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[NO. 1

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LOUISIANA.
STATE TAXATION AND THE INCREASE OF DEBT.
NEW ORLEANS, May 10, 1875.
Here are a few figures which give some idea of how the affairs of Louisiana have been managed under the radical rule of government since 1868.

COST OF THE LEGISLATURE.
For mileage, per diem and contingent expenses the General Assembly of the State cost, in 1860, before the war, \$99,435; in 1861, \$131,482; in 1866, the year after the war, \$164,906; in 1868, the year of reconstruction, \$363,156; in 1869, \$360,214; in 1870, \$722,231; in 1871, \$658,956; in 1872, \$350,000; in 1873, \$461,450; last year a much smaller sum, over \$200,000; but still the Comptroller of the State says, \$60,000 above his estimates of the proper cost.

STATE PRINTING.
In 1869 the State printing cost \$40,900. In 1867, the year before reconstruction, it cost \$75,000. The Legislature of 1868 adopted a system under which each parish has an official organ, which prints at the public cost, not only the laws, but the proceedings of the Legislature and the proceedings of police juries. This abuse has been checked, but not yet entirely stopped. During its height these petty journals were, with a very few exceptions, owned by members of the Legislature. Hence these persons every year voted themselves handsome subsidies, and the State printing bill, which amounted to \$75,000 in 1867, jumped to \$481,345, in 1869, \$313,920; in 1870, \$397,600; in 1871, \$154,732; in 1872, and \$160,866 in 1873. That is to say, the reconstructors managed to spend out of the Treasury in five years for printing alone very nearly \$1,500,000, and a great part of this they voted into their pockets.

STATE TAX RATE.
In 1871 the State tax amounted to 29 cents on \$100; in 1867, the year before reconstruction, to 37 1/2 cents; in 1868 to 52 1/2 cents; in 1869 to 90 cents; in 1870 to \$1.45; in 1872 to \$2.15; in 1873 to \$1.45, at which it is fixed, now, I believe, by the constitution.

STATE DEBT.
In spite of this enormous increase in the tax rate, the debt of the State has tripled since 1860. In this year the absolute and contingent debt, by which the State accountants here mean the debt owing and for which the State has engaged itself for the future, amounted to \$11,182,877. In 1868, the year of reconstruction, it amounted to \$10,885,982. In 1870 it had run up to \$40,456,734. The report of the Joint Legislative Committee to investigate the State Auditor's office—the committee is composed entirely of republicans—gives the following summary of the State debt at the beginning of the present year:—

Floating debt,	\$2,165,171 71
Bonds loaned,	4,880,683 88
Bonds sold proper,	22,134,800 00
Contingent debt reported,	19,895,000 00
Contingent debt not	9,605,600 00

Total \$40,644,155 01
Trust bonds and bonds issued \$9,194 01

The committee add to this statement these remarks:—
In conclusion the commission find that a large portion of the public debt has arisen from extravagance, profligacy and misuse of the revenues of the State; that to all that portion created since 1865, the State did not realize over fifty cents on the dollar, nor was the amount realized expended for the benefit of the State to the extent of more than one-half; in other words, the State has not been actually benefited in an amount exceeding one-fourth of the debt created, nor to an amount exceeding one-half of the taxes collected since 1865. The entire balance, say one-half of all the present debt, have been squandered or done worse with by the administration of the government since that date.

TAXES COLLECTED IN SEVEN YEARS.
The State revenues, as given in the Auditor's reports for the different years, were:—

1868	\$3,452,659	1872	\$4,318,083
1869	4,987,769	1873	4,016,000

1870	6,587,939	1874	5,614,882
1871	6,616,843		
Total	\$33,487,066		

collected in taxes from the people for the support of the State government in seven years, besides city and parish taxes.
The various petty monopolies and swindles to which State aid was so profusely given, and some of which I mentioned in a previous letter account for a small part of this huge debt and expenditure. Such extravagance as is mentioned by the Auditor in his last report (1873), in the following words account for more:—
Thus the number of pages in the Legislature, which by act No. 11 of 1872 is limited to ten, at a compensation for each of \$180, was increased more than sixty, and vouchers issued to them at from \$50 to \$180 each, nor was this practice confined to this particular class of employees, but was carried to other classes, such as enrolling an committee clerks, porters, &c.

