The Weekly True Democrat.

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Good Government; Honesty in Public Office; Equal Justice to All--Special Privileges to None.

CHASING UP THE STATE PRINTER.

Mutilaiton of a Report and Other Matters Investigated.

Senator McCreary, chairman of the committe on public printing, on Wednesday made a report concerning the alleged mutilation by the State Printer of an official report of the commission for the revision of the statutes, in which the following words were erased and did not appear in the copy of said report as printed in the journal:

"The commissioners also respectfully submit the Divisions 2 and 3 of this work were fully prepared and submitted to the printer on the first day of October last, all the other part of the work has been in his hands since the 15th of January last. The contract with the printer called for the work to be finished within twenty (20) days after the submission of each part. The delay in having this work printed is, therefore, not the fault of the commission, but from causes beyond their control;" and also the following words: "Especially the 1st, 4th ar d 5th divisions. These were caused by the delay in submitting the proof of the work by the printer in time for the present meeting of the Legislature."

The committe on public printing states that the Stat printer personally interviewed each of the members of the commission whose report was thus mutilated, and believing from what they said in response to his request that the words objectionable to him be omitted, that he had the authority to change the report by omitting the same, did so; but his claim of authority therefor was only "in part borne out by the commissioners," who stated that their consent to the omission only extended to their personal authority to make the change, reserving their opinion as to their right to do so after the report had been snbmitted to and ordered printed by the Senate.

The conclusion of the committee was that "Your committee in view of all the facts in the case does not recommend undue condemnation of the State printer, and express the belief from statements made by him that there will not again be a recurrence of such alterations in the official documents of the Senate."

In effect, this was a verdict of "Not guilty; but you mustn't do it again."

SUPREME COURT PRINTING.

Senate concurrent resolution No. 18, introduced by Hon. W. Hunt Harris, came up as a special order on Wednesday, and was adopted unanimously. The resolution is as follows:

Whereas it appears from the report of the Attorney-General that volume forty-five, which comprises the decisions of the Supreme Court for the January term, 1903, has been in the hands of the State printer since April, 1904; that the "copy" for volume forty-six, which comprises the decisions of the Supreme Court for the June term, 1903, has been in the hands of the State printer since November, 1904; that the copy aforesaid was delivered to the contractors promptly upon its receipt by the Attorney-General;

And whereas it appears by said report that copy for volumes forty-seven and forty-eight, comprising the decisions of the Supreme Court for the year 1904, is in the office of the Attorney-General and that the contractor has refused to receive the same;

And whereas it is the duty of the Board of State Institutions to protect the State of Florida by forcing the contractor for State printing to carry out the terms of his contract;

And whereas the State of Florida has been damaged by the failure and refusal of the contractor to carry out the terms of his contract;

Therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring—

That the Board of State Institutions be and they are hereby ordered to take into their possession the copy for volumns forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven and forty-eight of the reports of the Supreme Court, aforesaid; that they take steps for the immediate publication of said Supreme Court Reports as is provided by law, that they cancel the existing contract for publication of Supreme Court Reports; that any damages sustained by the State by reason of the failure of the contractor to comply with the terms of this contract be deducted from any sum or sums hereafter found to be due him from the State of Florida, on account of anv other printing done; that in awarding the contract for the publication of the said volumes of the Supreme Court Reports, no contract shall be awarded, unless a time limit is prescribed and a good and sufficient bond is taken to insure the compliance of the contractor with the terms of his contract.

In presenting the resolution, Senator Harris did not spare the State printer, but alleged, on information and belief, that he had, after making a ridiculously low bid of 60 cents a page for work which he well knew could not be done by any reputable printer for less than $1.20 a page, and done this in order to forestall competition and insure the award to himself of the entire contract for State printing, had apparently determined to evade entirely the disastrous consequences of his bid, involving a prospective loss of something like $4,000, by failing and refusing to do the work.

Senator Harris declared that it appeared as if rottenness existed everywhere, and referred to rumors which have floated about Tallahassee some time to the effect that members of the Board of State Institutions are interested in the State printing. He did not say such things were true, but, if they were, it might be necessary to go to the House and institute impeachment proceedings.

Railroad Commission.

On Monday, in accordance with previous notice given, the Railroad Commission had a hearing to determine the adoption of the new classification of freights, at which the following transportation lines were represented:

Seaboard Air Line, by Geo. P. Raney, Esq., division counsel, and E. D. Kyle, assistant general freight agent.

Atlantic Coast Line, by John E. Hartridge Esq., counsel, and James Menzies, general freight agent.

Louisville and Nashville by C. B. Compton, traffic manager, E. O. Saltmarsh, superintendent, and J. W. Lurton, division freight agent.

