collected in 1884 was owing to the failure of the regular terms of court in the 4th district, where the principal claims were pending.

The value and necessity of the services of a Revenue Agent to the taxpayers of the State is shown by the large aggregate of collections for the last five and a half years. The total collections for that period were $134,542.13.

PUBLIC LANDS.

Under the Act of Congress of March 1, 1817, providing for the admission of Mississippi into the Union, five per cent. of the net proceeds of the lands lying within the State were reserved for making public roads and canals; of which three-fifths was to be applied under the direction of the Legislature and two fifths under the direction of Congress. There is now admitted to be due, and payable to the State, under the provisions of this act, and the act of September 4, 1841, the sum of $43,945.81, unless the general government is entitled to set-off against this demand the $413,084.66, which was apportioned to the State by section 8 of the Act of August 5, 1861, levying a direct tax of twenty millions. This subject was called to the attention of the last Legislature, and an act was passed March 14, 1884, providing that the Governor should give such personal supervision and attention to the adjustment of claims against the United States as he might deem proper, and he was authorized to employ all necessary agents, clerks and attorneys to aid in such adjustment. In furtherance of the provisions of this act, and by the advice of the Attorney General, I employed E. M. Watson, Esq., to take such steps as he deemed expedient to secure the collection of the claims, and in addition to the sum of $150 paid him in cash, I agreed to pay him a contingent fee of ten per cent., it being the compensation fixed by the Attorney-General and himself. I also visited Washington in person on this and kindred matters in April, 1884, and made every effort to secure the payment of this demand but without success. The Attorney-General of the United States, it is true, admitted the justice of the debt and the illegality of the set off claimed, and agreed to facilitate the early determination of the question involved in an action which I had brought in the Court of Claims. It was discovered, however, after Mr. Watson had instituted the suit, that this court was without jurisdiction, in that the State could not sue the United States without authority of Congress. Congress was then in session, and Hon. E. Barksdale promptly introduced a bill to adjust and settle the account of any State against the United States without regard to the amount claimed to be due by such State on account of the direct tax of 1861. This bill was reported back to the House with a substitute embodying the same provisions, but it was not reached before adjournment. After the adjournment Mr. Watson made application to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia for a mandamus to compel the Comptroller to issue a warrant for the amount due the State. The Comptroller admitted in his return that the State was in no manner indebted to the United States on account of the direct tax or otherwise, but maintained that he was bound to close his eyes to his clear convictions that the act of 1861 could not, constitutionally, and did not, and never was designed to create a debt against the States themselves, because a certain Auditor, on the 15th of May, 1868, made a certificate that he had examined and adjusted an account and found the precise sum of $413,084.66 to be due by virtue of the act of 1861, and afterwards so certified the same. The court held that it was without jurisdiction to entertain the petition for mandamus, and without authority to pass upon the validity of the objection interposed by the Comptroller. All legal remedies having failed, it is now for Congress to say if tardy justice shall be done the State.

In addition to the $43,945.81 due on account of the two and three fund, $57,771.23 is due on other accounts and its payment refused. My personal expenses in visiting Washington and detention there in making examination, etc., was $300.