He also, in the same report, complains that he has vainly tried to get the Legislature to adopt a new plan of assessing property or taxation which "would save the State \$156,000 a year." In the Auditor's report for the year 1871, complaint was made to the Legislature of the great cost of collecting the taxes. "In 1870," says this report, "the actual commissions paid on account of assessors was \$181,975, the amount paid to tax collectors \$215,411. In 1871 the commissions of tax collectors amounted to \$320,252, and that of assessors to \$250,834."

PENITENTIARY.
Of course there were some heavy jobs, which helped to run up the debt. For instance in the Auditor's report for 1871 I find a statement that during the two previous years the State, under an arrangement with the firm of Jones & Huges, lessees of the penitentiary, had issued \$500,000 in State bonds for machinery for the institution. The lessees were to pay one-half their clear profits to the State. They paid nothing, and in 1870 transferred their contract to another set of men, the State agreeing thereafter to accept \$5,000 a year in lieu of all profits, with an increase of \$1,000 a year. Between 1869 and 1871, two years, "the penitentiary had cost the State \$790,000."

A RAILROAD JOB.
In 1868 the New Orleans, Mobile and Chattanooga Railroad was chartered in Louisiana, an it was determined to connect Mobile and New Orleans with Houston, Texas. In 1869 the Legislature agreed to endorse the second mortgage bonds of the road to the extent of \$12,500 per mile, and to make its endorsement for every section of ten miles built. They built seventy miles, and the State indorsed \$87,000 of their second mortgage bonds. The next Legislature agreed in addition to give the road a State subsidy of \$3,000,000 of bonds out of this they drew \$750,000. The company now proposed to build a railroad from Vermillionville to Hopeport, and in 1871 the State agreed to take stock in this enterprise, \$500,000, paying for it in bonds, and the whole of these bonds were delivered to the company when they had done one day's work on it! They have never done any more. That is to say, the company have built in all seventy miles of an uncompleted, and, therefore, worthless road, and, given from the State \$4,250,000 of the \$5,800,000 a mile, besides a great of the \$58,000 a part of the New Orleans levees of \$1,000,000, and they have kept all. Finally, it remains to be said that two different companies of Northern capitalists offered to build the Houston and New Orleans road with-out subsidy or State aid of any kind, but the Legislature would not give them a charter.

THE LEVEE COMPANY.
A great deal of money has been spent and squandered since the war on the reconstruction of the levees and their repair, and democrats assume well as republicans have taken part in this jobbing, the greatest was in 1868 and 1871. Between 1868 and 1871, \$1,500,000 of State and still no levee purposes, money was given. Most of the money was given by a "State Board of Public Works," whose members were appointed by a Governor whose name was adopted by a different system and under which still is in force, revenues of a large part of the private for a State has been handed private corporations term of years to which enablement, with privileges that they might misuse and squander. By the act of incorporation, which capital is a million of dollars in pair the State to build and responsible of the State and to be done and damages to the planters by owners who could suffer turn for or or or or. In return for the Legislature gave them a million dollars down, before they began work, and the proceeds, annually, for the term of years, of a tax of four mills on the whole tax-

ty property of Louisiana, and authorized them to charge, against the great fund, sixty cents per cubic yard for their work. But a great part of the levee work done by planters for themselves, cost only from fifteen to eighteen cents per cubic yard; and thirty cents for the average of all kinds of work all over the State would be, experts tell me, a high rate. In fact the first charge was so exorbitant that it has been reduced to fifty cents, and in 1874 the levee tax, which the company continues to receive, was reduced to three mills. If the company never had any money; the levees have not been kept in proper repair, and the losses from overflow have never been so great as since it went into operation; and having no capital of their own, if they are sued for damages they must pay those out of the State fund, and thus, in fact, the taxpayers pay their own insurance. The company receive about \$720,000 a year.

This was one of the most notorious jobs perpetrated by the Legislature, and attracted attention at the time because a great many members not only received bribes for its support, which was too common an occurrence to be noticed—but actually gave their receipts for the money paid them. The following letter, of which the original is before me, shows how openly Legislative bribery was carried on under Warmoth's administration. The writer was then a member of the Assembly, is now State Senator and member of the State School Board, and I'm sorry to say is a negro:—

HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES,
STATE OF LOUISIANA,
NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 25th, 1871.

