

The Port Royal Commercial

Thursday, January 29, 1874.

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THE RING BROKEN.

In another column will be found the report of the special committee, James A. Bowley, chairman, appointed to investigate the refusal of the Republican Printing Company to employ colored printers. It appears that the committee enlarged their own powers somewhat and made some investigations as to what the printing costs. We have been roundly abused as false to a lifelong profession of republican principles because we have attacked this giant swindle; our assertions have been denounced as false; our figures have been sneered at as garbled; a paper has been established to crush us out. All these things we were prepared for. But that a committee of the House should proceed to substantiate every charge of fraud, bribery and extravagance made by the COMMERCIAL, was something we were unprepared for.

We cannot repress a feeling of exultation in view of the fact that the COMMERCIAL was the first paper in this state to point out the enormity of this fraudulent business. While the conservative papers in almost every county were quieted by a few hundred or a few thousand dollars worth of pay; the COMMERCIAL has always preserved its opposition to the printing swindle. In 1871-72 we printed the laws, and made out a bill for them amounting to \$1,621 of which we got only \$1,200, being obliged to pay the balance to a member of the legislature from this county to get the bill paid. Our necessities compelled us. When the bill for sixteen hundred dollars was made we were told to make it out at the same rate as the Beaufort Times, which was \$7.021. We could as easily have had that sum as the one we did get, but we would have been then forward the "slave of the Ring." We have alluded to this only to show the means taken to silence the press. It has been generally successful. The sentinels of the opposition party have been in the pay of the enemy. What wonder then that the defence of the state has been so feeble, and that the baggage train and provisions have mostly been captured.

Another blow has been struck however, and it is a telling one. Whether it is an honest effort to beat off the marauders, or whether it is a ruse of pretended retreat, is immaterial. The figures are there. Admitted by a republican committee of a republican house. Our efforts have not been in vain. Publicity has been the weapon wherewith this sortie has been successful, and we appeal to friends of good government to aid us in continuing thus to bring the power of the press to bear upon all such wicked, shameless swindles as the Republican Printing Company.

\$474,000—\$100,000—\$374,000.

The above represents an arithmetical showing of the printing swindle. Mr. Woodruff testified, (see report) that he could do all the printing of the general assembly, with the decisions of the supreme court and executive documents, for \$100,000. Mr. Bowley's figures show that to do this work \$474,000 has been appropriated. Subtract \$100,000 from \$474,000 and there remains \$374,000, as a profit to the Republican printing company for one year's work.

Does any believe that Josephus Woodruff and A. O. Jones are allowed to absorb such a sum. We know the contrary. Both of them have told us that their share was a pittance. We believe them. But such supple tools are only used to be worn out. A score of republican members divide this plunder, after paying a couple of slices to the executive departments. Considering the odium attached to the company, the utter wreck of commercial and personal reputation they have made, Woodruff and Jones ought to have had the whole of the profits. It would not pay them, but it would be something. Messrs. Woodruff and Jones, if their own stories are true, are the hardest workers for the least pay that we know of anywhere outside a parish workhouse. They have both said repeatedly, in the last two weeks, that not ten thousand dollars stuck to them out of the \$225,000 of certificates voted at the special session of the legislature.

The Oakes Ames of South Carolina.

Woodruff and Jones are amiable fellows. Everybody sympathizes with them. They take all the odium of the printing swindle, and their legislative partners squeeze out of them all the profits. We have heard that Woodruff has kept a "memorandum book" and a "check book." Such apparently harmless weapons once put into the hands of the christian statesmen in Washington as easily and as surely as the smooth stone from a brook over a Jew's Goliath in old.

Let us have the figures Josephus, and you will be forgiven. You did not keep those weapons without a purpose. You knew the kind of men you were

dealing with. You knew that when they were done with you they would desert you and leave you naked to your enemies. The time has nearly come. Preserve therefore those little books, and purchase immunity for yourself by exposing your legislative pals. Be the Oakes Ames of South Carolina.

A Conundrum for Mr. Cardozo.

If the entire cost of a year's printing for the general assembly, and the supreme court decisions in addition, according to the terms of the contract with the Republican Printing Company, only amounts to \$12,319.60, what kind of vouchers are required to draw \$474,000 out of the treasury for doing the work? Have you the items of the bills? Tweed and Ingersoll are in jail, the one for making out fraudulent bills and the other for allowing them.

The political history of South Carolina since the close of the war has added no lustre to its previous fame, but on the contrary is exhibited a page that would make every honest man blush at its record. Nor does the future bring any signs of relief. Each administration that comes into power is pregnant with promises that not many moons shall wax and wane before a change for the better is visible, and that the burdens that have heretofore borne our patient people down shall be lifted, and prosperity will again sit at their firesides. The good words that have been whispered in our ears, have been uttered only to turn into ashes, for each successive day that dawns only plunges us still further into difficulties.

