

The Press and Banner

Published every Wednesday at \$2 a year in advance.

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1889.

The Credit of the State.

Many well-meaning persons have been led to believe that the credit of the State is in some mysterious way involved in the matter of the township bonds which the Courts have declared were issued under provisions of a law which was unconstitutional. The cry of the holders of doubtful bonds, we believe, is the same everywhere, and at all times—the credit of the State must be preserved. We do not know that the holder of a fraudulent or illegal or doubtful bond ever failed to cry out and proclaim the dangers of repudiation, and it is astonishing to know of the number of unthinking persons who take up the cry for the bondholder who has made a mistake in the investment of his money.

The late effort of the Legislature to bring discredit on the Supreme Court, has put South Carolina in an anomalous position before the world. The Supreme Court in its wisdom had the nerve and the manhood to declare the law as it stood, even though some of the bondholders might suffer, and immediately the State Legislature attempts to declare void a portion of these bonds, in utter disregard of the opinion of the Court and the interests of the people.

With the example of such acts by the Legislature, is it any wonder that the excited mob should occasionally set the law at defiance, and presume to deal out justice according to their own notions of equity, and that at the time of the riot in the town of Charleston, the law was not only set at defiance, but the rioters were actually armed with the law?

Whatever opinion the Supreme Court, as individuals, may hold as to the validity or constitutionality of township bonds, we think there is no room for doubt as to what the Court will say of the recent "invalidating act" of the Legislature.

Then, will not South Carolina present a spectacle before the world? Her Courts declare that citizens are not bound to pay township bonds which were issued by authority of unconstitutional law. The Legislature then, in the interests of bondholders—enact a law which can have no other effect, than to bring the Court into public contempt.

The Court will, of course, set aside the unconstitutional law, which has a two-fold effect, viz: contempt for the Court, and the protection of capitalists who may have been foolish enough to spend their money for bonds which were issued in the name of the people without constitutional law.

When it is remembered that great corporations employ the ablest and most influential lawyers to look after their interests, and when it is remembered that a lawyer's highest duty is to his client, it is not a subject for amazement when these same lawyers—who are also law-makers as well as attorneys—should exercise their influence for the corporations whose interests they represent. It is not a matter of surprise if corporation lawyers hastily and conscientiously believe that the Supreme Court erred in its decision. It is natural and right that they believe in the justice and equity of their cause. While then no blame can attach to representatives of corporations for their fidelity to their clients, yet we think it is pity that many unthinking people should be led into the error of believing, as they do, that it is the duty of the Legislature to conform the laws of this country to the interests of the holders of doubtful bonds, even though such acts be contrary to the interests of the people, and subversive of the decisions of the Supreme Court.

Have Mark Twain's Innocents Come Home?

When a man looks as wise as a mule and talks about the "innocent holders of township bonds," we are struck with amazement. Is there any such person as an "innocent" holder of township bonds? If so, what is meant by the term "innocent"? Does it mean a plain gudgeon who has foolishly parted with his money? If so, and it is intended to give him "protection," application for guardianship should be made before the Probate Judge. His powers are ample in all cases where it can be shown that the individual is incapable of managing his own affairs.

Another word as to the "innocents." We know that the Charleston capitalists have not invested a dollar in the bonds, and they are told that they have taken them on good faith, and that they are entitled to the money loaned to persons who are of themselves liable for the debt. As a rule, the Charleston people are the wisest and most sagacious men on the face of the earth. They seldom or never put their money where it will not yield a fair return and where the principal is not sure to be paid. If any man in Abbeville county is ever at doubt as to how he should act, then let him find out how the Charleston capitalists do, and then let him do as they do.

What Harrison Should Do.

Much has been said in the newspapers as to the probable policy of President-elect Harrison, and many suggestions have been made to the effect that he ought to make a declaration of principles, as regards the intention of the Government towards the South.

If it were in order for the Press and Banner to make a suggestion, we would suggest that he write a piece especially to the colored people. According to our way of seeing things, his election has already cost several negroes their lives, while many others have gotten themselves into serious trouble because of the delirium which has followed Republican success.

To be specific. The negroes everywhere seem greatly elated, and the prospect or hope of a return to the "good old days" when the negroes ran riot over the whites and were protected in so doing by United States bayonets, has made many of them offensive, and the white negroes, in some instances, actually insulting and tantalizing. Of course, no revolution can take place which will protect negroes in personal insults to white men, and as a result we believe more negroes have been killed and maltreated in Southern States during the last two months than during any two months since 1876. If President Harrison would do the proper thing by the negroes he might do them a great service in admonishing them to continue to behave themselves as good citizens, without provoking the hostility of the white neighbors. The Government is powerless to prevent bloodshed when men are irritated and goaded to deeds of violence, and the sooner this fact is understood, the better for all.