Gentlemen of the Finance Committee of Louisiana Levee Company.
Sirs—Please pay to Hon. A. W. Faulkner the amount you may deem proper to pay me on account of Levee Bill, I being absent at the time under orders of the House. But would have voted for the Bill had I been here. Mr. Faulkner is authorized to receive and receipt for me. Very Respectfully Gentlemen Your obt. servt.
T. B. STAMPS.

Surely the brazenness of corruption could go no further than this—when a legislator claims a bribe on the score that he would have rendered the service had he been in his place, and asked his friend not merely to receive—but to receipt for it.

NEW ORLEANS.
The city of New Orleans is made to pay a very great part of the State tax, and has been, besides, burdened in various ways by the Legislature, which has set apart a large part of its revenues for State or special purposes. It has now a debt of its own of about \$22,000,000, and its tax rate has been run up to three per cent. About \$17,000,000 of its bonds are worth but thirty-five cents on the dollar in the market. Here is an example which tells the tale of wasteful misgovernment.—An estate which could have been sold in 1867 for over \$1,000,000, showed on its looks in 1872, this remarkable condition. After paying for insurance and usual repairs, the taxes levied that year on the property exceeded the entire rental by \$540. In the next year the receipts, exceed the taxes, repairs and insurance by \$800. Yet, in 1867, this property netted seven per cent on over \$1,000,000—that is to say more than \$70,000, after paying insurance, taxes and repairs.

It is not the wealthy alone who complain. I have spoken with at least a dozen small property owners in the city and they all tell the same story of the country the small farmer who complain that they are forced to pay the heavy taxes, while the rich are allowed to refuse paying them to delay. I was struck with a story of exasperation told me by a man who said: "One piece of property after another belonging to members of my family had been sold for taxes. Two years ago we not sell, and we could not pay the terrible taxes. I went to the Sheriff and said to him: 'This property which you are advertising is the last possession of my mother and sisters, and their only support. I warn you that on the day you put it up at auction I am going to attend the sale with my double-barrelled shotgun. And it was not sold. Next year we were fortunately able to pay.' Now I know the man very well who told this, and I know him to be a peaceable respectable, law-respecting citizen, one of the most important and useful members of the community in which he lived. How sad that I was shocked and pained at his story, and I thought, 'What could I do?' We were wealthy people before the war; we have been contented in our poverty since, and I have worked hard and lived very economically. My sisters teach school. But the moss are so hard and the taxes so high that it was all we could do to live, and when I saw the last little dependence of my mother and sisters about to be sold to satisfy these enormous taxes I could not stand it."

So great is even yet the distress that the Legislature has just passed a tax redemption law, forbidding Sheriffs sales where inability to pay taxes is shown. In the parish of St. Landry alone, as I think I have before stated, there were between November, 1871, and November 1873, 821 sales of plantations and lands for taxes. The newspapers in New Orleans speak of this Tax 'Stay law as an act of beneficence. Yet Louisiana is by nature one of the richest States in the Union and New Orleans is one of the greatest commercial ports. Is it surprising that the whole white population of the State, except the office-holders and their relatives and intimates, united, in 1874, in the endeavor to overthrow a party which has so abused its powers?
CHARLES NORDHOFF.

A Breathing Cave.

In the range of mountains in Western North Carolina known as the "Fox Range," a most singular phenomenon exists. It is a "breathing cave." In the summer months a current of air comes from it so strongly that a person can't walk against it, while in the winter the suction is just as great. The cool air from the mountains in summer if felt for miles in a direct line from the cave. At times a most unpleasant odor is emitted upon the current from dead carcasses of animals sucked in and killed by the violence. The loss of cattle and stock in that section in winter is accounted for in this way. They range too near the mouth of the cave, and the current carries them in. At times, when the change from inhalation begins, the air is filled with various hairs of animals; not frequently bones and whole carcasses are found miles from the place. The air has been known to charge materially in temperature during exhalation from quite cool to unpleasantly hot, with gurgling sound, like a pot boiling. It is unaccounted for by scientific men who have examined, though no exploration can take place. It is feared by many that a volcanic eruption may break forth there some time.