Hon. John M. Smylie, Commissioner of Swamp lands, having tendered his resignation, H. D. Cameron, of Lauderdale, was appointed to fill the vacancy on April 10, 1884. Afterwards it was discovered that Mr. Cameron was ineligible under the last clause of Act IV, Sec. 38 of the constitution, and his resignation was promptly tendered. Mr. E. B. Comfort discharged the duties of the office until June 13, when Hon. P. M. Doherty, of Yazoo, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Before his resignation, Mr. Cameron was engaged in examining the swamp and overflowed lands selected under the act of March 16, 1852, and amendments thereto, and in procuring necessary proofs that the lands were of this description, and after his resignation he continued in this service as special agent of the department. This proof was exceedingly difficult to obtain, as under the regulations of U. S. Land Department, the State was required to prove, by the testimony of at least two witnesses who have personal and exact knowledge of the lands as it existed on September 28, 1850, the date of the swamp land grant, not only that each forty acres, or smallest legal subdivision was on September 28, 1850, swamp and overflowed, within the meaning of the grant, but at what seasons and to what extent this was its condition, together with the causes of the overflow, the name and description of the timber, shrubs and plants on the land, and the character and extent of means necessary for their reclamation, &c. When this proof could be obtained at all, it was at considerable expense, delay and inconvenience. Mr. Cameron was not able to obtain the proof on more than about 10,000 acres in three months and the expense, including his salary, was $660.82. I had already become convinced that some more expeditious and less expensive method of selecting and locating these lands should be adopted, and while in Washington had negotiated for the adoption of the field notes of the original survey as the criterion for determining the character of these lands, whether swamp and overflowed or not. After my return to the Capital, the board entered into a contract with the general government to that effect, and selected Dr. J. S. Crissey, a gentleman of long experience in the U. S. Land Office, as the agent of the State to select the lands and secure patents or indemnity scrip for the same, as the case might be, and agreed to pay him at the rate of four and a half cents per acre. Other States were paying from twenty-five to fifty per cent. for the same service, and the board regarded this compensation as entirely reasonable and five times less expensive than the former method. The service has been most satisfactorily performed by Dr. Crissey. He has secured patents for about 200,000 acres of land and indemnity scrip for 47,888.73 acres, for which he has been paid $11,410.25. The patents have been duly recorded in the office of the Swamp Land Commissioner, and the land represented by them is subject to sale at one dollar per acre, the price fixed by the board under the act of March 14, 1884. Under the same act indemnity scrip amounting to $47,888.73 has been sold at one dollar per acre, or one hundred per cent. higher than the minimum fixed by law, and the amount paid into the State Treasury. This scrip can be located on government land within the State, which is held for $1.25 per acre, and to some uninformed persons it may appear that it was sold at a sacrifice of twenty-five cents per acre. But such is not the fact. The State could not locate the scrip on saleable land without making a careful selection which would necessitate an expensive survey, nor on any land without paying the commissions of the Register and Receiver of the U. S. Land Office, which amount to two per cent in cash. But after the land was obtained it was subject to sale at not less than fifty cents per acre, whereas, without the incurring the expense of locating the scrip, the board obtained one dollar per acre for it. I am therefore warranted in saying that the board acted wisely and for the best interests of the State in making the sale for the price stated. During the past two years the sales in the Swamp Land Office have amounted to only 5,649.82 acres, of which 238,868 acres were Internal Improvement land.

Under the Act of March 15, 1884, the marsh lands belonging to the State and lying on the coast were surveyed under the supervision of Mr. Cameron by Mr. J. M. T. Hamilton, a competent civil engineer, at a total expense of $2,872.23, and maps, field notes and report of the same are now on file in the Swamp Land Office. These lands aggregate 13,179.84 acres, and is valuable for different purposes. None of them have been sold, but several applications are on file for the consideration of the board charged with the disposition of the land.

In the years 1884 and 1885, 1,025,585 acres of land were purchased and redeemed through the Auditor's office, leaving 966,226 acres still held for taxes.

These lands are subject to purchase for the taxes and the cost of the conveyance, which is in many cases far less than their value. If the purchaser fails from any cause to get title, his money is refunded with six per cent. interest. In other words, the State warrants the title. If the purchaser gets title he secures a valuable piece of land for much less than its value, and has made a good speculation without incurring the slightest risk. The object of this provision was to stimulate the purchase of State lands and get them on the assessment rolls, and it was a wise provision when, as was the case in 1875, 27 per cent. of the lands in the State were held for taxes. But now there is no need for it. The lands will find a ready market without it. I therefore recommend the amendment of § 537 of the Code so as not to apply to future purchases. A similar provision in relation to swamp lands was repealed at the last session of the Legislature. Only 80 acres of the Chickasaw school lands have been sold since January 1, 1884. The price is $6 per acre, and I renew my recommendation that it be reduced. About 34,000 acres of these lands remain unsold.