Suwannee and San Pedro, by R. P. Hopkins, general freight agent.

South Georgia and West Coast by C. I. Harrell.

Georgia Southern and Florida by J. M. Cutler, general freight agent, and C. B. Rhodes, general passenger agent.

Georgia, Florida and Alabama by E. O. Alston, general freight agent.

Protests were filed and argued against the adoption of the classification, and several of the representatives present argued that no action thereon should be taken by the commission pending injunction suits which had been commenced against some of the roads.

The matter was taken under advisement by the commission to be decided later.

Sherlock Holmes Reproduced.

Last Wednesday evening "Sherlock Holmes" was again presented by our College boys before a large and appreciative audience. The young dramatists brought forth the plaudits of the spectators by their clever acting: They all acted their several parts with a confidence and an assurance worthy of old stage veterans. When all have done so well it is hard if not unfair to discriminate, and without intending to make any invidious distinction, we wish to speak of the exceedingly fine acting of Miss Hattie Perkins, who as Alice Falkner, did exceedingly clever work. The young dramatists have no cause for complaint as to the size of their audience as both last week on the first presentation of the play and on Wednesday evening they were greeted by large audiences. The play was well staged and went off without a hitch during the whole performance.

The Whitfield Orchestra again delighted the audience by excellent music.

Charming Musicale.

A charming musicale was given Wednesday afternoon by the pupils of Miss Josie Edmonson's music class. The parents and many friends of the young pupils were present and were much interested and entertained listening to the various selections rendered, all of which reflected great credit on Miss Edmondson's ability as a teacher. Refreshments were served at the conclusion of the program. The following program was rendered:

Dance of the Haymakers—Misses Edmondson and Cureton.

Village Fete—Miss Bessie Temple.

Military March—Miss Ruby Duval.

Holiday March—Miss Jennie May Holmes.

Gavotte—Op. 16 (Godard), Miss Mary Cureton.

Flower Fairies—Misses Edmondson and Johnson.

Heart Leaves—Miss Blanche Syfret.

My Mamma's Waltz—Miss Connie Hancock.

Dance of the Daisies—Miss Mabel Moody.

Old Black Joe—(Variation) Miss Katie May Cox.

Idiliuo (Theodore)—Miss Mary Cureton.

A Night in May—Miss Eva Hammit.

Fable—Miss Ruth Johnson.

La Grace—Misses Katie May Cox and Mabel Moody.

Lanark On the Gulf.

The hotel at Lanark, Fla., on the C. T. & G R. R., has been remodeled and refurnished and equipped with electric lights, hot and cold baths, and mineral bathing pools, and is in every respect a most attractive hotel. It is now open for the reception of guests who are in search of seashore recreation, affording an especially fine opportunity to those who are fond of angling.

For special rates, schedules, and other information, apply to E. O. Alston, General Passenger Agent, Bainbridge, Ga.

The events of the week have been too rapid even for our town clock. It seems to be utterly demoralized, and strikes any old time whenever it takes a notion.

MORE INVESTIGATION.

On Thursday the investigation spirit was rife in both houses of the Legislature, in each of which resolutions were introduced requesting the Governor to transmit full information as to the methods heretofore adopted and now in force for the insurance against loss and damage by fire of the State buildings and other property, and especially as to the employment of an agent or agents to conduct the said business and the terms and particulars of his employment. The resolutions were both adopted.

In the Senate Senator West introduced the following:

Whereas, it has been asserted and charged on the floor of the Senate by a senator that it is rumored that members of the Board of State Institutions are interested in and own stock in the Capital Publishing Company and are contracting with themselves purchasing supplies, goods and material from themselves as such stockholders. in violation of the laws of the State; therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, that a committee of three members of the Senate be appointed by the President to investigate said charge, and said committee is hereby authorized and empowered to take such evidence as may be available for the purpose of ascertaining the truthfulness of said charge and report their findings as soon as practicable.

Mr. Harris offered the following amendment:

Strike out all after the word "empowered," in third line from bottom, and insert the following:

"To administer oaths, to send for persons and papers, to take such evidence as may be available for the purpose of ascertaining the truthfulness of said charge, to employ a stenographer and report their findings as soon as practicable." The resolution was then adopted as amended, and the President of the Senate announced the appointment of the following committee: Messrs. West, Harris and Clarke.

In the Senate this morning Senator Bailey introduced a concurrent resolution requesting the judge of the second judicial circuit to order a special term of his court in Gadsden county, have a grand jury summoned therefor, and so charge said jury as to insure a complete judicial investigation of the charges and conditions reported to the Legislature by the joint committee appointed to investigate the hospital for the insane, and thus secure the indictment of any person appearing to be guilty of wrongdoing in connection with the management of that institution. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

In the House this morning, Mr. Noble, of Lake, introduced the following House resolution, which was adopted:

Whereas, the public service of the State of Florida demands not only men of ability, but especially men of honesty; and

Whereas, the report of the committee sent to examine the asylum at Chattahoochee brings to light a very discouraging state of affairs in its past management; therefore

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, That a committee of three be at once appointed, with power to call for persons, books and papers, to investigate certain persons and matters in connection therewith.