In addition to her other pretensions California promises to become an important tobacco producing State at no distant day. In 1871 a company was formed in Santa Clara county for the culture and preparation of tobacco under a new process. The first crop in 1872 amounted to a few thousand pounds; in 1873 it rose to 500,000, and to about 1,500,000 in 1874. A portion of the crop was from Havana seed, adapted to cigar-making, the remainder being from Florida seed, better adapted to pipe smoking and chewing tobacco. The company were compelled to manufacture their own material and are now making 200,000 cigars per month, besides packing about 10,000 pounds of smoking tobacco, and have recently determined to greatly extend their operations. The area suited to the growth of tobacco under the process employed is said to be unlimited.

The steady and rapid increase of crime in the city and County of New York is assigned as the reason for appointing a legislative committee to sit during recess and investigate the causes, with a view to ascertaining whether the laws or the courts are to blame. One provision of the resolution constituting this committee is peculiar, namely, that the State shall be at no expense for the support of its members at hotels. They will have to depend on their per diem, the same as though they were in legislative session at Albany. The smaller courts of the metropolis, and some of the higher ones, view the movement with anything—but favoring eyes.

Artemus Ward was one day lying upon the sofa, enjoying a cigar, in the little office of his publisher, in New York, when a telegraphic despatch from San Francisco was handed him. It was from Mr. McGuire, of the Opera House, who inquired: "What will you take for ten nights in California?" Without a moment's reflection, or changing his position, he wrote his reply in three words, and handed it to the messenger, as follows: "Brandy and water—A. Ward." This was not all he did take, however, for soon afterward McGuire engaged the showman, and he lectured in California with extraordinary success. The little despatch—a ten dollar joke—was published in the San Francisco papers, and set everybody laughing and anticipating the author's arrival.

Mr. Wiley Williams, the young man who was so sadly injured at Charlotte on Thursday the 20th of May, was in twenty-four battles during the late war and escaped unhurt to be so terribly wounded, at last, in a civil celebration.

Official Misconduct.

SUMNER, May 20.—Catching the infection of honesty, which seems to be spreading like an epidemic over the State, the county of Sumner is beginning to see light upon the darkness which has pervaded its fiscal affairs.
The first of a series of prosecutions commenced to day, viz., the State vs. W. H. Gardner, late county treasurer, for official misconduct. Your correspondent chanced to be in court while the case was going on, and was forcibly struck by the peculiar manner in which the defence was conducted. First, they objected to the indictment because it contained, as they said, different charges. That being defeated, they then objected to the oath book of the Treasurer being used as evidence, claiming that it was a private book; whereupon a long discussion ensued between the attorneys of the parties, but before it was decided the defence withdrew its objection. Thereupon the State proved that at a time when the treasurer had reported "no funds" there was actually over seven thousand dollars in hands. Soon after this the court took a recess for dinner. After dinner the case was resumed, and it was pretty clearly proved that the late treasurer failed to make the reports required by law from about March, 1873, to January 1874. It does not follow that Mr. Gardner embezzled any of the funds. No such charge is made, but it is believed that he did use the county funds to speculate, either directly or indirectly, in claims jury tickets, witness tickets, &c., and that he put in these papers in lieu of the cash collected. No doubt the late treasurer did take some of these papers at par. He certainly did so at least in one instance to my own knowledge. There are other indications against the same party. As he is now out of office, it is highly probable that those who might, under other circumstances, stick by him, will desert him like rats from a sinking ship. It is remarkable how quickly Radicals find out the short-comings or the frauds of their associates just as soon as they lose the power to serve them, either politically or financially. My own impression is that there are much worse men than Mr. Gardner in public office in this county. The grand jury is after some of them, and I will keep you posted if anything tangible proved.
JUNIUS.

Tweed's Condition.