I now invite your attention to a brief history of the

CHICKASAW SCHOOL FUND,

after which I will ask you to consider the best means of reducing the high rate of interest the State now pays on that fund.

Congress, by an act approved March 3, 1803 (2 Statutes at Large, p. 234) reserved from sale, section number sixteen in each township for the support of schools within the same. By the treaty of Pontotoc Creek, on the 20th October, 1832, (7 Statutes at Large, p. 380,) the Chickasaw Indians ceded to the United States all their lands in Mississippi, embracing 6,283,804 acres, and the United States on its part agreed to sell the same and pay over the proceeds to the Chickasaw Nation. Since title to the sixteenth sections in this cession had already vested in the State, this treaty could not divest it. But to settle all controversy that might arise out of these conflicting grants, by an act approved July 4th, 1836 (5 Statutes at Large, p. 116,) Congress granted to the State in lieu of the said sixteenth sections one-thirty sixth part of the land ceded by the Chickasaws, within the State, which lands when selected were to be holden "by the same tenure and upon the same terms and conditions, in all respects, as the said State now holds the lands heretofore reserved for the use of schools within said State." Thus the amount donated for school purposes and known as Chickasaw school lands, was 174,550 acres. By an act approved February 23d, 1848, (Acts, 1848, p. 62), the State authorized the Secretary of State to lease these lands for a period of ninety-nine years, and renewable to the lessee, his heirs or assigns forever for a sum not exceeding six dollars per acre, but certain persons were authorized to enter at two dollars and a half the several preemptions theretofore entered by them under the laws of the general government. The fifth section of this act provided that the proceeds of these lands, after deducting the expenses of the sale, were to be a charge upon the State, "to be held in trust by said State for the use of schools in the Chickasaw cession, and to be applied to that purpose as here after to be provided by law."

It will be noted that these sales were made without the authority of Congress. But by an act approved, May 19th, 1852, (10 Statutes at Large, p. 6), Congress approved and ratified the sales under the act of 1848 aforesaid, and authorized the State thereafter "to sell and convey in fee simple, or lease for a term of years, as the said Legislature may deem best, all or any part of the lands heretofore appropriated by Congress for the use of schools within said State, and to invest the money arising from said sales, as said Legislature may direct for the use and support of schools within the several townships and districts of country for which they were originally reserved and set apart, and for no other use or purpose whatever." By an act approved March 7th, 1856, (acts 1856, p. 141,) it was provided that the Chickasaw school fund, which arose from sales under the act of 1848, "shall become a charge on the State of Mississippi and shall remain and be subject to general appropriation, by law, from the treasury or otherwise, to be used by the State in the same manner as the money received into the State from the ordinary sources of revenue." It was further provided that eight per cent interest should be paid on this fund, to be distributed semi annually among the counties entitled thereto, for the support of schools therein. This act was continued in force by an act approved February 20th, 1867, (acts 1867, p. 391) and a strict observance of all its provisions directed.

The principal of this fund now aggregates $816,615.71, on which the State annually pays at eight per cent., interest to the amount of $65,329.25.

Having ample power to pursue either course it may elect, it is now for the Legislature to determine whether this excessive interest shall be reduced, or the principal paid and invested in securities of the United States or other good securities for the benefit of those entitled thereto. The State may adopt either plan. It may by an act of the Legislature reduce the present rate of interest to four per cent, which would be a fair and equitable rate, or it may raise the principal of the fund by the issuance of four per cent bonds and invest it in other securities. It is the same to the State in either event, but it would be more advantageous to the Chickasaw counties for the State to reduce the interest to four per cent and retain the fund, for negotiable four per cent securities cannot be purchased in the money centers of the world except at a premium. But whatever method of accomplishing the object may be adopted, the duty of the Legislature to reduce this interest in some way to a reasonable rate is clear. A generation has passed away since the debt was incurred. The State has already, at eight per cent, paid nearly $1,500,000 in interest. During this period money has become much cheaper, and almost every State and government except Mississippi has so changed the form of its indebtedness as to take advantage of this cheapness. We must now do likewise if we would not neglect ordinary business principles, and utterly disregard the interests of the people.