Within the comparatively short space of five years the taxes required for State purposes have been on the increase from seven mills until at the present it reaches twelve mills, and yet there is no visible or real diminution of the State debt, excepting what has been done by a so-called scaling process, only to deceive the people. Thousand of dollars are wrongfully taken from the pockets of those who can ill afford it to support powerful organizations that are nothing but putrid matter upon the body politic—and they are so linked in and interwoven with members of the General Assembly, that the remedy is difficult to find. Retrenchment and reform is what they clamor for to suit their constituency, but facts and figures which are paraded before the tax-payers is evidence that the day for the execution of these promises has not yet come.

THE PRINTING SWINDLE.

The Truth at Last—A Legislative Committee give the Figures—Printing bill Multiplied by ten—\$174,000 Appropriated to pay for \$50,000 worth of work.

In the Legislature, almost the only topic for the past ten days, has been the following report to the House:

Mr. Bowley, from special committee, submitted the following:

"The committee to whom was entrusted the duty of investigating the charges against the Republican Printing Company of unjust and illegal discrimination against colored compositors, in accordance with the following preamble and resolution:

"WHEREAS, The constitution of the United States and of South Carolina guarantees to all citizens, irrespective of race, color or previous condition of servitude, equal rights and privileges; and

"WHEREAS, The Republican Printing Company, although sustained by the Republican party, has repeatedly refused to employ colored compositors because their white employees, being members of the Typographical Union, dislike to work in the same apartment with colored men, and threatened, if alleged, to leave rather than to do so; and

"WHEREAS, By their action in pandering to the prejudices of their white compositors, the said company violates the constitution of the United States and of this State, and disregards the principles, platform and pledges of the Republican party, and inflicts upon the colored compositors of the State a flagrant wrong, deserving of censure and rebuke; therefore,

"Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed by the speaker to examine into and ascertain the cause of this unjust discrimination and refusal to employ colored compositors, and to recommend some practical means to compel the said company to give the colored compositors of the State an equal opportunity with the white to obtain a livelihood; and that the said committee report to this House the names of the persons composing the said Republican Printing Company, beg leave to report:

That the Republican party and honest printers employed by the Republican Printing Company are all white men; that they belong to the Typographical Union, an international association of printers throughout Canada and the United States. By the laws of this association its members are forbidden to work with printers who are not members, and pined out to a strike or refusal to work should such be employed in the same office with them. Each local Union regulates the rules of admission of its members—a given number of back bills or adverse votes, preventing admission. Throughout the Southern States no colored printers are members of this association. The evidence before your committee was that in New York and Washington cities no colored printers were members, but we have since direct information from Washington city that colored men are these members.

ing is made. During the last regular session the following sums were appropriated, viz: Under joint resolution of December 21, 1872, to pay the claims of the Republican Printing Company, \$25,000; under act of January 29, 1873, for current printing, \$55,000; under act to make appropriations and raise supplies for the fiscal year terminating November 1, 1873, approved February 16, 1873, for permanent printing \$71,000. At the special joint closed there was appropriated, under act of November 19, 1873, for printing immigration report, \$75,000; for printing decisions of the Supreme Court, \$25,000; for printing tax decrees, &c., \$25,000; so that the aggregate of appropriations to the Republican Printing Company during the last twelve months amounted to \$474,000. The Legislature has also appropriated during the same period \$100,000 for publishing the laws. The total revenues of the State from all sources during the fiscal year ending October 31, 1873, were, according to the State treasurer's report, \$1,719,728.37.

In the statement of the treasurer of undrawn appropriations, or deficiencies, at the close of the fiscal year ending October 31, 1873, we find: Free schools, \$216,919.29; salaries, \$116,064.93; State Normal School, \$24,989; State Orphan House, \$18,526.58; Lunatic Asylum, \$22,915.71; current printing, \$83,000; permanent printing, \$92,589.63. The last two items only have been provided for.

The act of November 19, 1873, authorizes and requires the State treasurer, to issue certificates of indebtedness, negotiable for taxes, to the Republican Printing Company, for \$100,589.93, with interest, and for the additional amount of \$125,000, appropriated by the act of November 19, 1873.

The contract for the printing is given to the Republican Printing Company under authority of the act of January 23, 1871, as follows: "And they (the clerks respectively of the Senate and House of Representatives) are further authorized to provide by contract for the permanent and current printing of the General Assembly, provided that said contract be approved by the Senate and House of Representatives." The present contract is found on pages 1,455 and 1,426 of reports and resolutions of the General Assembly, 1870-71, and signed by J. Woodruff and A. O. Jones, clerks of the two Houses, respectively, on the second part, and the Republican Printing Company on the first part. Mr. Woodruff, the clerk of the Senate, testified before your committee that Mr. A. O. Jones, the clerk of the House, and himself, composed and were the sole proprietors of the Republican Printing Company.