The warden of Blackwell's Island states that William M. Tweed was examined recently by three distinguished physicians, who say that he is affected with heart disease and an affection of the kidneys. They did not express any fear of immediate danger but thought that his situation was sufficiently grave to justify unusual consideration on the part of the keepers. Tweed is allowed to sleep out of his cell, for the reason that he grows so stout that it is impossible for him to get in the door of one. Even if he could be squeezed in, the bed with which each cell is provided is too narrow for his bulky form, and there is not room for a larger cot. It is said that the grand jury, in making their presentment, will recommend that Mr. Tweed be allowed more privileges in consequence of his sickness.

A Revolutionary Belle.

The colonial mace belonging to the executive department of South Carolina was borne in the centennial parade at Charlotte. The mace is now the only remnant of official royalty in this section. It is made of silver, gilded over with gold, and is said to have cost two hundred guineas. It is about four feet long, and of some considerable weight, being surmounted with the crown and great seal of England, around the verge of which are the two faces of the provincial seal of South Carolina highly embossed, and other ornamental devices. This mace has in it \$1,000 worth of silver, and its great antiquity makes it invaluable.

The new five-cent stamp to be used for international postage under the late Borne treaty has upon it a picture of Gen. Zachary Taylor in full uniform. The stamp will be issued in a few weeks.

The Clinch Rifles.

The Clinch Rifles met at their rooms on Broad street, below McIntosh, last night, in full force, for the purpose of christening the large punch bowl won at the Schutzenfest for the best company shot. It will be remembered that the bowl was won by the shot of Markor Thomas Jones.
Toasts.—A magnificent basket bouquet, presented by Miss Lilla Platt, was suspended from the chandelier in the centre of the room. The first toast of the evening, offered by Capt. Frank G. Ford, was, "South Carolina, her past, present and future." Major W. T. Gary responded in a most eloquent manner. We give his response as nearly as possible in his own words:
"This tribute of the citizen soldiery of Augusta, to the good people of the State of my nativity, fills my heart with emotions which are shared by many who are here to night.
The hearts of Georgians beat in unison with those of the brave but oppressed Carolinians.
In the past, South Carolina, like sentinel upon the watch tower of liberty, has warned us of the dangers which we were not able to avert. Her fidelity has brought upon her those ills which now grievously oppress her, but which she has the heroism to bear with fortitude. For many years her office-holders have brought disgrace upon themselves, and infamy upon the Government which has sustained them. But by their acts, they could not tarnish the reputation of the State, which they did not assist to make. The Palmetto emblazoned upon her escutcheon was made illustrious by her sons. Proudly has it floated above the touch of those who sought to defile it. *Dum spiro spero spes* will shine forth with the first gleam of the sunlight of liberty which shall flash upon banners. Brave men never despair. The spirit which actuated her Sumner, her Marion, her Calhoun and her Pickens, her Butler and her Hampton, will again place her sons in the front ranks of American heroes and statesmen. And until that day shall come 'whatsoever things are done, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,' you may expect to hear from the good people of South Carolina.—*Constitutionalist.*

Sudden Death of a Columbia Merchant.

The news that Mr. Edward Hope, an old merchant of this city, was found dead in his room yesterday, about noon, startled the community by the suddenness of the demise of the unfortunate gentleman. The particulars of his death, as gathered from the witness at the coroner's jury and other sources, are that Hope retired to his room on Saturday evening as usual, and was not afterwards seen until found lying dead on the floor by Mr. Capers. At a coroner's inquest the jury rendered a verdict that the deceased came to his death by the stoppage of blood circulating from the heart to the lungs. Mr. Hope was about fifty years old, a native of London and unmarried. He had been successful in business but lost his fortune by his trusting nature. He was buried yesterday, at 6 P. M., in Elmwood cemetery. His coffin was followed by many sympathizing friends.—*Columbia U. H.*

Death of Hon. Jesse D. Bright.

The death of this honored son of Indiana, removes another of the strong men who controlled the destinies of this country in the political contest which preceded a resort to arms in 1861, and it would have been well if his counsils had prevailed. Mr. Bright was born in central New York, in 1812, and there studied law. Soon after removing to Indiana, he became deeply interested in politics, and almost from the outset of his public career, was a public leader. He was successively a Circuit Judge, State Senator, United States Marshal, Lieutenant Governor and United States Senator. His service in the Federal Senate began in 1845, and continued unbroken down to his expulsion in 1862.