New Lot Hammocks just in at Evans'.

Hon. R. H. M. Davidson, of Quincy, is in the city today.

The friends of Hon. W. D. Bloxham will be pleased to learn that he is recovering from his recent illness.

There have been numerous railroad men in the city this week appearing before the Railroad Commission.

Gents Elastic Seam Drawers, 50c, at Evans'.

General Manager R. P. Hopkins of the Live Oak and Suwannee R. R. Co., was in the city on Wednesday, before the Railroad Commission. Mr. Hopkins is a Tallahassee boy, and his success as a railroad man gives much pleasure to his many friends in his home town.

Some little dispensary talk, but we do not think that prosperous old Jackson county will attempt to fill her coffers at the expense of ragged, barefooted, unschooled and helpless children and poor women and men. The citizens of this county do not want whiskey, nor do they intend to have it. Two years happy experience in a dry county warrant their saying, "away with the cursed stuff," and they have and will continue to say it.—Marianna Times-Courier.

Speaking of State pensions reminds us that there would be a heap of honor reflected upon the present Legislature should it pass the bill granting the measly stipend of $25 a month to the aged and impecunious widow of Gen. J. J. Dickerson. That man served his State bravely, ably and without adequate compensation at a time when brave men were needed. His widow should not be allowed to want during the few declining years, at best, she has to live, Give her the pension.—Palatka News.

Judge P. W. White, of Quincy, is in this city, where he has hosts of friends.

Hon. O. A. Sloan, of Monticello, was circulating among his Tallahassee friends and the lawmakers today.

Mr. Hugh Black, Sr., of Bloxham, is in town this week in attendance on the court in the capacity of petit juror.

Mr. Henry H. Walker, one of Crawfordville's foremost merchants and ex-sheriff of Wakulla county, was in the city yesterday.

The load some officials have been carrying for several years is now bearing down heavily upon them. Can or will they shake that load? Investigation is now "the order of the day" in the Legislature. Let the good work go on.

The Buckman Bill.

The committee substitute for House Bill No. 361, being the Buckman bill abolishing all but three or four of the State institutions of higher education, came up as a special order in the House on Thursday, and was the subject of a long and heated debate, on a motion of Mr. Bryan of Washington to indefinitely postpone; which motion was defeated by a vote of 28 to 39. Two amendments were offered and tabled.

In explaining his vote against indefinite postponent, Mr. Noble, of Lake, said:

"While there are some features in the bill that I do not consider perfect, one of which is the instituting of a "Female College." I believe in co-education. Statistics prove satisfactory to me that separate institutions for male and female is deteriorating to both—physically, mentally and morally, but the time has come to stop the enormous outlay of money wrung from the masses for the benefit of the few."

It is now generally believed that the bill will pass both houses.

Much as we deprecate the arbitrary abolishment of some of the institutions thus affected by this bill, and especially our own State College, we feel, as Mr. Noble has said, that the time has come to cut off the wasting of the people's money by appropriations for local schools, and to heal the many other abuses which have grown up under the present system of management; and if the enactment of the Buckman bill is the only means of accomplishing this purpose, we are in favor of it.

Leon County High School.

The Leom County High School held its examination exercises during this week and to day presented certificates of promotion to its pupils.

Todays exercises were very interesting and entertaining and ended one of the most successful years of the Academy. One interesting feature of the exercises was the awarding by County School Superintendent Eppes of the prize offered by the Anna Jackson chapter U. D. Cs., for the best essay on "Stonewall" Jackson, open to all the pupils of any of the county public schools. The essays were numbered and without the authors names and submitted to a committee composed of three of our Supreme court Judges, viz. Judges Carter, Shackleford, and Cockerell, who awarded the prize to Miss Christene Wideman with Mr. T. L. Strickland a close second whose essay was most excellent. Mr. Eppes' address, awarding the prize was particularly happy and pleasing and was much enjoyed by those present. Another feature of interest was the awarding of the medal offered by Mr. Geo. Lewis to the best pupil in the school in any of the grades above the 2nd. This medal was offered by Mr. Lewis last year but was not awarded at that time and this year the faculty, being unable to decide on the award, have sent the names of the pupils ranking first in all the grades to Mr. Lewis so that he can make the award. These are, in the 3rd. grade, Miss Azal Moore, 4th. grade Miss Patty Carter, 5th. grade Miss Eva Childs, 6th. Miss Bertha Clayton, 7th. Miss Helen Carter, 8th. grade Lizzie Cureton, and 9th. Miss Eva Dyer.