He also stated that his company could do all the printing of the General Assembly, with the decisions of the Supreme Court, and the printing of the executive departments, for \$100,000 per annum, were the pay regular and assured. This would be a saving to the State, but other prominent and responsible printers of the Republican party have said to the undersigned that they would do the entire work for \$50,000 per annum.

The total disbursement for printing under the first Republican Legislature of South Carolina, from September 1868, to October 30, 1870, over two years, will be found on page 107, report of the joint special financial investigating committee, in the reports and joint resolutions of the General Assembly, 1871-72, stated thus: Printing laws special session 1868, \$8,764.25; printing bond stock and record book, \$559.80; permanent printing, \$4,310.46.

The opportunity now presents itself to a Legislature composed of a majority of colored men, to abolish a system of printing by which colored men are deprived of the privilege of working in that department of State service, and deprived of its benefits, while the responsibility of its vast expenditures rests mainly upon them; and to inaugurate one which by its recognition of the rights of their manhood, and by a great retrenchment in the expenditures of the revenues of the State, will vindicate to the world their just claim to all the rights of freemen. We submit a statement, with the calculations carefully made from a high source, a practical printer and responsible man and republican, of the cost of the permanent and current printing of the General Assembly, session of 1871-72, with the decision of the Supreme Court, under the present contract, and recommend that the act under which the Republican Printing Company was awarded the contract for the public printing, be repealed, and that the committee on public printing be instructed to draft and report to this House a bill providing for the award of the lowest responsible bidder, who will perform the work, employing compositors irrespective of race or color; provided, that the entire cost of the public printing shall not exceed the sum fifty thousand dollars.

Respectfully submitted, JAMES A. BOWLEY, JOSEPH D. WILSON, S. S. CUNNINGHAM, N. B. MYERS.

Mr. Thompson moved that the report be received as information and be postponed, and made the special order for Monday next, at 1 P. M., which was finally agreed to.

The Actual Cost.

The following is the actual cost of all the printing done for the General Assembly, for the session of 1871-72, carefully calculated according to the present contract:

CURRENT WORK.—Senate Journal, 874 pages, at \$2.75, \$2,405; add rule and figure work, 116 pages, at \$2.76, \$319; House Journal, 845 pages, at \$2.75, \$2,324; add rule and figure work, 157 pages, at \$2.75, \$431; reports and resolutions, 1,579 pages, at \$2.75, \$4,340; add rule and figure work, 762 pages, at \$2.75, \$2,096. Total, \$11,506.

PERMANENT WORK.—Senate Journal, 990 pages, at \$4.48, \$4,442.20; House Journal, 1,090 pages, at \$4.48, \$4,880; reports and resolutions, 2,144 pages, at \$4.48, \$9,604.80; Acts, 336 pages, at \$1.36, \$457.92. Total, \$15,780.60; add above, \$11,506. Grand Total, \$27,286.60. Add one-quarter to the current work for extra pages, as parts of pages always count as whole pages, and when reports and resolutions are printed, there is often half a page left blank, one quarter current work is \$2,841.50; add for calendar a mean average of 16 pages per day for both Houses, at \$2.75 per day, 160 days, \$440; average bills per day at 20 pages, \$3 per page for 160 days, \$960. And the sum total is reached, excepting contingent printing, such as Governor's message, or some document sent to the Legislature in a special manner, and ordered printed by either house.

RECAPITULATION.—CURRENT WORK.—Senate Journal, \$2,422; House Journal, \$2,766; reports and resolutions, \$5,888; add one-quarter, \$2,841; calendars, \$4,000; bills, \$6,000; total, \$24,207.

PERMANENT WORK.—1,000 Senate Journals, \$3,445; 1,000 House Journals, \$3,480; 1,000 reports and resolutions, \$3,780; 1,000 Acts, \$1,465; total, \$15,780. Grand total, \$39,987.

The above rates exceedingly high rates. Add for Supreme Court decisions the

year, 535 pages, at \$4.36 per page, \$2,332.60. Entire cost, \$42,319.60.

There should be added to this amount for report of the Executive department, printed by order of the General Assembly, job work for the departments, Supreme Court, etc., calculated in the same way, \$18,000 more. The total cost public printing according to the contract should therefore, have been not to exceed \$60,300.

The amount actually paid out for printing during that year, was \$214,629.86, leaving (1872) nearly a hundred thousand dollars worth of claims against the treasury for printing besides.

Festus wished his lady love was all lips, and Nero wished the human race had but one neck, but the Parisian lover distanced both when he sent a bottle of perfume to his sweetheart, with the sentiment: "When you smell this you will wish you were all nose."

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