

## EDITORIAL

and who served his country in '61 faithfully, in both cases, should not receive pensions from both Governments which he served.

Section 9 provides that pensions may be paid out of the general revenue fund. I think that pensions should be paid from a special fund derived by a tax levy for this particular purpose.

I make these criticisms on this bill because I am jealous of the reputation of the State of Florida in this matter of providing for her soldiers.

I desire that the Florida pension laws should be a model and as near perfection as it is possible for human lawgivers to produce.

I would not have this construed as a criticism on this measure now pending.

It is in NO SENSE a criticism, but the expression of my sincere desire to improve it, if a suggestion from me to those in charge of the bill can have this result.

I have advanced some ideas on this pension proposition from time to time. I have heard it discussed by former Confederates in my presence. Confederates whose war records were as widely and favorably known as their good deeds since, have told me that FORTY PER CENT of the pensioners now on the Florida roll DID NOT PROPERLY BELONG THERE.

This roll should be a roll of honor, and Florida should not be too captious about it at this late day, when the ranks already thinned by the passage of time will be decimated as the next few years roll by.

The time seems fitting to reorganize this pension giving.

I therefore suggest that a bill be enacted, providing: That three Pension Commissioners, one from each Congressional District, shall be appointed by the Governor, and each of whom shall be a Confederate soldier of proven service and good standing.

Commencing IMMEDIATELY AFTER the passage of the act, it should be made the duty of these three Commissioners to travel over the State, go into EVERY VOTING PRECINCT IN IT, and by diligent inquiry and by searching the records, make up a list of all men who served AT THE FRONT in the Confederate army.

On this list the widows of Confederate soldiers who served should also be placed.

The fact once established to the satisfaction of the Pension Commissioners that the applicant for a pension served AT LEAST SIX MONTHS AT THE FRONT in the Confederate army should entitle his name to go on the pension roll, provided he is not receiving an income from his own labor or from any other source exceeding \$250 a year.

Two years from the passage of the act, which would be sufficient for the three Pension Commissioners to cover the State, all the present pension rolls SHOULD BE ABROGATED and the new pension roll made up by these new Commissioners, which would include the names of EVERY CONFEDERATE SOLDIER WHO SERVED AT LEAST SIX MONTHS AT THE FRONT, whether disabled or not, and should get on the pension roll of the State at from \$12 to \$15 a month, depending upon his length of service.

This would make the pension roll of the State of Florida A ROLL OF HONOR.

No Confederate veteran worthy of the respect that clings to this title would, if serving as Commissioner, put a man on the roll who does not properly belong there.

It is time for Florida to reward all of those who served her in her time of need.

They should receive more than they are now getting.

If the pension roll were freed from the names which do not belong there—

Those who are worthy would receive more.

And the same amount now provided to pay pensions would go around—or nearly.

It would be more worthily bestowed, that is all.

### TAXES WORRY US ALL.

I have a letter from one of my friends and subscribers calling my attention to the fact that turpentine property is valued for purposes of taxation at fifty cents to one dollar per acre, while the fruit grower and farmer pay on the valuation of ten to two hundred dollars.

I have not had time to verify this statement, but it does not need verification at my hands. I have confidence in the man who wrote it and will, therefore, treat the figures he gives me as facts, for the purpose of saying that the statement exemplifies the necessity of a general adjustment of our tax assessment law.

There has been no bill of this kind introduced, nor proposed, so far as I am able to find out.

A GOOD REVENUE BILL IS ONE OF THE CRYING NEEDS OF THE STATE.

It is a fact patent to every one who owns enough land to bury him in, that the tax burden is unequally distributed and great favors are shown to some and great hardships put upon others.

Under the system now in operation, it is an impossibility for tax assessors to correctly assess property.

They can not make a personal inspection of every piece in the county within the time set for preparing the rolls. They have to rely largely on what other tax assessors have done before them, and upon the returns made by the property owners themselves.

Under this system it is inevitable that great differences should appear in the tax rolls and that the burden should bear heavily on one class of citizens and lightly on other classes.

In other Legislatures bills have been introduced designed to remedy this evil condition. They have failed of passage because it has been impossible to give them proper attention during the time at the disposal of the members.

It is, perhaps, too late to pass this measure in this session.

It could be done, however, if a joint committee were appointed to consider this subject and to bring in a bill during the closing week of the session, allowing three or four days to discuss it simultaneously in each house, and then pass it under suspension of the rules.

Any bill that five men of average intelligence and hon-

esty and integrity of purpose could get up would be better than the law which inflicts us now.

This might be taken as a suggestion.

I don't care if it is.

Somehow, I hope it will.

Then, maybe, a bill will be passed.

### TIME FLIES—TAKE IT UP NOW.

More than half of the session of 1907 has gone, and very little general legislation has been accomplished. The State would not be much loser if a large proportion of the bills now on the calendars of both houses should fail to get on the statute books.

There are bills pending, however, that should be passed.

The people need them.

They are demanding them.

The greatest good to the greatest number would be accomplished by their passage.

Among these are the bills for State life insurance, introduced in the Senate by Senator Trammell, and in the House by Mr. Register of Hamilton.

I defy any man to investigate this question for himself, or to read the pamphlet which contains the result of Governor Broward's investigation of it, without becoming a convert, and even an enthusiast for this measure.

THE SUN has contained discussions on this bill before, and I will not attempt to discuss it at this time. I mention it simply to call attention to the fact that progress should be made with it if it is to become a law.

Another bill is the uniformity school book bill. This is not as important a measure as the State life insurance bill, but it would result in great benefit to the school children of this State, and benefit to the most deserving is the very best subject for Legislative attention.

In addition, this benefit to the substantial citizens of this State, those who send children to school, and who are responsible for its prosperity, will be great.

There are other bills which should become laws, but the limitations of this space prevent me from enumerating them at this time.

I am getting up a list, however, and propose to put on it all of the bills of a general nature, the enactment of which would be good for the people at large, excluding from the list all special bills or purely local bills, or unimportant bills.

When I have this list completed, I will keep it standing in some column of this paper.

Just, because I want to—

And because it may do some good.

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