It may be fairly assumed that the cause of

EDUCATION

is prospering in Mississippi. More than fifty years ago the constitution adopted for the government of the people of the State declared that "religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government, the preservation of liberty, and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged in this State."

This fundamental provision, adopted by those who spoke for themselves and posterity, is thoroughly endorsed by the people of this day. It is a source of no little gratification to be able to state that the "common school system" is in a healthier condition, and that the complicated machinery of the department, is working more smoothly and satisfactorily than at any previous time in its history. My information from various sources satisfies me that the interest in favor of our system of public education as established and maintained by law, is steadily increasing and assuming a more intelligent and well defined form of action.

I am led to believe that the teaching force of our schools, though improving some, is, as a whole, very inefficient. It would be better to reduce the number of schools and employ more competent and efficient teachers. In many of the counties there are more schools than are necessary to carry out that clause of the constitution requiring that adequate school facilities shall be furnished to all the educable youth of the State. I learn from the able School Superintendent, General Smith, that the attendance of 1884, was largely in excess of that of any previous year, and will, he supposes, be greater for the year 1885. Especially is this increase marked among the colored people, showing more attention and concern about the education of their children than manifested heretofore. It may be truthfully said that the educational outlook of the State is hopeful and the object of every one connected with legislation should be to revise, improve and perfect our school system.

Your efforts in this direction will receive my hearty co-operation. The able report of the efficient State Superintendent will advise you of the details of his department.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

has been well attended during the past two years, and has graduated a larger number of young ladies and gentlemen than usual. The co-education of the sexes may yet be considered as an experiment, but it is hoped that it will prove successful. The young ladies are found to be the equals of the young gentlemen in all the departments, and one has, indeed, already carried off the honors of her class. I learn that the deportment of the young gentlemen has undergone a marked change for the better since co-education was established, and that the mild discipline of the College is found sufficient for all purposes. There is a full corps of Professors, and the organization of the University is all that could be desired and affords the youth of the State every facility for the acquisition of higher education. The University is in great need of an adequate equipment for the splendid Observatory on the grounds, and I extremely regret that the State is not in a condition to furnish it at this time. But as the people are able, I am sure they will still further increase the facilities and enlarge the usefulness of their University, which they must all regard with affectionate pride and solicitude.

THE AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

received from all sources and expended for the years 1884 and 1885 the sum of $89,708.41. Of this sum $75,000 was received directly from the State, and the balance was from various sources, including interest on land-scrip fund, matriculation and tuition fees, chemical fees and proceeds of farm, dairy and nursery. It appears that $8,382.40 was derived from the sale of surplus farm and dairy products, an increase of $934.46 over the amount received from same sources for the three previous years. The cost of the farm, not including student labor, implements, machinery and permanent improvements, was $8656.48. The cost of student labor was $10,199.61, a slight decrease from the amount expended on this account for the years 1882 and 1883. The cost of stock, implements, machinery and permanent improvements was $4877.84. It thus appears that the farm has been conducted at a pecuniary loss. In view of the fact that experiments are required to be made in the interest of agriculture, which yield no revenue to the College, and of the further fact that student labor is not, for obvious reasons, as profitable as more regular and systematic labor, it was not to be expected that the farm would prove a pecuniary success; but let us hope that the loss will be less each year. The advantage of employing students cannot, however, be measured by a pecuniary standard. The skill and practical experience they acquire, the habits of industry and frugality they form, and the physical development they obtain through manual labor on the farm largely compensate for the pecuniary loss sustained by the College.