Suit Against the Silk Smugglers.

United States District Attorney Bliss, of New York, has followed up the criminal prosecutions against the ring of silk smugglers in that city by the initiation of civil proceedings to recover for the government the ill-gotten gains it has been defrauded of. The rate of duty to which the history and other fraudulent "sample" goods were subject was paid upon the ostensibly which were smuggled. The difference between this rate and that which ought to have been paid is claimed to have amounted to about \$1,336,400, and a suit was begun on Friday in the United States District Court against Charles L. Lawrence, the recently extradited forger and confederate of the smugglers, to recover the amount. This is probably only the first of several similar suits to be instituted.

Carruth Quits Journalism.

VALLEYTOWN OF AN EDITOR WITH A BULLET IN HIS BRAIN.
VINELAND, N. J., May 25, 1875.
The following curious announcement is made in the Independent by Mr. Carruth, who was recently shot by Landis. The article is headed "Adios" (adiou); but no one will venture to assert that, notwithstanding the presence of lead so near the vital region, it is loaded with melancholy:—
With this issue we step down and out from the editorship and proprietorship of the Vineland Independent. We commend the proprietor to our patrons and friends, and hope and trust that under his management the paper will give increased satisfaction to its readers. This sudden sunsetting of our connection with newspaperdom will surprise, and doubtless disgust, many of our friends, but there was no alternative. Two months' constant wrestle with a hostile bullet in our brain has convinced us that we lack the opportunity to develop a lead mine and publish an independent Vineland newspaper at the same time. Our impaired eyesight, shattered nerves and pulsating brain admonish us that for the coming year we must not stray too far from the hospital.
To our subscribers who, for the past four years, have read the Independent and paid for it, we hereby tender our acknowledgments. Those who have taken the paper just to help it along never volunteering a dime or recognizing a dun, we shall feel it our duty, if we recover our health, to thank in person.
We cannot omit to embrace this perhaps last free opportunity to thank our editorial brethren, who in their kindness of heart have flattered our abilities, extolled our virtues and whitewashed our faults. The "yooyotes" of the craft who taking advantage of our our helplessness, have attempted to redeem past cowardice by yelping over our grave we can afford to forgive and forget.
And now, with charity for all, and malice toward none, we bid goodby to friends and foes, and settle back on our pillow for a long, long, refreshing nap.
URI CARRUTH.

A Cork Helmet for U. S. Soldiers.

The quartermaster's department of the army has received a sample of the new cork helmet lately adopted for British troops in hot climates. It has been submitted to the secretary of war, with the recommendation that it be referred to the medical department for examination, and also that 500 of them be ordered for issue to the troops in Texas and Arizona.

Disgraced.

Though the Republican vote of Kentucky is five-sixths Negro, the white Radicals, at their recent conventions, have completely forgotten that there is a freedman in existence. Once, it is said, a colored delegate essayed to speak, but so swift was the extinguisher put upon him that it is doubtful whether he will ever speak again—at a public meeting in Kentucky.

A distressing accident occurred to a party of friends engaged in blasting in Frederick County, Maryland, recently. They had returned to a charge which had from some cause failed to explode at the expected time, and on their arrival the blast occurred, injuring them all seriously, and some probably fatally.

Gen. C. H. Smith, from Fort Riley Kansas, reports that there are occasional straggling bands of Indians in that vicinity, but he believes the frontier troubles to be over for the summer. Six companies of the 5th cavalry have started from Fort Lyon to relieve the 5th infantry, a portion of which will meet them at Sant Fe.

"Ish here some leaders here for me?" inquired a Cornial at the general delivery window of the post office yesterday. "No, none here," was the reply. "Well, that is queer," he continued, getting his head into the window; "my neighbor told me that some red leaders is here and I get none. I says to the daxon leader yet. How come do you not get none?"

Speaking about the "adios" fashions, it is said that the revival of calicoes, now sets the Paris fashions, instead of the English fashions, is responsible for their restored favor in the fashionable world.

A negro who lately died of hydrophobia, in Nashville, believed to be the first that had been bewitched by a fortune telling aunt.

The taxable wealth of Texas is said to have been increased 33 per cent. in four years.