The last named, Miss Dyer, was first in her grade last year, and during the two years she has not been late at school nor missed a day, failed in recitation or received a demerit. A most remarkable record.

There were enrolled in all the grades of the academy during this year 177 male and 145 female pupils, in all 322, of which 206 received unconditional certificates of passing to the next higher grade. A few more, having failed on account of sickness to pass the examination, will be examined later.

Next year another grade, the 10th, will be added to the curriculum of the school, which, with the 9th, will compose the regular high school grades, in which there will be 29 pupils—an increase of 21 over this year.

The school imperatively needs more seating capacity for its scholars, and if not furnished by the county school board before the next term, the pupils applying for admission will not be able to be accommodated. This is a matter of vital importance to the success of the school and the health of the pupils.

The Legislature is surely after those who need investigating. If no thing wrong has been done, no one will be hurt. If wrongs have been committed the people of Florida should know all about it.

ROTTENNESS AND GRAFT EXPOSED.

The State Insane Hospital Under the Jennings Administration.

In last week's issue of The True Democrat we predicted that "before the expiration of Governor Broward's term the period of his predecessor's term of office will be regarded as one of the most discreditable to the real interests of Florida that has occurred for many years."

The prediction promises to be fulfilled before the adjournment of the present Legislature.

On Wednesday the joint committee appointed to investigate the hospital for the indigent insane at Chattahoochee made a voluminous report of the conditions which have prevailed in that institution during recent years, together with a large volume of testimony, and referring to other testimony taken by the committee which is "of such a character that it would not do to put in public print."

The committee's report declares that the hospital is "not a hospital for the insane, but is more of a dumping place for all sorts of people, where they are maintained after a fashion at an enormous expense to the State"; that "the management has been cruel, negligent, and heartless in some instances;" that "attendants and nurses have been drunk while on duty," and have been "brutally and inhumanly cruel to helpless inmates." Also that "the very atmosphere of the institution has been scented with vice and immorality to the extent that even inmates have begged and plead for release on account of it."

The committee also found gross irregularities, and worse, in the management of the business of the institution, and it holds the Board of State Institutions very largely responsible for the deplorable conditions it describes.

Among the testimony submitted and published in the appendix to the report, is that of Mr. V. F. Balkcom, a druggist of Tallahassee, who testifies that he admitted to a fourth interest in his business as partner, at his own solicitation, for the express purpose of furnishing supplies to the institution, Mr. C. H. Dickinson, the private secretary of Governor Jennings, and, incidentally, purchasing agent for the hospital; that 15 and 20 per cent. profit was charged on supplies thus furnished, and that the partnership arrangement was discontinued at the instance of Dickinson for the reason that the house was "not making money enough for him."

At the conclusion of the reading of the report in the Senate, Senator W. Hunt Harris addressed that body, referring to the horror with which the people of the entire State would receive this report of conditions "of which hell itself would be ashamed," declaring that in this day of graft, corruption and whitewash, it is exceedingly gratifying to find a committee of this Legislature ready to sign their names to such a report. He referred to the excellent management of the institution during Governor Bloxham's administration by a distinguished citizen of Florida, then superintendent and now deceased, and, concluding, he moved that the report be received and adopted, and that 1,000 extra copies of the same be printed in pamphlet form for general distribution, so that, if no other or fitter punishment should reach those who were responsible for the shame and disgrace thus brought upon the State, the people of Florida may be furnished the full text of the committee's informal indictment of the culprits. The motion was carried unanimously.

Thus, page by page, the true record of what its admirers were fond of calling "the best administration Florida has ever had," and the model "business administration," is being made up and cast into permanent and enduring form as a beacon light to successive generations.

Mrs. Rose Entertains.

The reception given by Mrs. R. E. Rose yesterday was a most delightful entertainment. The floral decorations were elaborate and most tasteful. All of the rooms on the first floor were opened up and on the wide verandah the punch bowl was presided over by Miss Douglas. Mrs. Broward and Mrs. Clay Crawford assisted in receiving. Vocal music added much to the enjoyment of the guests. Refreshments were served by the young ladies. There were a number of the visiting ladies in the city present and about 6:30 o'clock the Governor and a number of prominent gentlemen joined the festive throng. It was a most enjoyable occasion.

It is to be hoped that the Legislature will not adjourn without being quite sure that the primary election law has been so amended as to forever preclude the possibility of a recurrence of the experiences of last year's primary, when crookedness of all kinds was freely practiced for the sake of factional success, as well as to gratify personal greed for office.