The College has now received from all sources the sum of $304,000, not including interest on the land scrip fund, which amounts to $4,928.75 per annum. With this sum it has been supported for five years, and has acquired a property which a recent appraisement by Messrs. M. L. Jenkins and A. H. French values at $203,401, an increase of $28,599.84 over the valuation two years ago. From these statistics, it would appear that the annual average cost of supporting the College has been something over $25,000. The annual appropriation for the past two years, including interest on the land scrip fund, was $37,478.75. The College is now admirably equipped in every department, and ought to be, considering the large sums of money expended on it, and for the next two years the appropriation should be limited to an amount sufficient to pay salaries, student labor and incidental expenses. The estimated salaries for the next two years amount to $22,847.50 per annum, student labor $5,000 and incidental expenses $2,310, making a total of $30,157.50 for the support of the College proper per annum. But the College receives $4,928.75 from the land scrip fund, and will receive at least $1200 from matriculation fees per annum. Deducting these amounts we have $24,028.75, which is the amount the Legislature should in my judgment appropriate for the support of the College.

The only other expenses, besides those enumerated, the College will have to incur will be for the conduct of the farm, dairy and nursery, but these should be self-supporting with the aid of student labor, which is included in the above estimate, and the money arising from chemical fees. These fees aggregated $2,937.45 in the last two years. If this recommendation is adopted by the Legislature it will result in an annual saving of $8,471.25 to the State.

The attendance this year is 369, an increase of 78 over the attendance for the second term of last session. The expense of students is decreasing, the average being less than $60 per session. Some students pay all their expenses by labor on the farm at eight cents per hour. It is doubtful, however, if this can be done without prejudice to the literary pursuits of the students, and some regulation on the subject of labor might well be adopted by the Board of Trustees. It is essential to the accomplishment of the purposes of the College that the students should perform some manual labor in each department, and it should be made compulsory, but care should be taken that students do not, through mistaken notions of economy, devote time to this that might be more profitably expended in other directions. A well regulated and less expensive compulsory system of student labor is one of the needs of the College that deserves and will receive, I hope, the careful attention of the faculty and Board of Trustees.

I am led to believe from private and official information that the College is in a highly flourishing condition, and is discharging its important functions with gratifying success. The Faculty and students are working together in entire harmony and with a zeal and enthusiasm that must insure the best results. The beneficent influence of the College is already seen in the diversified industries and improved methods on the surrounding farms, and it is being rapidly extended by the students, and by the admirable system of lectures on agricultural subjects, which the different members of the faculty deliver throughout the State as opportunity offers.

In his admirable report, President Lee recommends certain additional equipments for several departments, which he says are made necessary by the large attendance. The attendance at the College is dependent on so many contingencies, and is subject to so many fluctuations that it would not be wise, in my judgment, to expend more money on the supposition that the present large attendance will be maintained. The first year of the College there were 354 pupils in attendance, but in the second year there were only 304; in the third 317, and in the fourth 291 in attendance. This year there are 369, as stated already, but next year the attendance may drop off to the usual number, for which present equipments are sufficient, at least until the State is in a better condition to provide more. I therefore dissent from the recommendation of President Lee, and recommend that the appropriation be limited to an adequate support fund.

Much interest was displayed in different parts of the State in the competition to secure the location of the

INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTE AND COLLEGE FOR THE EDUCATION OF WHITE GIRLS

in the arts and sciences. In pursuance of the statute, the Board of Trustees gave due notice by publication that they would receive proposals and examine sites offered for the location of the Institution, and after receiving numerous offers, and visiting the various competing points and carefully canvassing the advantages offered by each, the location was awarded to Columbus.

Columbus fills all the requirements of the statute in regard to the location, and besides being healthly, and free from epidemics, and having reasonable average facilities for going to and from the place, and being about as conveniently accessible to the people of every part of the State as any other College supported and maintained by the State, it is a refined and cultivated community, of exceptionally fine morals, social and religious conditions, and has excellent water works, and a well organized and fully equipped fire department available for the protection and use of the institution. And in addition to these Columbus offered twenty-two acres of land within its corporate limits, well adapted to the purpose, with one commodious and substantial brick building, and a large and well designed wooden building and other improvements thereon, and fifty thousand dollars in non-interest bearing bonds of the city, endorsed and the payment thereof guaranteed by her citizens, one-sixth of said sum maturing on the first of January in each year, commencing with the first of January, 1885. After remodeling the old building, and erecting new ones, and providing necessary furniture and equipments for the same, the Institute and College was opened on 22d October last, with imposing ceremonies, and under the most favorable auspices, for the reception of students. The buildings are handsome, convenient and imposing, and have all the modern improvements, such as water, both hot and cold, gas, electric light, elevator, steam heating, steam laundry, etc.