With a Small c.

We notice that some of our exchanges spell "Christian" with a small c, and then, sometimes they mangle "Christmas" by putting it Xmas. These same newspapers, we presume, would spell Mohammed with the proper number of letters, and begin Mohammedanism with a capital M.

There were many little cake cuttings in town last week.

Tux many friends of Mrs. J. L. Perrin will be glad to learn she is rapidly recovering.

RICH FOLKS' GOVERNMENT.

Poor Folks and Negroes Must Dance to the Music, and Swear to Their Returns—No Questions Asked as to Millionaire Tax-Dodgers, Banks, Railroads and Other Corporations.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL.

COLUMBIA, S. C., December 21, 1888.

The attention of this office has been called to the fact that in some counties of the State the Auditors have been in the habit of disallowing the returns of the township bonds, and allowing individuals to fill out the same, sending the said returns to the County Auditors without the township bonds, and to the same being administered. This practice must be stopped, and each and every taxpayer will be required to appear before the County Auditor, and there, either by themselves, their agents or assigns, bankers, trustees, administrators, etc., and answer the various questions as appear upon the return. And the County Auditors will put these questions categorically to each and every taxpayer, and no person shall be allowed to evade the law. When the said return is made the Auditor will administer the oath and swear to the truth of the return in each and every case.

It is the duty of each County Auditor to obtain as full returns as possible, for the higher the assessment the lower will be the tax. The County Auditors will therefore be very careful in taking the returns during the assessment, to wit: from January 1st, 1889, to February 28th, 1889.

Each Auditor is requested to make this office a complete report of the returns, in order that this office may be advised as to how the returns of 1888 compare with the returns of 1887. This report may be made in a short report by letter will answer.

S. V. KENNEDY, Comptroller General.

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Does not the Governor, the Comptroller-General and the County Auditor of Charleston, know that the *Press and Banner*, speaking for the banks of that city, declared that they would not return their property for taxation as the country banks had done? Any effort been made to make the rich tax-dodgers of that city give a fair return of their property?

Death of a Former Citizen of Abbeville County.

In another column notice is given of the death of Hon. William W. Smith, son of Mr. Charles Smith of Cokesbury, who has, for many years, been an honored citizen of the State of Arkansas.

An aged father is in deepest sorrow for the premature death of a noble son. But a record as bright and as honorable as his was, is worth a thousand years of mediocrity. A life of fifty years of honor and usefulness is worth ages of useless life. Viewed from this standpoint, the father whose son has just been cut down, has all of which to be proud. The father whose son was a gallant soldier, a distinguished lawyer, that was elevated to the Supreme Bench of a State like Arkansas, is honored above his fellow-citizens, and that son, though dead, reflects the highest credit upon his parents and his native county.

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For his exercise of this Constitutional right some of the newspapers seem displeased, and have criticized the act.

It appears to us, that no more censure should attach to the Governor for vetoing the bill, or withholding his approval, than was attached to the Lieutenant-Governor for vetoing the bill.

Let those who favor the Clemson College bear far to Governor Richardson as those who oppose it have been to Lieutenant-Governor Mauldin.

Against Lotteries.

The *Woodbury News* has launched a tirade against all the forms of gambling, and especially against the Louisiana State Lottery.

We fully agree with the *News* as to the evils attendant upon all the games of chance, and as to the demoralization attendant upon the effort to get something for nothing.

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It is a sad day since his return that his days were numbered, but the end was not expected so soon, and only a few days were expected of the change for the worse, and this will be a painful surprise to the entire state.

Among those who watched with the sorrow-stricken family and friends the life ebb away was Gov. Hughes, who had been his intimate friend ever since he became Governor. The assessment of the lower will be a great loss to the State, and his death will be a great loss to the State.

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A lady in Paisley, Scotland, writes to a friend in this State, in reference to the *Press and Banner*. While we would not in our vainest moment, set up a claim for the great merit which she attributes to the *Press and Banner*, yet it is nevertheless gratifying to know that an impartial intelligent reader has written so kindly of us. Whether the reader agrees with her or not, we trust to be pardoned for publishing the following:

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The Clemson Request.

We see by the newspapers that the Governor will withhold his signature from the bill to accept the Clemson estate.

Because the Governor had not the bill before him, and he had no time to do so, the adjournment of the Legislature, the Constitution provides that he may, at his own discretion, withhold his approval or disapproval until the next sitting of the Legislature.

For his exercise of this Constitutional right some of the newspapers seem displeased, and have criticized the act.

It appears to us, that no more censure should attach to the Governor for vetoing the bill, or withholding his approval, than was attached to the Lieutenant-Governor for vetoing