There is no male teacher, except the President. The curriculum embraces the ordinary collegiate and normal courses, with such industrial studies, now being taught, as book keeping, freehand drawing, designing, telegraphy, type-writing, phonography, painting, cutting and making garments, repousse, and art needlework and cooking, etc. Tuition is free in the collegiate, normal and industrial departments. The general rule is, that no pupil is received who does not take one or more of the industrial studies.

I learn from the report of the excellent President, Dr. R. W. Jones, to which you are referred for full information touching the College, that three hundred and seven pupils have matriculated since the opening, and many more from various counties in the State, have been denied admission on account of the want of room in the dormitory building—that sixty-three of the counties in the State are represented in the present patronage—that the cost of board per capita in the College, since the opening, including meals, furnished room, fuel, lights and washing, has averaged ten dollars and twenty cents per month; that all work in the dining room is done by students and each room is kept in order by its occupant; that no pupil is excused from this work, and it is regarded as honorable and is performed with alacrity by all of them, and that pupils who desire to earn something to defray their expenses, are paid for other work in and about the premises, and that in this manner, servants are practically dispensed with and a number of poor girls are in a great measure enabled to educate themselves by their own exertions. The Legislature of 1884 responded to a very general and popular demand in passing the bill establishing the Industrial Institute and College and the State is fully, and in my judgment, wisely and properly committed to its support. The Institute and College is intended for the benefit of the white girls of the State—not for poor white girls alone, not for rich white girls alone, but for the equal advantages of all, and to qualify them for the practical industries of the age. It is manifest that there is weakness and deficiency in our domestic life and economy. In our condition, any social or educational system which provides ample facilities for the higher and industrial education of males, but none for females, is radically defective, and tends to produce poverty, and dependence. Such discrimination against womanhood cannot be harmonized with justice, fair dealing, or the advanced and advancing lines of modern civilization. I divest the subject of all sentimentality, and still, regard it as one of intense practical importance to the people of Mississippi. Compulsory idleness and enforced dependence are terms which define with too much fidelity the condition of many of the noble daughters of Mississippi. If it be true, that that the State or nation is the best and most happily organized in which there is useful, pleasant and profitable employment for every member, and in which there is the smallest number of idle consumers, who are not also producers, how far is Mississippi to-day, on this account alone, away from the landmarks of a well adjusted and happily constituted commonwealth? In the millions of dollars which have been expended in Mississippi for educational purposes by the State, how little, if any, prior to 1884, has been devoted to the practical or industrial education of women, for what practical or industrial duties of life was she qualified under the past system of education provided for her by the State? What avenues of industry or enterprise are open to her in which she may engage—in which she is qualified to engage by education afforded by the State, and earn an honest livelihood for herself and those dependent on her? I hail the inauguration of the Industrial Institute and College as the advent of a new and better dispensation in Mississippi—a dispensation which, if properly appreciated and wisely improved, may contribute much to regenerate and vivify the energies of the State—to enlarge the sphere of woman's mission and influence, and without the loss of a single womanly quality, crown her with independence or the means of independence and self-protection, and render her an important factor in the economic resources of the State—a dispensation which moreover may also purify and elevate the pursuits of man, by placing woman as a co-worker and guardian angel by his side, in every vocation suited to her taste, talents and necessities.

I earnestly recommend that you foster and encourage the institution, and that you make such appropriation therefor as may be necessary to develop and increase its usefulness.

I am gratified to report that the

ALCORN A. AND M. COLLEGE

has been economically conducted during the past two years. The appropriation for the support of the College was $11,000 per annum, of which there was an unexpended balance of $1,615.27 in 1884, and $1,458.47 on the 8th December, 1885. The appropriation of $10,000 for repairs and improvements was judiciously expended in repairing, painting and plastering the buildings, making cisterns, changing a literary hall into a dormitory, etc. As a result of this expenditure there is a marked improvement in the comfort, convenience and capacity of the buildings, as well as in their general appearance. The appropriation of $1000 for a library has been expended in the purchase of useful and necessary books, maps, globes, etc. With a small annual expenditure the College will soon have a library sufficient for all its purposes. The attendance this term is 145, an increase over the average attendance for past years. The farm in connection with the College appears to be conducted without loss. For student labor there was expended in 1884 $1,922.84, and in 1885, $1,934.23. I recommend an annual appropriation of $11,000 for the support of the College for the next two years.

The Board of Visitors of the

TOUGALOO UNIVERSITY,

report that this excellent school for the education of colored youth continues in a highly flourishing condition. The attendance for the past year in all the departments, was 219.

During the past two years an Industrial department has been added; and four of the leading mechanical pursuits of this section, to-wit: blacksmithing, wagon-making, carpentry and tinsmithing are now being successfully taught under the direction of skilled workmen. At the Commencement of 1885, and at the Colored State Fair held at Jackson, the University made extensive and creditable exhibits, which have been transferred to the Exposition at New Orleans. There is an increasing desire on the part of the colored students to acquire a thorough knowledge of farming and housekeeping, or some trade that will qualify them to make a support after they leave the institution. This is a hopeful and promising feature that should be encouraged. The managers ask for an additional appropriation of one thousand dollars to provide shops for the trades named, but I recommend only the usual appropriation of three thousand dollars for each year, to be expended under the direction of the Board of Visitors and Managers, in such way as will best promote the efficiency of the University.

The American Missionary Society has nearly sixty thousand dollars invested in this institution, and the Society assumes and is responsible for its maintenance; nevertheless, it confidently relies upon assistance from the State, and highly appreciates the substantial sympathy and assistance thus far extended.

THE STATE NORMAL SCHOOL

at Holly Springs is reported by the Board of Trustees to be in a satisfactory condition.

The average attendance during the past two years has been about 140. The attendance appears to be broken and irregular, and only a small per cent. of the pupils complete the course prescribed. Since the organization of the school, sixteen years ago, only 35 pupils have graduated. I do not feel at liberty to make the usual recommendation touching this Institute until more information is obtained. I therefore suggest that a Legislative Committee be appointed to visit the school, and thoroughly investigate its workings, and report the result of its labors to your body, with such suggestions and recommendations as they deem just.

The report of the Superindent of the

PENITENTIARY

shows that there are 812 convicts, of whom 708 are colored, 103 white, and 1 Indian, an increase of 41 in the last two years. Since the last report 114 have escaped, 88 have been pardoned, and 14 have died, 7 being killed while resisting arrest or attempting to escape, and 6 by casualties.

Under section 2, of an act approved January 31, 1877, I approved in 1884 contracts made by the Superintendent of the Penitentiary for necessary repairs and improvements to the amount of $27,343.39. This sum was credited on the lease for 1883, and the balance of $12,079.61 due on the lease for that year was, on December 31, 1884, paid into the treasury.

In the year 1885, I approved similar contracts to the amount of $27,419.42, which was credited on the lease for 1884, and the balance of $12,100.58 due on the lease for that year was on December 19, 1885, paid into the treasury. During the past four years $58,121.52 has been paid into the treasury by the present lessees, being all that was ever received in the State's history from that source. The sum due on the lease for the year 1885 has not been paid.

Under the act approved March 15th, 1884, the Superintendent visited the different convict camps as often as the limited appropriation of $500 for his traveling expenses would permit. He has reported to me from time to time that the convicts were well cared and fed and humanely treated, except in one or two instances, and his reports have been confirmed by the absence of all complaint to the contrary. I know